

## WORLD SERIES EXTRA

A TIMES E-NEWSPAPER EXCLUSIVE :: SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2024

LA

4

NY

2

GAME 2  
DODGERS LEAD, 2-0W: YAMAMOTO  
L: RODÓN  
S: VESIAGAME 3: AT YANKEE STADIUM  
MONDAY, 5 P.M. PDT TV: CH. 11

## A REAL SHO STOPPER



Photographs by WALLY SKALIJ Los Angeles Times

**SHOHEI OHTANI** is hurt on a stolen base attempt in the seventh inning Saturday. He has a partial shoulder separation and will have more tests, Dave Roberts said.

## Dodgers take 2-0 lead but superstar suffers shoulder injury

BY JACK HARRIS

In Game 2 of the World Series on Saturday night, Dodger Stadium fell quiet only twice.

The first lull was rectified quickly, with the Dodgers turning a tied score in the third inning into a comfortable lead with back-to-back home runs from Teoscar Hernández and Freddie Freeman.

The second silence, however, lasted much longer — serving as the only ominous moment at Chavez Ravine in two otherwise rollicking Fall Classic nights.

The Dodgers defeated the New York Yankees 4-2 on Saturday, surviving a frightening ninth inning to take a commanding 2-0 lead in this best-of-seven World Series.

But in the process, superstar designated hitter Shohei Ohtani sustained a shoulder injury after he jammed his left arm on a slide in the bottom of the seventh inning on an unsuccessful stolen-base attempt.

While manager Dave Roberts said the team wouldn't know the full extent of Ohtani's injury until he underwent an MRI exam — which was expected to take place either Saturday night or Sunday — the early signs seemed to suggest he had avoided a worst-case scenario.

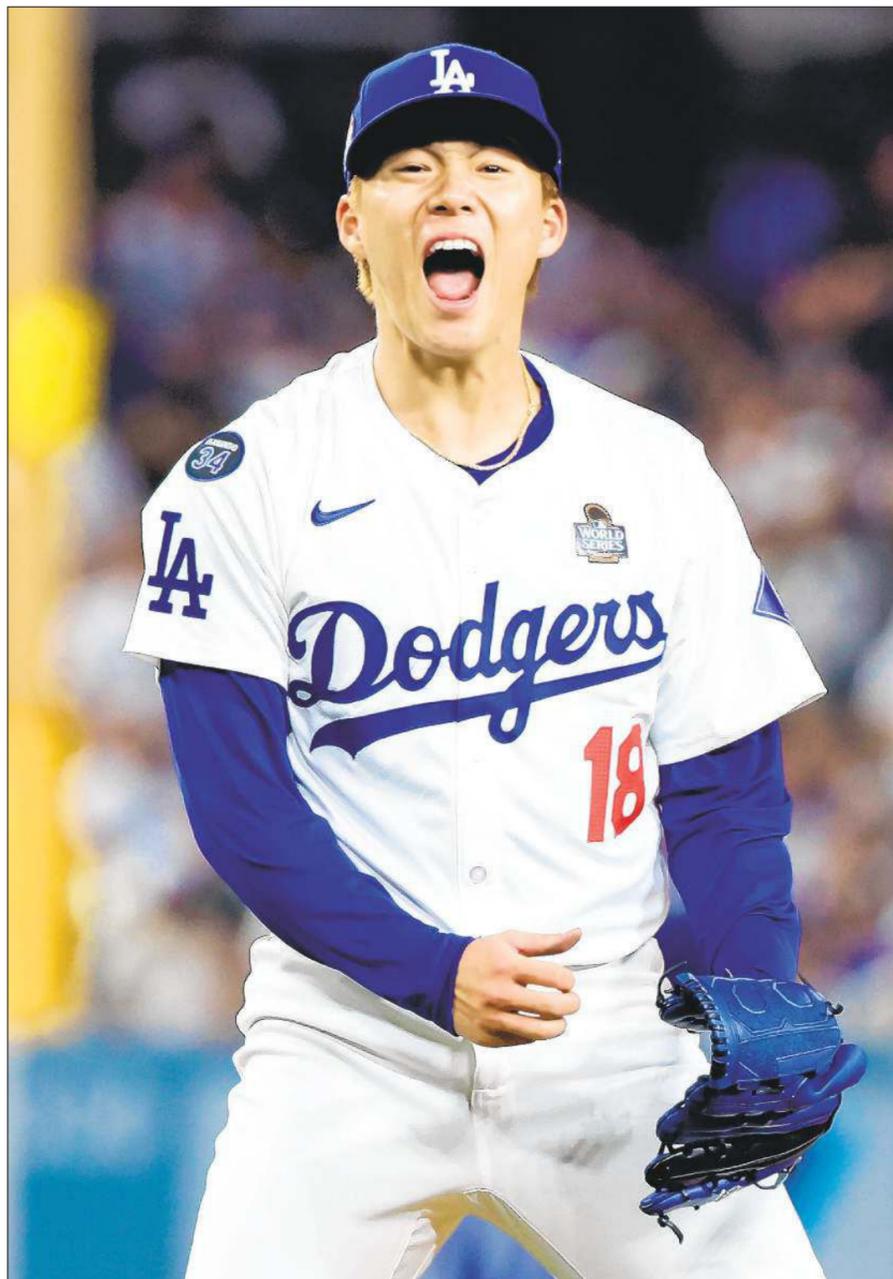
According to Roberts, Ohtani sustained a shoulder subluxation, essentially a partial dislocation less severe than if his shoulder had fully come out of its socket. In immediate postgame tests, Roberts said Ohtani's shoulder strength and range of motion were good, leaving the team "encouraged" about his status for the rest of this Series.

"Obviously I can't speculate because we don't get the scans yet," Roberts said. "But after the range of motion, the strength test, I felt much better about it."

When asked later how his team might handle possibly playing without Ohtani when the Series resumed on Monday at Yankee Stadium, Roberts declined to even entertain the hypothetical.

"I'm not there," Roberts said. "I'm expecting him to be there. I'm expecting him to be in the lineup."

Regardless of Ohtani's status —



**YOSHINOBU YAMAMOTO** held the Yankees to one hit in 6 ⅓ innings. New York was held to four hits in Game 2 as L.A. largely has limited the star bats atop the Yankees' lineup.

he left the stadium shortly after the game without speaking to reporters — the Dodgers' position in this World Series is nonetheless auspicious.

The team not only holds a 2-0 lead as things shift to New York, but also has neutralized all the potential advantages the Yankees appeared to have in this relatively even matchup.

The Dodgers have negated New York's expected starting pitching advantage on the mound, battering Carlos Rodón for four early runs Saturday while Yoshinobu Yamamoto worked 6 ⅓ innings of one-run, one-hit ball.

They have limited the superstar bats atop the Yankees lineup, most notably with six strikeouts of Aaron Judge in nine at-bats.

And they have watched their offense continue a scorching October surge, one that culminated with consecutive blasts from Hernández and Freeman in the third — the Dodgers' first back-to-back home runs in the World Series since Pedro Guerrero and Steve Yeager hit pivotal blasts in Game 5 of their 1981 championship.

"It was big," Roberts said of the third-inning sequence, which followed a solo blast from Juan Soto in the top half of the inning, turning a 1-1 tie into a 4-1 lead. "We needed it clearly."

Still, the Dodgers' path to a championship could get more complicated depending on Ohtani's status.

The soon-to-be three-time most valuable player was only one for eight over Games 1 and 2, plus a walk that put him on base in the seventh inning Saturday.

But, coming off his historic 54-homer, 59-stolen-base season, the Dodgers would have to compensate if they're forced to play without him.

"It's not going to be a good feeling," Hernández said of the thought of an Ohtani-less Dodgers lineup. "But if he can't go on Monday, we just have to keep doing the thing we've been doing for the past couple weeks."

Now, in a series in which almost everything else has been breaking their way, the Dodgers will have to wait and see what Ohtani's MRI test reveals.

WORLD SERIES GAME 2: DODGERS 4, YANKEES 2



**TOMMY EDMAN** gets the sunflower seed shower as teammate Mookie Betts greets him following Edman's solo home run that opened the scoring.

WALLY SKALIJ Los Angeles Times



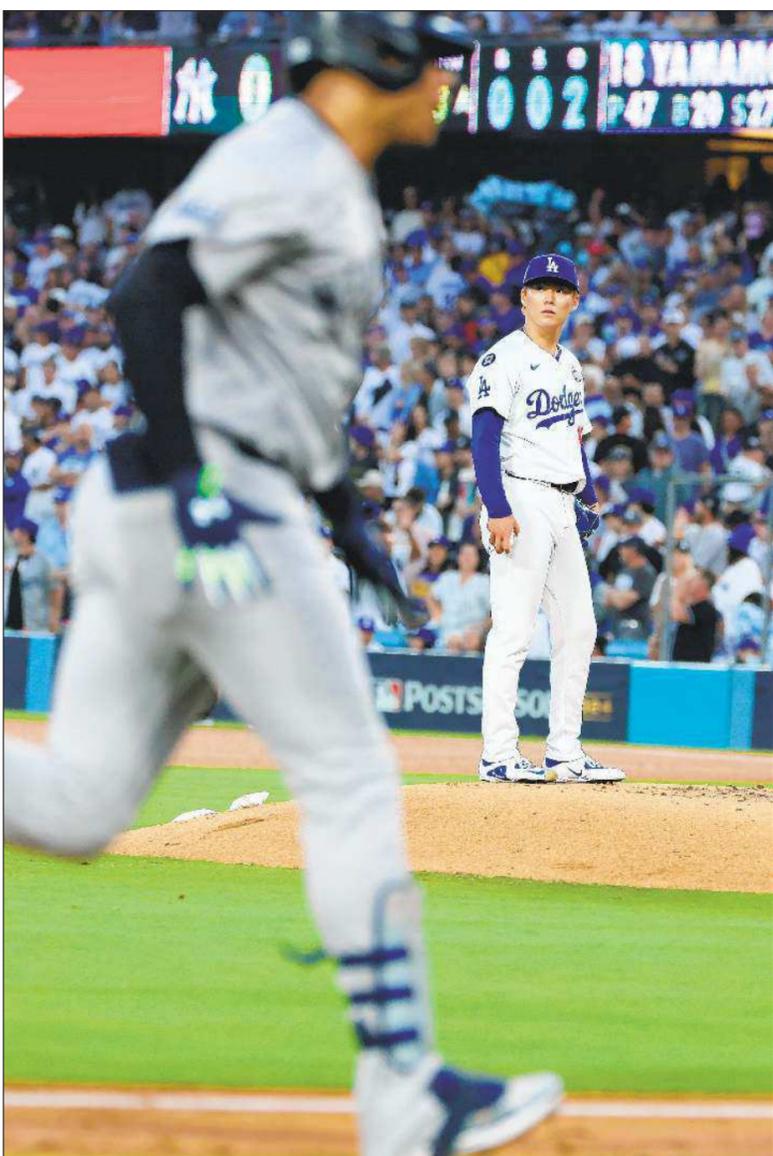
**THE SUNSET** silhouettes Dodgers fans as they get fired up upon Edman's blast in the second inning, the center fielder's second homer of the postseason.

ALLEN J. SCHABEN Los Angeles Times



**A DAY AFTER** his historic World Series walk-off grand slam, Freddie Freeman high-fives teammates following his solo homer that erupted Dodger Stadium again.

ROBERT GAUTHIER Los Angeles Times



**YOSHINOBU YAMAMOTO** waits as the Yankees' Juan Soto does his home run trot in the third inning. It was the only run Yamamoto gave up in 6 1/3 innings.

ROBERT GAUTHIER Los Angeles Times



**TEOSCAR HERNÁNDEZ** preceded Freeman's homer with a two-run shot to right-center field, his third homer of the playoffs, to the delight of Betts.

WALLY SKALIJ Los Angeles Times



**SOTO FOLLOWS** through on his homer, just one of four hits by the Yankees in Game 2. New York scored five runs total in the first two games at Chavez Ravine.

WALLY SKALIJ Los Angeles Times



EMILY MARKSTEIN, 31, who has a master's in historic preservation, lives in a 2006 GMC van in Mammoth Lakes.

Photographs by BRIAN VAN DER BRUG Los Angeles Times

PLENTY OF OPEN SPACE, BUT NOWHERE TO LIVE

In the Eastern Sierra, government agencies' large holdings leave little land for housing

By Jack Dolan | REPORTING FROM MAMMOTH LAKES

Emily Markstein, a sinewy rock climber and skier who has spent seven years living and working in the Sierra resort town of Mammoth Lakes, opens a large sliding door and welcomes a stranger into her home.

One of the gleaming multimillion-dollar mansions nestled among towering pine trees and granite peaks in this exclusive mountain enclave? Not exactly.

Markstein, who has a master's degree in historic preservation and has coached skiing, taught yoga, trimmed trees and waited tables at one of the fanciest restaurants in town, lives in a 2006 GMC van.

Like countless other adventure seekers drawn to California's rugged and remote Eastern Sierra, Markstein, 31, initially embraced "van life" after scrolling through social media posts that made it look carefree and glamorous. She continues because she genuinely likes it, she said, but also because, [See Space, A6]



MARKSTEIN'S description of "van life" often circles back to plumbing. "During COVID, I was showering in the creek," she said.

Refinery closure means more gas imports

After Phillips shuts down Wilmington-Carson complex, state may need to double its foreign purchases.

By Russ Mitchell

California for decades produced enough gasoline to supply almost all of its own needs, but the era of self-sufficiency is coming quickly to an end.

The Phillips 66 refinery complex in Wilmington and Carson now produces 1.3 billion gallons of gasoline annually, which will leave a huge gap to be filled after its planned closure late next year. With no pipelines into the state, and no plans to add new refineries, California will need to make up for the deficit with imports via ocean tanker — in what analysts say will be a costly endeavor, and one with inherent risks of supply disruptions.

"This is going to make California even more dependent on a longer supply chain. Not only will we see average upward pressure on prices, but probably volatility to prices as well," said Skip York, chief energy strategist for industry consultant Turner, Mason & Co.

California imports about 11 billion gallons of gasoline annually, or 8% of its supply, [See Refinery, A10]

Latino vote in California could tip balance of power

Districts with notable populations may help decide which party will control Congress.

By Andrea Castillo

On a recent Tuesday in Sacramento, Alexa Sosa Nunez put in her AirPods, stacked her printed script and took a deep breath before she dialed her first call

on behalf of Democratic congressional candidate Rudy Salas.

The 50-year-old woman who answered the phone said immigration is her top priority this election.

Sosa Nunez, who works for the voter mobilization group Communities for a New California Action Fund, told her that Salas supports a pathway to citizenship for undocumented workers. Salas is running against Republican Rep. David Val-

adao for control of California's 22nd Congressional District in the San Joaquin Valley.

"Can we count on your vote?" she asked.

"Oh yeah," the woman replied. "I have family that — they need something. We need to do something so they can get papers here."

Some of California's most competitive congressional races are in districts with significant Latino popula- [See Latino, A7]

World Series Game 2 coverage

Read about Saturday night's Dodgers-Yankees result at latimes.com/sports and in our World Series Extra at latimes.com/enewspaper.

Israeli strikes on Iran limited

Tehran downplays damage and hasn't vowed to respond amid warnings of escalation. WORLD, A3

Showcasing L.A. for the Olympics

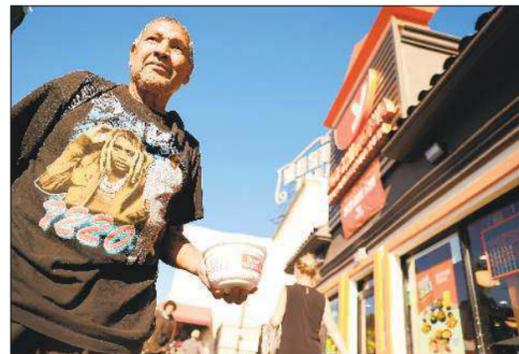
The Times asked 11 public intellectuals for their takes on what really defines the city. CALIFORNIA, B1

13 haunts to visit all year round

For fans, there's just one problem with Halloween season: It ends. Here's where its spirit lives on. WEEKEND, L1

Weather Clouds and sun. L.A. Basin: 78/60. B10

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MICHAEL BLACKSHIRE Los Angeles Times

A MAN named Michelangelo prepares to cross a street near Yoshinoya in the MacArthur Park area.

Drug use, violence surround restaurant

Workers struggle with safety and city inaction at 'Yoshinoya Alley'

STEVE LOPEZ

In one sense, the Yoshinoya Japanese Kitchen across the street from MacArthur Park couldn't be in a better location.



Thousands of potential customers stream by each day on foot, headed to and from work, home, shopping,

school and the Metro station.

In another sense, it couldn't be in a worse location. The fentanyl epidemic is often literally at its doorstep, along with the same raft of public safety issues that prompted the exasperated owner of nearby Langer's Delicatessen to tell me in August that he was thinking of shutting down after 77 years in business. [See Lopez, A8]

If Trump does return, he'll bring a list of once-unthinkable 'firsts'

By James Rainey

Former President Trump stands on the verge of a series of firsts that once would have seemed unthinkable.

Winning a second term as president would make the Republican nominee the first occupant of the White House to be: a convicted felon, an adjudicated sexual offender, a twice-impeached

federal officeholder and a serial denier of election results that have been certified by the courts and Congress.

Trump has not only weathered those largely self-inflicted wounds, but persuaded somewhere approaching half of Americans to consider putting him back in the White House. For a significant share of Trump supporters it is his opponent, Vice President Kamala

Harris, who is too extreme to lead the country.

Many Harris supporters express incredulity that Trump remains a viable candidate. But veteran political analysts said that, for mostly apolitical voters who don't follow the news closely and who may decide the election, Trump's repeated departures from political norms may have little practi- [See Trump, A10]

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## PERSPECTIVES

# Trump judge blunts an effective anti-fraud tool

Civil War-era qui tam rules, an aid to whistleblowers, are declared unconstitutional.

**MICHAEL HILTZIK**

Since 1986, whistleblowers have been in the forefront of the government's war on fraud, accounting for \$53 billion, or more than 70%, of the \$75 billion recovered from swindlers on defense contracts, from Medicare and from other federal programs.

There's no debate over what's driving this record: It's a 1986 federal law that awards whistleblowers up to 30% of the recovery. For the federal government, this is a bargain. Without the law, the government might never even know about most of the \$75 billion in fraud that was unearthed.

That makes the law "one of the government's top fraud-fighting tools," says James King, a spokesman for the Anti-Fraud Coalition, a Washington watchdog group.

So perhaps it's unsurprising that a Trump-appointed judge in Florida has just declared a key provision of the law unconstitutional. The provision concerns so-called qui tam actions, in which private litigants bring lawsuits on behalf of the government as well as themselves. (The Latin term came to us via old English law.)

The ruling came from federal Judge Kathryn Kimball Mizelle, whom Trump named to the bench in 2020 despite her having been labeled "not qualified" by the American Bar Assn. due to her "lack of meaningful trial experience." She did, however, boast a sterling right-wing legal pedigree, including service as a law clerk to Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas.

Mizelle is one of a cadre of Republican-appointed regional trial judges who have taken it upon themselves to upend settled government laws and programs by declaring them illegal or unconstitutional.

They include Trump appointee Matthew Kacsmaryk of Amarillo, Texas, who has tried to remove the

abortion drug mifepristone from the market (though he was originally unsuccessful, he is getting a second shot at the issue) and Reed O'Connor of Fort Worth, a George W. Bush appointee who tried to declare the entire Affordable Care Act unconstitutional, only to be overruled by the Supreme Court.

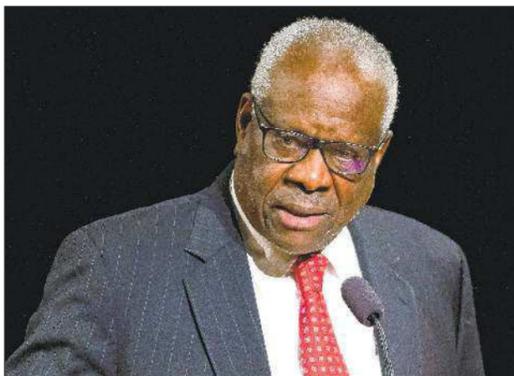
The current qui tam case, in which physician Clarissa Zafirov accused her employers and related companies of faking and inflating diagnostic codes to increase their Medicare reimbursements, isn't Mizelle's first rodeo in the game of overturning government rules and regulations. In 2022 she struck down the Biden administration's pandemic-era mandate that travelers on planes and public transportation wear masks, even though the Supreme Court had upheld the rule three times.

The qui tam rules are part of the False Claims Act, a Civil War-era law that was enacted in response to reports of wholesale plundering by suppliers of military goods and ammo to the War Department.

The qui tam concept is older than that, however. It dates back to the first Congress, which enacted numerous qui tam laws signed by President Washington. An early heyday for the concept came with the 1794 Slave Trade Act, which provided for a bounty to be paid to private citizens who sued slave traders they found violating a law prohibiting the modification of vessels to transport slaves.

In 1986, Congress amended the False Claims Act to encourage whistleblowers — or "relators," as they're known in the law. The amendment increased the relators' share of recoveries and set forth a procedure for qui tam lawsuits. Here's how it works: The relators must file their initial lawsuits under seal, notifying the government, but not the targets, of their case. The government then has 60 days to decide whether to intervene in the case.

If it intervenes, it takes over management of the lawsuit though the relator remains a party; the latter can receive 15% to 25% of any recovery. If it declines, relators can continue the lawsuits on their own, shouldering the cost of investigating their charges but becoming eligible for a higher 25% to 30% of any recovery.



ROBERT FRANKLIN Associated Press

**SUPREME COURT** Justice Clarence Thomas has raised the constitutionality issue over qui tam rules.

Either way, the government keeps the balance of the recovered funds.

The government declines to intervene in the majority of qui tam cases. That's "purely a resource matter," King told me — the feds simply don't have the money or staff to investigate every case of fraud in its programs, so it relies on whistleblowers to carry the charges forward.

The 1986 amendment was chiefly aimed at deterring defense-related fraud — through 2000, King says, more than 85% of whistleblower cases involved military procurement. But since then, about 80% of cases involve accusations against providers to Medicare and Medicaid.

A good example concerned the drug company Biogen, which paid \$900 million to the federal and state governments in 2022 to settle a qui tam lawsuit in which a former employee alleged that the company had paid kickbacks to doctors to entice them to prescribe its multiple sclerosis drugs. (The company didn't admit guilt in the settlement.)

The whistleblower collected about \$250 million, or roughly 30% of the federal government's share of the

settlement.

That brings us full circle back to the Zafirov lawsuit. The physician filed her lawsuit in 2019. The government declined to intervene. So for the following five years Zafirov pursued it, until Mizelle threw it out on Sept. 30.

Mizelle asserted that Zafirov was essentially acting as a government officer in bringing and pursuing the case. After all, Mizelle wrote, the physician "has determined which defendants to sue, which theories to raise, which motions to file, and which evidence to obtain." But because Zafirov had not been appointed by the president, her role violated the "appointments clause" of Article II of the Constitution.

A few things about this argument. First, it tracks closely with the most notable published objection to the qui tam system. That came from Justice Thomas, Mizelle's mentor. He asserted in a 2023 opinion that "there is good reason to suspect that Article II does not permit private relators to represent the United States' interests in FCA suits."

He didn't state outright that the qui tam provision is

unconstitutional but only suggested that it would be a ripe issue for some other lawsuit.

Still, corporate lawyers representing businesses likely to face qui tam lawsuits took heart from his expression of doubt, as well as from comments by Justices Brett M. Kavanaugh and Amy Coney Barrett, in concurring opinions in the same case, that they'd be open to considering the issue "in an appropriate case." That makes a possible anti-qui tam bloc of three justices, which is a start.

Yet the fact is that numerous federal judges at the trial and appellate level have heard similar objections to qui tam lawsuits, and rejected them every time. Indeed, only three weeks before Mizelle weighed in, a judge in a neighboring federal court flatly rejected the argument.

Even corporate defense lawyers are wary of regarding Mizelle's decision as anything but an outlier — for now. No other judge has ever found qui tam provisions to be unconstitutional. The judicial comments that Thomas mined for his comment were all dissents.

"At this point, Zafirov is a district court decision without precedential value," wrote two corporate lawyers in a recent analysis. But they observed that Zafirov is almost certain to be appealed and more corporate defendants will be using it to get lawsuits against them thrown out. "It is possible if not likely that the constitutionality of the FCA's qui tam provisions is going to be before the Supreme Court before long," they wrote.

A successful attack on qui tam lawsuits would mean the end of efforts that brought \$53 billion in recoveries over recent decades.

"Without the qui tam, the federal government

often would never find out about the fraud at all," Leonardo Cuello, an expert on Medicaid at Georgetown University, wrote after Mizelle's ruling. "Ultimately, individuals or companies engaged in fraud (and the lawyers that defend them) will know they can knock out any claim brought alone by a whistleblower. It's like the robbers finding out that all the cops are on vacation."

There's more to it than that. "This fits into the broader category of defanging government so the government can't do the things we need and want it to do," Cuello told me. Conservatives have tried to sap the authority of presidents and federal agencies to do their work, and conservative federal judges have helped them do so — blocking public health mandates during the pandemic and efforts by the Biden administration to relieve the burden of student debt, among other things.

When they haven't been able to defeat government actions at the congressional level, they've tried to do so by challenging the authority of executive branch agencies. They've challenged the constitutionality of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and the National Labor Relations Board (the latter challenge launched by that noted defender of the rule of law and of regulation, Elon Musk).

In other words, it would be wise to think of Mizelle's ruling as a canary in the coal mine. Big business has been trying to eviscerate anti-fraud laws for more than a century. They may finally be in with a chance.

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

## Russians made fake election video, FBI says

U.S. officials say a clip that falsely depicted ballots' destruction is part of Moscow's bid to divide Americans.

BY MELISSA GOLDIN, MIKE CATALINI AND ALI SWENSON

YARDLEY, Pa. — Russian actors were behind a widely circulated video falsely depicting mail-in ballots for Donald Trump being destroyed in Pennsylvania, U.S. officials confirmed Friday.

The video had taken off on social media Thursday but was debunked within three hours by local election officials and law enforcement after members of the public reported it.

U.S. officials said in a statement sent by the FBI that they believe the video was "manufactured and amplified" by Russian actors. The officials said it's part of "Moscow's broader effort to raise unfounded questions about the integrity of the U.S. election and stoke divisions among Americans."

The information was released by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, the FBI and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency.

The Bucks County Board of Elections had identified the video as fake on Thursday, saying the envelope and other materials in the video "are clearly not authentic materials belonging to or distributed by" the board.

The quick knockdown of the staged video showed how election officials have learned to move swiftly to counter false narratives over the last four years, ever since a large swath of American voters became distrustful in the voting process in 2020. Yet the video's detailed mimicking of ballots in a key county in this year's presidential race was a wake-up call that demonstrated how committed foreign actors are to undermining faith in the U.S. voting process in the critical stretch before voting concludes.

The faked video showed a person sorting through



MATT SLOCUM Associated Press

**THE STAGED** video was soon debunked, showing how election officials have learned to move swiftly.

what looked like mail ballots labeled as coming from Bucks County. The person appeared to be tearing up ballots marked for Trump, and leaving alone ballots marked for Vice President Kamala Harris.

Researchers who closely study Russian foreign influence campaigns had previously connected the video to a Russian disinformation network known as Storm-1516 or CopyCop. The network has previously shared videos with false claims about Harris and her running mate, Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz.

Darren Linvill, the co-director of the Media Forensics Hub at Clemson University, who closely studies the group, said the user who popularized the Bucks County video on the social platform X had been an early amplifier of other narratives from this network, including the first one his team ever tracked, in August 2023.

The style and appearance of the latest video matches other videos from the network too, Linvill said.

The video used a Black actor with a foreign accent — a choice that may be intentional as a way to inflame existing divisions on American soil, according to Josephine Lukito, an assistant professor of journalism at the University of Texas at Austin who has researched Russian disinformation.

It's a common strategy in fake videos originating in Russia, she said.

"It tends to amplify racism, right?" Lukito said.

that the video was circulating online. Schorn was in a pretrial conference Thursday and when she emerged she saw the calls about the video pouring in.

"Immediately at that point, we began investigating the video and made our ultimate conclusion that it was, in fact, fabricated," she said in a phone interview Friday.

Schorn was reluctant to describe how authorities reached their conclusion, citing concerns that subsequent fraudsters could improve their tactics. She said her office has assigned two attorneys to screen allegations of fraud and that they'll be on "24/7" on election day.

Both Republicans and Democrats in the county called the video out as bogus and expressed concern about how it could affect the election.

"To us, this is disinformation, aimed at scaring voters and dissuading them from using mail-in ballots or on-demand voting that uses the same mail-in ballot process," the Bucks County Republican Committee wrote in a statement. "We have seen dirty underhanded tactics this year, from the defacing of signs, letters threatening Trump supporters, and now this video trying to scare Bucks County voters."

Pennsylvania Sen. Steve Santarsiero, chair of the Bucks County Democratic Committee, called the video an attempt to "cast doubt on our vote by mail system and, ultimately, the outcome of the Presidential Election," in a statement.

Officials said they were heartened by the speed with which this disinformation and some other harmful falsehoods have been caught during this election cycle.

"I don't at all blame Americans for wanting to be reassured that the system can be trusted," Schorn said. "I don't blame that because, sadly, you know, there are criminal entities out there that do undermine processes. I felt reassured yesterday. I felt like it worked the way it was supposed to."

Goldin, Catalini and Swenson write for the Associated Press.

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Los Angeles Times

## THE WORLD

## Israel's strikes on Iran prompt calls for restraint

Tehran downplays damage and hasn't vowed to retaliate as Western nations warn against escalation.

BY TRACY WILKINSON  
AND RAMIN MOSTAGHIM

TEHRAN — Israel's retaliatory bombardment of Iran on Saturday appeared to be limited in scope, but Western nations including the U.S. warned another spark could swiftly ignite a new and dangerous round of Middle East escalation.

Israel on Saturday declared its mission accomplished after three waves of predawn airstrikes hit military targets, including missile batteries and production facilities, near Tehran. Iran sought to downplay the damage and said only four soldiers were killed.

Life in Tehran, the capital and other cities seemed to return to normal Saturday, after a noisy night of exploding munitions. People sat in cafes, children went to school and traffic was routine, but with long lines at gasoline stations. The Iranian news agency FARS published photos of a "bustling" bazaar in the capital amid other attempts to show calm.

By limiting its attacks to military targets, Israel may have been heeding entreaties by the Biden administration to avoid Iran's oil fields and nuclear research facilities as a way to temper any Iranian retaliation.

"This should be the end of this direct exchange of fire between Israel and Iran," a senior Biden administration said in a briefing with reporters after Israel declared the overnight operation to have been completed. "If Iran chooses to respond once again, we will be ready, and there will be consequences for Iran once again. However, we do not want to see that happen."

Vice President Kamala



Israeli army

**AN ARMED** Israeli air force plane prepares to take off from an undisclosed location Saturday. The airstrikes targeted missile batteries and production facilities and avoided oil fields and nuclear research facilities.

Harris, pausing during a campaign swing to speak to reporters, said the administration was "very adamant" about seeing de-escalation in the region. "That will be our focus," she said.

Israel's bombardment of Iran came in response to Iran launching nearly 200 ballistic missiles at Israel on Oct. 1. That attack was in retaliation for Israel's killing of senior leaders of the Iranian-backed militant groups Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in the Gaza Strip — two of the factions Tehran uses to fight its archenemy Israel by proxy.

"I am clear that Israel has the right to defend itself against Iranian aggression," British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said Saturday. "I am equally clear that we need to avoid further regional escalation and urge all sides to show restraint."

Yet containing wider conflict has become ever more difficult.

Fury throughout the region over Israel's killing of

tens of thousands of Palestinians in Gaza remains intense — and the anger is growing as Israel expands its operations into Lebanon, bombarding cities and sending troops into the country's south.

Just over a year ago, Hamas militants crossed the border from Gaza and attacked southern Israel, killing about 1,200 people and seizing around 250 hostages. In response, Israel launched an operation that has decimated the Gaza Strip, killing more than 42,000 Palestinians and displacing some 90% of its population.

The day after Hamas' Oct. 7, 2023, attack, Hezbollah started firing rockets and missiles into northern Israel, and in the last year it drove some 70,000 Israelis from their towns. After Israel escalated bombardments and launched a ground invasion in late September, more than 2,000 Lebanese have been killed and 1 million displaced, ac-

ording to the Lebanese health ministry.

Israel says its military campaigns target militants who have killed Israelis and who often hide in hospitals, schools or other civilian structures, but the Biden administration and others say the high civilian toll of deaths and injuries is "unacceptable."

In the weeks leading up to Saturday's attack, Biden administration officials repeatedly urged Israel to choose its targets carefully, avoiding civilians as well as the energy sector. Although Israel has routinely ignored U.S. advice in recent months in its prosecution of the wars in Gaza and Lebanon and in negotiations over truces, this time Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu apparently heeded the calls to calibrate targeting.

It is not yet clear why. Netanyahu's office denied he based targeting on U.S. pressure. Washington gives Israel about \$3.8 billion in mostly military aid annually, and

this month added to Israel's arsenal a sophisticated missile defense system known as THAAD along with 100 U.S. troops to operate it.

Not everyone struck a conciliatory tone. Several ultra-right members of Netanyahu's government said Saturday's barrage was just a first step. Even the more moderate Benny Gantz, a former member of the Cabinet, said the "significant attack" across Iran "constitutes a new phase in our war against Iran that lays a foundation for further actions."

The fear looming behind the exchanges between Israel and Iran is that the United States could eventually be drawn into a regional war. That is a development that neither the U.S. nor Iran wants, analysts say.

"Iran doesn't see this as just a war with Israel but one where the U.S. would inevitably be dragged in and Iran would be 100% outgunned," Dina Esfandiary, an Iran expert at the International Crisis Group, said in an in-

terview from Geneva. "The way they are downplaying [the Israeli strikes] confirms to me what Iran has been saying for a year: They don't want escalation. They don't want to fight a war they can't win."

The U.S., in the middle of a presidential election, is loath to take on yet another foreign conflict. Washington is already extended, primarily with money and weapons, as it supports Ukraine against Russia and Israel against Hamas and Hezbollah.

From Iran on Saturday, there were a handful of bombastic comments from hardliners, but not from Iranian leaders. Instead, the Foreign Ministry issued a statement saying it was "entitled" to self-defense but did not make specific threats.

Iran "considers itself entitled and obligated to defend against foreign acts of aggression," the statement said.

Later, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said: "Iran does not set any boundaries for itself in protecting and defending its interests and territorial integrity and its people."

Iran has not endured full-fledged war on its soil since its disastrous fight with Iraq in the 1980s, and trauma from that conflict, which claimed tens of thousands of lives, lingers today.

More concretely, Iran is struggling with widespread domestic discontent over its repression of dissent and a weak economy battered by U.S. and other international sanctions. After the Oct. 1 ballistic attack on Israel, the European Union went so far as to sanction the Iranian airline, making it impossible for its planes to land in most European destinations.

Iran must calculate how to save face by standing up to Israel, analysts say, yet minimize antagonizing the West as it seeks sanctions relief and possibly new negotiations over the Iran nuclear deal, drafted and signed by President Obama and six other world powers but jettisoned by President Trump.

Above all else, analysts say, Iran's priority is the survival of the Islamic Republic and its government.

Sanam Vakil, a Middle East analyst at Chatham House in London, said Iran will be reluctant to openly attack Israel now because its military reputation has suffered recently. (Most of the ballistic missiles it hurled at Israel were intercepted and damage was minimal.) Instead, Tehran will shift focus to Gaza as a rallying point and use its diplomatic arm to attempt to deepen Israel's isolation, Vakil said.

Despite those factors, the moment remains volatile, Vakil said. "Both Israel and Iran are in reactive mode, and the terms and conditions of their long adversarial relationship have been redefined," she said on X. "Without guardrails, red lines or a strategy to de-escalate, further conflict remains in the cards."

Times staff writer Wilkinson reported from Washington and special correspondent Mostaghim from Tehran.

## Vatican reform effort disappoints gender equity hopes

Conclusion of process falls short of goals of many seeking greater role for women in Catholic Church.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

VATICAN CITY — A years-long process to reform the Catholic Church closed Saturday with recommendations that fell short of hopes that women would be given more equity.

Pope Francis said he would not issue a teaching document from the recommendations, which called for women to be allowed all opportunities that church law already provides while leaving open the contentious question of allowing women to be ordained as

deacons.

As a result, it remains unclear what, if any, authority or impact the synod's final recommendations will have, given that the purpose of the exercise was to provide the pope with specific proposals on reform.

Francis said he would continue to listen to the bishops' counsel, adding that "this is not a classic way of endlessly delaying decisions."

The Vatican's top doctrinal officer, Cardinal Victor Manuel Fernandez, told an assembly of bishops and laypeople earlier that the pontiff said the moment for allowing ordination of women as deacons in the church "is not ripe."

The synod process had sparked great hopes for change, especially for women, who have long complained that they are treated

as second-class citizens in the church. Women are barred from the priesthood and the highest ministerial positions in the Catholic Church, yet do the lion's share of the work running Catholic hospitals and schools and passing the faith onto future generations.

Deacons perform many of the same functions as priests, such as presiding over baptisms, weddings and funerals, but they cannot celebrate Mass. Advocates say allowing women to be deacons would help offset the shortage of priests. Opponents say it would signal the start of a slippery slope toward ordaining women to the all-male priesthood that Francis has repeatedly reaffirmed.

Speaking to the synod on Thursday, Fernandez explained that a special work-

ing group would continue beyond the closing of the meeting, but that its focus would be on discussing the role of women in the church — not in the diaconate.

He added that while working with women in previous pastoral roles, "most did not ask for or want the diaconate, which would be cumbersome for their lay work."

He did not respond directly to a request to define what would determine "ripeness" for a greater role for women.

The outcome is a disappointment for Catholics who have been campaigning for recognition that women share a spiritual calling that is no different from a man's.

"I think the final document will be received with much disappointment and frustration by many women

around the world who are hoping for concrete changes," said Kate McElwee, the executive director of the Women's Ordination Conference.

The first phase of the synod process ended last year by concluding it was "urgent" to guarantee fuller participation by women in church governance positions, and calling for theological and pastoral research to continue about allowing women to be deacons.

The idea of allowing women to be deacons gained attention during the debate.

Francis, though, had other ideas, contending that ordaining women would "clericalize" them and that there were plenty of other ways to empower women in the church, even leading Catholic communities, without ordination.

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# Opposition disputes vote in Republic of Georgia

Election result may decide whether to join EU or revert to Russia's orbit.

By Emma Burrows

TBILISI, Georgia — The Republic of Georgia's opposition disputed the results of the country's parliamentary election Saturday after officials said the ruling party led the crucial vote, which could decide whether the country pivots to embrace the West or falls back into Russia's orbit.

Many Georgians viewed the vote as a make-or-break referendum on the opportunity to join the European Union. Initial figures suggest turnout is the highest since the ruling Georgian Dream party was first elected in 2012.

Georgia's Central Election Commission said Georgian Dream won 52.99% with the majority of votes counted. Not all paper ballots and votes cast by Georgians abroad have been counted, and it is unclear when a final result could be announced.

Georgian Dream stood against four main opposition groups, which indicated they did not accept the results. The opposition initially declared victory shortly after polls closed at 8 p.m. local time.

If Georgian Dream's win is confirmed, the party will have a parliamentary majority, which will stoke fears about the country's bid for EU membership. The party has become increasingly authoritarian, adopting laws that are similar to those used by Russia to crack down on freedom of speech. After one such law was passed earlier this year, Brussels suspended Georgia's EU membership process.

Bidzina Ivanishvili, the founder of Georgian Dream, claimed victory almost immediately after polls closed

and said, "It is rare in the world for the same party to achieve such success in such a difficult situation."

Tina Bokuchava, the chair of the United National Movement opposition party, accused the election commission of carrying out Ivanishvili's "dirty order" and said he "stole the victory from the Georgian people and thereby stole the European future."

She indicated the opposition would not recognize the results and "will fight like never before to reclaim our European future."

Georgian electoral observers who stationed thousands of people across the country to monitor the vote said there were multiple violations and the results "do not correspond to the will of the Georgian people."

The parliamentary campaign in the South Caucasus nation of 3.7 million people bordering Russia has been dominated by foreign policy and marked by a bitter fight for votes and allegations of a smear campaign.

Some Georgians complained of intimidation and being pressured to vote for Georgian Dream, while the opposition accused the party of carrying out a "hybrid war" against its citizens.

The biggest opposition party, United National Movement, said its headquarters came under attack on polling day. Georgian media also reported two people were hospitalized after being attacked outside polling stations in two cities.

There were also reports of multiple voting irregularities.

One video shared on social media Saturday also showed a man stuffing ballots into a box at a polling station in Marneuli. Georgia's Interior Ministry said it launched an investigation and the Central Election Commission said a criminal case had been opened and that all results from the polling station would be declared invalid.

Before the election, Ivan-

ishvili — a shadowy billionaire who set up Georgian Dream and made his fortune in Russia — vowed to ban opposition parties, should his party win, and hold them "fully accountable" for "war crimes." He did not explain what crimes he believes the opposition has committed or offer evidence.

Many believe the election may be the most crucial vote since Georgia gained independence following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

Georgians want "European integration, want to move forward and want policies which will bring us a better, more stable, future," Kristine Tordia, 29, told the Associated Press shortly after voting in Tbilisi.

Around 80% of Georgians favor joining the EU, according to polls, and the country's constitution obliges its leaders to pursue membership in that bloc and NATO.

But Brussels put Georgia's bid for entry to the EU on hold indefinitely after the ruling party passed a "Russian law" cracking down on freedom of speech in June. Many Georgians fear the party is dragging the country toward authoritarianism and killing off hopes it could join the EU.

The election is "not just about changing government, it is about whether Georgia survives or not because Ivanishvili's government means Russia," said Nika Gvaramia, leader of Coalition for Change, an opposition group.

Ivanishvili voted Saturday morning under heavy security. He did not respond when asked by the AP if he wanted to form an alliance with Russia.

Opposition parties told voters they would pursue EU membership even though laws passed by Georgian Dream have put that hope on hold.

Burrows writes for the Associated Press. AP producer Sophiko Megrelidze contributed to this report.

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## THE NATION

## Beyoncé backs abortion rights at rally for Harris

While vice president tries to sway voters in Texas on reproductive freedom, Trump talks about border security.

BY JENNY JARVIE  
AND KEVIN RECTOR

Deadlocked in the polls less than two weeks before election day, Vice President Kamala Harris and former President Trump headed to staunchly Republican Texas on Friday in a bid to sway undecided voters by focusing on the key issues of abortion and border security.

Texas is not a pivotal 2024 battleground. Polling averages compiled by FiveThirtyEight.com show Trump with a 6.8-percentage-point lead in the state over Harris. But the Democrat's foray into Texas was less about flipping that state blue than issuing a national warning on reproductive rights from a part of the country that her campaign dubs the epicenter of GOP abortion bans.

After being introduced by pop megastar Beyoncé and fellow Destiny's Child star Kelly Rowland — who are Texans — Harris came out to Beyoncé's song "Freedom" and delivered a speech in which she told stories of young women suffering and dying after being denied abortions.

She blamed the suffering of those women on Trump and the three conservative justices he appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court, which undid long-standing federal abortion protections under Roe vs. Wade in 2022. And she said there are many other women out there who have suffered similarly.

"There are so many stories we've never heard, an untold number of women and the people who love them who are silently suffering, women who are being



BEYONCÉ, right, and fellow Destiny's Child star Kelly Rowland walk on stage during a campaign event for Vice President Kamala Harris on Friday in Houston.

made to feel as though they did something wrong, as though they are criminals, as though they are alone," Harris said. "And to those women, I say — and I think I speak on behalf of all of us — we see you, and we are here with you."

Harris blasted Trump for bragging about toppling Roe, and called him the "architect" of a resulting "health crisis" playing out across the country. She said he erased "half a century of hard-fought progress for women" during his last term, and now wants to go further with a national abortion ban.

Harris noted that Texas officials are suing for the right to demand the private healthcare records of women who leave the state for abortion care in other states, and said, "Simply put, they are out of their minds."

Before Harris spoke, Beyoncé and Rowland — and Beyoncé's mother, Tina Knowles — roused the large crowd into raucous cheers.

Beyoncé said it was time for America to "sing a new song," for young girls to live in a world where they see no ceiling, and for Harris to be elected to a historic presidency.

"We are at the precipice of an incredible shift, the brink of history," she said. "I'm not here as a celebrity. I'm not here as a politician. I'm here as a mother — a mother who cares deeply about the world my children and all of our children live in, a world where we have the freedom to control our bodies."

Trump, who has repeatedly shifted his position on abortion, has recently denied that he would push for a federal abortion ban. At the beginning of this month, the former president wrote on

Truth Social that he did not support such a ban "and would, in fact, veto it" because he believes it is up to the states to decide. He added that he supports exceptions for rape, incest and to save the life of the woman.

But Trump was not scheduled to talk about abortion when he spoke from a private airplane hangar in Austin. Instead, he delivered remarks on border security and crime in a state that he said had "turned into ground zero for the largest border invasion in the history of the world."

"Over the past four years, this state has become Kamala's staging ground to import her army of migrant gangs and illegal alien criminals into every state in America — and every state's a border state, you've heard that, it's true — paving a trail of bloodshed, suffering and death all across our land,"

Trump said. "And it's only getting worse."

The former president made the false claim that "many" of the millions of migrants who illegally entered the U.S. over the last 3½ years "are murderers, drug dealers, people from jails." In fact, research shows people living in the U.S. illegally are arrested at significantly lower rates for violent, drug and property crimes than native-born Americans.

"We're like a dumping ground," Trump said. "What Kamala Harris has done on our border is cruel, it's vile, and it's absolutely heartless."

Trump highlighted crimes committed by migrants living illegally in Texas, including two Venezuelan men charged with sexually assaulting and strangling to death Jocelyn Nungaray, a 12-year-old girl in Houston. He invited Alexis Nungaray, Jocelyn's mother, to speak about her daughter, who was a rising seventh-grader.

"The Biden-Harris policies we have here are why she's not here anymore," Nungaray said. "They made her a target and ran with that, and now I will forever be a grieving mother, and my son will forever be a grieving brother who will no longer get to grow up with his sister."

She added that Harris never reached out to give her condolences, but days before the election had tried to apologize. "I think it's very sad," she said, "that she can't even just give me an open... sincere apology."

If elected, Trump has said he would deport millions of immigrants living in the U.S. illegally and carry out the "largest deportation operation in American history." But his campaign has offered few details.

Speaking to reporters in Houston, Harris criticized Trump for comments he made Thursday and again Friday, dubbing the U.S. a

"garbage can for the world" because of the Biden-Harris administration's immigration policies.

"This is someone who is a former president of the United States who has a bully pulpit, and this is how he uses it — to tell the rest of the world that somehow the United States of America is trash," Harris said.

In the final weeks of the campaign, polls show Trump and Harris neck and neck. A national poll released Friday by the New York Times and Siena College found Harris and Trump deadlocked at 48% to 48%. Polling averages by FiveThirtyEight.com show Harris leading Trump nationally by 1.5 percentage points, well within the margin of error.

Harris' rally was crowded for hours before she or Beyoncé appeared, with various speakers taking the stage to talk about reproductive healthcare. Screens and signs around the stage carried the messages "Freedom," "Trust Women" and "Vote for Reproductive Freedom."

Rep. Colin Allred (D-Texas), who is challenging Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas), praised Harris for "shining a light" on the dangers facing Texas women and told the crowd he would help restore abortion protections nationally if they helped him beat Cruz. Multiple Texas women and families spoke about the dangers they have faced because of Texas' abortion restrictions since the fall of Roe, which they blamed on Trump and his Supreme Court appointees.

Shanette Williams, the mother of Amber Nicole Thurman, a Georgia woman who died after doctors refused her a routine medical procedure after she took abortion pills and developed an infection, directly blamed Trump.

"My daughter is gone because of what Donald Trump did," she said.

## Trump leaves supporters waiting 3 hours for Joe Rogan podcast

Many depart before the GOP nominee finally shows on a cold night at a rally on a Michigan tarmac.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

TRAVERSE CITY, Mich. — Many of Donald Trump's supporters left a Michigan rally before his arrival because the former president kept them waiting for three hours while he was interviewed for a popular podcast.

Those who remained at the outdoor rally on an airport tarmac huddled in the cold Friday night as they waited for the Republican nominee to touch down in the battleground state.

Trump apologized to the crowd for the delay, which he blamed on an interview with Joe Rogan, the nation's most listened-to podcaster and an influential voice with younger male voters, whom Trump is aggressively courting.

The interview, taped in Austin, Texas, was released Friday night and ran three hours, with Trump telling many familiar stories but also engaging with Rogan on topics such as UFOs.

Minutes before Trump's Michigan rally was scheduled to begin at 7:30 p.m., his spokesman posted on the social media platform X that Trump was just leaving Texas, more than two hours away by air.

Trump recorded a video from his plane urging his supporters to wait for him, promising: "We're going to



PAUL SANCYA Associated Press

TRUMP sent a video urging the crowd to sit tight and promising: "We're going to have a good time tonight."

have a good time tonight."

Trump eventually took the stage at the Traverse City airport, where temperatures dipped to about 50 degrees. The remaining mem-

bers of the crowd erupted into cheers as video screens showed Trump's plane arriving and then him walking down its steps.

"I am so sorry," he said.

"We got so tied up, and I figured you wouldn't mind too much, because we're trying to win."

Those who remained had bundled up, some covered by blankets, as they waited for him to land. The crowd sounded and looked disengaged as North Dakota Gov. Doug Burgum and former Michigan Republican gubernatorial candidate Tudor Dixon tried to kill time onstage. Hats were thrown into the crowd.

Among those who stuck around were John and Cheryl Sowash, who live in Traverse City and arrived at the airport at 4 p.m.

"Things happen," John Sowash said. "He spoke to a lot more people talking to Joe Rogan than he did here."

Cheryl Sowash said she was worried about Trump, who had missed speaking to

the full crowd in Michigan.

"He's gonna be disappointed, because there were twice as many people here. He missed it," she said.

Trump's interview with Rogan was part of the Republican nominee's strategy of appearing on podcasts targeting young male voters and tapping surrogates who sometimes use crude language.

Rogan pressed Trump on whether he's "completely committed" to bringing Robert F. Kennedy Jr. into his administration.

"Oh, I completely am," Trump responded, but added that he and Kennedy disagree on environmental policies. He said he'll tell Kennedy to "focus on health" and "do whatever" he wants to in that arena.

Kennedy has been spread skeptic — and sometime falsehoods — about vaccines, rejecting the overwhelming consensus among scientists that the benefits of inoculation outweigh the risk of rare side effects.

Trump again seemed to entertain the idea of eliminating federal income taxes, saying, "Yeah, sure, why not?" when Rogan asked whether he was serious about doing so.

He also repeated at length his unfounded grievances about the 2020 election, and said, "If I win, this will be my last election."

As for UFOs, Trump said he's "never been a believer" in theories about extraterrestrial life visiting Earth. He said he is asked frequently about what the U.S. government knows about "the people coming from space." He said that as president he was told "a lot," but he dodged the host's entreaties to discuss alien life in detail.

Trump also called Chinese President Xi Jinping a "brilliant guy, whether you like it or not."

The podcaster is known for his lengthy interviews on "The Joe Rogan Experience," which Spotify's charts list as No. 1 in the U.S. The host calls women "chicks," once laughed as a comedian friend on his show described repeatedly coercing young female comics into sex.

## Trump piles new threats on top of his old 2020 election lies

BY KEVIN RECTOR

With less than a week left in the presidential race, former President Trump has once again questioned U.S. election integrity — pairing long-debunked lies about the 2020 election being stolen from him with equally baseless claims of fresh cheating.

In a post Friday on his social media platform Truth Social, the Republican presidential nominee wrote that there was "rampant Cheating and Skulduggery" in 2020; that he and his allies are watching closely for similar problems in the current race; and that, if he wins, those involved in such "unscrupulous behavior" will be "sought out, caught, and prosecuted at levels, unfortunately, never seen before in our Country."

Trump's remarks echoed claims he has made without proof that U.S. elections have been corrupted, drawing renewed condemnation from election experts.

"Sadly we have seen this playbook before," said Sophia Lin Lakin, director of the

Voting Rights Project at the American Civil Liberties Union, which is fighting legal challenges to voter access initiatives and protections nationwide.

"Trump is doubling down on setting the groundwork to question and try to overturn the election if it doesn't go his way," Lakin said. "His threats of prosecution sound [like] authoritarianism and should concern all who care about preserving our democratic institutions."

Sean Morales-Doyle, director of the Voting Rights Program at the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University, said it was important not to repeat Trump's claims but to refute them, because they are not grounded in fact and undermine the electoral system by driving down trust and participation among voters.

"Not only are these lies, but there is every reason to have confidence in the system, and the only way to make the system work is participating in it," Morales-Doyle said.

He said that while the election system has been

tested heavily in recent years — including by Trump and his followers, who have faced criminal charges for trying to subvert the last presidential vote — it has shown itself to be "actually quite strong and resilient."

"Voters should know they can trust our elections, their votes are safe, and we will have results we can trust after Nov. 5," Morales-Doyle said.

Neither Trump's campaign nor Kamala Harris' responded to requests for comment Friday. The Democratic nominee has previously said Trump's 2020 election denial proves he's unfit for office.

Some experts said Trump's remarks were particularly brazen given it is Trump and his supporters who have been credibly accused of trying to overturn an election, including by storming the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021. Many are serving prison terms for crimes related to that effort.

Special counsel Jack Smith is pursuing a case against Trump on allegations of a sweeping criminal conspiracy to deny and sub-

vert the 2020 election.

Trump and his allies went to great lengths to find proof of substantive election fraud or irregularities in 2020 but failed. State election officials, independent election experts and most Americans agree today that President Biden's victory was legitimate.

Trump then "resorted to crimes to try to stay in office," Smith alleged in a filing last month detailing allegations that Trump had conducted a "pressure campaign" targeting GOP leaders, election officials and election workers in states where he lost, in an effort to change their results.

The filing also accuses Trump of personally setting into motion and monitoring a plan to have fake slates of electors cast state electoral votes for him instead of Joe Biden; and of continuing his "stream of disinformation" Jan. 6 by falsely suggesting then-Vice President Mike Pence could halt the certification of Biden's victory.

Trump also was charged by Georgia prosecutors with trying to subvert the state's 2020 election.

Trump has called the cases bogus, and Smith's case a "SCAM."

In his post Friday, Trump said those facing "legal exposure" in his threatened crackdown would include lawyers, political operatives, donors, illegal voters and "corrupt election officials."

Morales-Doyle, of NYU's Voting Rights Program, said Trump's warnings were particularly alarming given they were paired with his meritless claims about 2020.

"It is very troubling to hear someone suggest that they would use prosecutorial power that way and go after people for what I have to assume would be political purposes — because we know that all of the statements about fraud in our elections that he is making are false," he said.

Morales-Doyle has raised similar concerns about the Heritage Foundation's Project 2025, saying it promotes the idea of conservatives using the Justice Department to go after political rivals, including those who support voter access measures.

He called such ideas "appalling."



Photographs by BRIAN VAN DER BRUG Los Angeles Times

**BISHOP**, a dusty crossroads of about 3,800 people, has exploded in popularity with tourists. But in Mayor Jose Garcia's time there, "the city has not grown at all."

# In wide-open region, workers live in vans

[Space. from A1]

even in this big, beckoning land full of wide-open spaces, there's almost nowhere else for working people to live.

Official statistics are hard to come by, but Markstein spitballs the percentage of hourly workers in Mammoth Lakes who are living in cars and vans as "less than 50 but more than 20." In every place she's worked since moving here, she said, "there have been at least two of us living in our vans."

Like so many others, she tries to hide that uncomfortable truth from tourists so as not to shatter their fantasy about escaping to an untroubled mountain paradise. But it takes effort.

"I had to play the part of the fine dining expert, like, I know my wines and I know good food," she said with an easy, infectious grin. "But you haven't showered in a week and a half and you're putting deodorant on, and all these sprays, trying to make yourself look like you don't live in your car."

The notion of an acute housing shortage in this wild and sparsely populated region — there are about four people per square mile in Mono County and fewer than two per square mile in neighboring Inyo County — can be hard to wrap your head around.

It's due, in large part, to the fact that more than 90% of the land is owned by conservation-minded government agencies: the U.S. Forest Service, the federal Bureau of Land Management and, most controversially, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.

Those large, distant bureaucracies have little interest in making land available to the fast-growing ranks of outdoor enthusiasts — hikers, climbers, skiers, anglers with fly rods — flocking to this mostly unspoiled part of California near the Nevada border.

So when any sliver of private land or an already existing home hits the market, there's usually a longline of well-to-do professionals and would-be Airbnb investors from coastal cities ready to drive the price out of reach for even the most industrious working people. As a result, essential workers are left out in the cold.

"That has always been a problem here," said Mammoth Lakes Mayor Pro Tem Chris Bubser. But it has become noticeably worse since the pandemic, when so many well-paid professionals discovered they could work from anywhere, and so many long-term rental units became Airbnbs to accommodate them.

Now, Bubser said, the lack of affordable housing is a full-blown crisis making it almost impossible for hourly workers, and even some salaried professionals, to keep a traditional roof over their heads.

Last year, the schools made job offers to four teachers, but three had to say no because they couldn't find anywhere to live, Bubser said.

"Our community is hollowing out, and it's going to be catastrophic down the line," Bubser said. "We want people to come and raise a family in this amazing place. It feels terrible that it's not for everybody."

The economics of resort towns, where tourists go to play and most everyone local hustles to get by, have been hard on working people for decades. It's the same in ski towns throughout the American West: Lake Tahoe, Vail, Aspen, Park City.

But the Eastern Sierra's housing crunch stretches well beyond



**A CITY OF** Los Angeles private property sign warns would-be campers near Buttermilk Country in the Eastern Sierra. The notion of a housing shortage in such a region can be difficult to fathom.

the confines of Mammoth Lakes.

A 40-minute drive south on U.S. 395 descends more than 3,000 vertical feet to the floor of the Owens Valley and fills your windshield with one of the most sweeping and expansive views in the country. Snowy peaks tumble down to steep granite walls. The walls descend to lush green pastures. The pastures give way to high desert that stretches toward the horizon.

The most breathtaking part? In all of that wide open space, there's still essentially nowhere to live.

"It's just insane," said Jose Garcia, mayor of Bishop, a dusty crossroads of about 3,800 people at the bottom of the hill.

Garcia has lived in Bishop for 35 years and has watched the once-sleepy ranching outpost explode in

popularity with adventure-loving tourists: hikers and climbers in the summer, anglers and leaf-peepers in the fall, skiers in the winter. Tourism is by far the biggest industry, he said.

But in all his time there, "the city has not grown at all," Garcia said.

That's because almost all of the land in and around Bishop is owned by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, Garcia said.

More than a century ago, when it became clear the booming metropolis 300 miles to the south would very quickly dry up its own meager water supplies, its agents fanned out across the Owens Valley, buying up every acre they could find to secure rights to the precious

snowmelt that flows down from the mountains each spring.

Today, the DWP owns about 250,000 acres in Inyo County, where Bishop is located.

"We are basically landlocked," said an exasperated Garcia over coffee earlier this month, as soft morning light bathed the mountains in every direction.

California has a dozen summits higher than 14,000 feet; the trailheads leading to 11 of them are within about an hour of where he sat.

"Bishop would be like Santa Monica" if the city had room to grow, he said. "People would come from all over because of the beauty of this place."

Adam Perez, the DWP's top manager in the Owens Valley, said it's easy to point the finger at his agency and blame it for the stagnation. But the DWP manages the land responsibly, he said. The overarching mission remains what it always was — to send the water down to Los Angeles — but the department works hard to be more than just "bullies that are trying to push people around," he said.

The agency allows hiking, hunting, fishing and camping on most of its land, he pointed out.

And if you're lucky enough to own one of the existing houses, he said, you might like the fact that your view across that incredible landscape is never going to be marred by "a big housing tract" plunked down in the middle of it.

"You're always going to have a protected view," Perez said.

If Perez is at the top of the local pecking order, the young climbers who flock to Bishop from around the globe to train on world-class crags in Buttermilk Country and the Owens River Gorge are near the bottom.

The Mammoth Gear Exchange, a secondhand sporting goods shop on a corner of Bishop's main intersection, is a local landmark and regular haunt for climbers. On a recent weekday morning, a handful of the shop's employees agreed with at least some of what Perez said: They love that Bishop remains so remote and that it hasn't succumbed to suburban sprawl as have climbing meccas near Denver

and Boulder.

But all of them have spent long stretches living out of their vans, even after they decided to give up the itinerant life of a hard-core traveling climber and tried to put down roots.

One, who asked to be identified only by his first name, Peter, to avoid attracting attention from parking enforcement, said he had been living in a van since making the trek from Ohio to California 2½ years ago. His girlfriend lives with him.

They're in no rush to start paying rent, he said, but it didn't take much prompting to get him to rattle off a long list of the difficulties.

"When you've lived in a house your whole life, you don't realize how much you value your own space," he said, choosing his words carefully. Forget about getting anything delivered from Amazon.

"It seems like the whole system is set up" for people who live in houses, he said, "like, you're supposed to have a permanent address."

He sounded almost mystical when his thoughts turned to the comforts of indoor plumbing. "Just having warm water to wash your hands on demand," he said. "Like, you just turn the dial."

Back up the hill in Mammoth, Markstein's description of van life also frequently circled back to the issue of plumbing.

"During COVID, I was showering in the creek," she said, because social distancing requirements made invitations to use indoor bathrooms hard to come by. "Right now, I rotate through my friends' houses to get my weekly shower."

Then, realizing how that might sound to an audience of the uninitiated, she added: "For many people that's pretty gross, but for people living in a van it's kind of normal."

During her stint as a tree trimmer, she guessed about 70% of the properties she worked on sat empty because they were either second homes or unoccupied Airbnbs. That was immensely "frustrating" for someone working her butt off, living in a van, she said.

But maybe nothing is as frustrating for van lifers, or occupies as big a chunk of their daily bandwidth, as the question of where to find a toilet.

At one point, a few of her friends worked at an organic coffee shop on Main Street called Stellar Brew. It had a comfortable, welcoming vibe. Word spread quickly. Before long, Markstein said, she'd go there in the morning and see "10 vans lined up" in the parking lot.

The inside joke was: "Have a stellar poo at Stellar Brew."

The shop's general manager, Nikki Lee, had nothing but sympathy and praise for the van lifers.

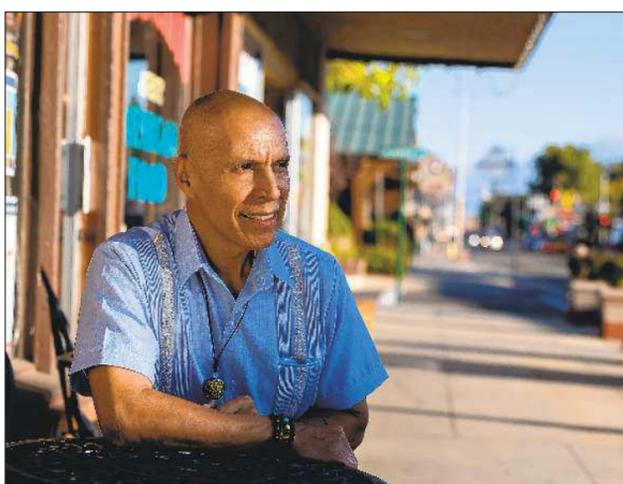
The housing situation is so precarious for working people in Mammoth, Lee said, she actually prefers job candidates who live in their vans. Their lives are more stable than people engaged in the almost always losing battle of trying to hold on to an apartment in a town where rent is often upward of \$4,000 a month and constantly rising.

A current full-time baker at the shop, who used to be a kindergarten teacher, lives in his van, Lee said.

"I don't ever let that be a deterrent for hiring," Lee said, "because I know that the folks that live in their van, they can make the commitment to stay."

'We want people to come and raise a family in this amazing place. It feels terrible that it's not for everybody.'

— CHRIS BUBSER, mayor pro tem of Mammoth Lakes



**'BISHOP** would be like Santa Monica" if the city had room to grow, said Garcia, the mayor, who has lived there for 35 years.

# Latino voters in state hold sway in key House races

[Latino, from A1] In the 13th Congressional District, which is centered in Merced County and stretches from Lathrop to Coalinga, 50% of all eligible voters are Latino. In the 22nd Congressional District, encompassing portions of Kern, Kings and Tulare counties, that share is 59%. And in the 27th Congressional District, which spans northern Los Angeles County from Santa Clarita to the Kern County line, it's 33%.

The races for those seats — currently occupied by Republicans in districts President Biden won in 2020 — are critical to determining which party will control Congress next year and, by extension, how much the next president will achieve while in the White House.

If Democrats flip just four seats held by Republicans across the country, they would take back control of the U.S. House. In California, home to six tight congressional races, winning could come down to who appeals to the most Latino residents.

Latino voters are an increasingly influential and diverse bloc that draws power from multiple sources. Voting trends vary widely between Mexican Americans and Cuban Americans, for instance. But in California, a poll of 1,000 Latino voters released this month by the Latino Community Foundation found that Democratic challengers in the 13th, 22nd and 27th congressional districts all hold significant leads over their Republican opponents, with around a quarter of voters still undecided.

In these districts, Latino voters overwhelmingly cite cost of living, the economy and concerns about jobs as the top issues facing the country, according to the poll.

"Latino voters in California's competitive districts will play a crucial role in determining the balance of power in the U.S. House of Representatives," said Julián Castro, chief executive of the Latino Community Foundation.

Matt Barreto, who founded the Latino Policy and Politics Institute at UCLA and a political polling firm that works for the California Democratic Party, said the ingredients are there for a heightened Latino turnout this year be-

cause of the historic presidential campaign of Vice President Kamala Harris, the state's former attorney general and U.S. senator. But it's up to the candidates to convert that into votes.

Baretto cautioned that those Democratic candidates have to overcome historic underinvestment in regions such as the San Joaquin Valley, which has led to lower voter registration and turnout among Latinos compared with other racial and ethnic groups.

Campaigns and political groups are getting creative to court Latino voters. Democrat George Whitesides, who is vying to represent District 27, held a "balloons and burritos" event last week in Palmdale.

The California Republican Party has opened three Latino community centers, in Palmdale, Bakersfield and Merced, since 2022.

The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee held a fight night watch party last month in Atwater for Mexican boxer Canelo Álvarez.

And the Republican National Committee staffs a Latino regional engagement coordinator in Bakersfield, a man who was born in Mexico and became a U.S. citizen in March.

Those efforts — and the energy surrounding the presidential election — appear to be helping the campaigns make inroads with voters. Democratic Assemblymember Adam Gray, who is trying to oust Rep. John Duarte (R-Modesto) in the 13th District, said he's had more volunteers in this campaign than in any other over the last 12 years. Salas said he's on pace to raise twice what he raised last cycle, when he lost to Valadao in 2022 by 3 percentage points.

The LIBRE Initiative Action, a national conservative Latino political organization, is helping Duarte and other California Republican candidates. LIBRE President Daniel Garza said both parties took notice after the last election saw eight Latino Republicans flip blue House seats nationwide.

"For the most part, the Republican Party just did a very inadequate job, I think, of connecting with the Latino community," he said. "That is no longer the case. What you're seeing is much more investment. Groups



BRIAN VAN DER BRUG / Los Angeles Times

SEVERAL of California's most competitive congressional races are in districts with significant Latino populations. Above, resident Victor Roche deposits his ballot in a drop box at Domenic Massari Park in Palmdale.

**'Democrats are ill prepared because what they want to talk about all the time is immigration and racism. Most Hispanics don't think we're racist and most Hispanics want to secure the border.'**

— DUANE DICHARA, campaign spokesman for Rep. John Duarte (R-Modesto)

like ours, who are center right, are driving a different conversation about policy in a different direction, pointing to different candidates. So it's game on."

In close races such as Duarte's, which he won in 2022 by just 564 votes, every vote is worth gold, Garza said.

That fact isn't taken lightly by locals such as Eliseo Gamiño, who heads the Central Valley Leadership Round Table, a coalition of Latino community leaders and elected officials. Earlier this year, the group issued their first-ever GOP endorsement in favor of Duarte over his opponent, Gray. It's not a ringing endorsement, though.

"*Cual es el menos peor* — which is the least worst?" he said. "Because none of them are the ideal candidate."

Gamiño pointed to Gray's ad featuring long-time Merced County Sheriff Vern Warnke, who previously cooperated with immigration authorities seeking

custody of jail inmates for deportation. No incarcerated immigrants have been transferred to federal authorities for the last two years, according to the Merced Focus.

Gamiño contrasted that with an ad by Duarte's campaign that features a Latino family playing the Mexican bingo game *lotería*. He said it's clear that Duarte knows he needs Latino voters, and many in the community are disillusioned with the Democratic Party's inability to pass immigration reform.

"Hispanics don't forget that," Gamiño said of the sheriff. "Duarte is doing more in regards to talking about bringing families out of the shadows. You've got to give him credit."

Duarte broke with most Republicans last year when he voted against the hard-line Secure the Border Act, citing a desire to protect the Valley's farmworkers who lack U.S. citizenship. Last year, he co-sponsored a bill that would establish a path to permanent residence for immigrants who arrived in the U.S. as children. Gray has said he supports comprehensive immigration reform that includes a path to citizenship. As a California assemblyman, he voted for a 2017 bill that prohibited landlords from disclosing tenants' immigration status.

This month, the Mendota Chamber of Commerce hosted a Spanish-language debate for Duarte and Gray, but only Duarte showed up. Gray said he wasn't invited until a couple of days before, and when his campaign said he couldn't make it, the chamber didn't offer to reschedule.

"My opponent is running a campaign trying to mislead voters," Gray said.

"They're trying to get in with the Latino community despite the fact that he helped to kill the compromise immigration reform bill."

The bipartisan Border Act of 2024, which was opposed by many progressives because it did not include a path to citizenship, failed in the Senate after former President Trump pressured Republicans to abandon support for it. It was never brought to a vote in the House.

Duarte spokesman Duane Dichara said his campaign has focused on reaching Latinos, who he said are moving quickly to the right politically.

"Democrats are ill prepared because what they want to talk about all the time is immigration and racism," Dichara said. "Most Hispanics don't think we're racist and most Hispanics want to secure the border."

Because California's swing district races may decide which party controls the House, money and attention are in ample supply.

The Democratic National Committee recently announced it had made a six-figure investment for a media campaign targeting diverse constituencies, including Latinos, in California districts with competitive House races. And the top House GOP super PAC dropped more than \$4 million on TV ads to help Republican candidates in competitive California races, including \$250,000 on Spanish-language ads.

Battleground California, the first statewide independent expenditure coalition targeting competitive races in districts with substantial shares of Latino, Asian and Black voters, also has spent \$4 million toward its goal of a Democratic-controlled Congress.

The campaigns for the California swing seats, however, are more grounded in local issues and the individual, personal appeal of the candidates.

"Latino voters are Americans who love this country and deserve security like every American," said Rep. Mike Garcia (R-Santa Clarita). "For my campaign, this isn't an 'outreach' program as I am literally part of this community."

Salas, the son of farmworkers, hopes to become the first Latino in Congress to represent the Central Valley.

His campaign has partnered with organizers from United Farm Workers, who are helping him connect with hard-to-reach voters.

"I tell people, 'Look, I'm just a Central Valley kid. I used to wake up early in the morning to go out and work with my dad in the fields and in construction,'" he said. "We know we have support in the community, it's just about getting them to turn in the ballot."

Back at Communities for a New California, Sosa Nunez, the woman phone banking on Salas' behalf, was routed to another voter. This time, a 22-year-old woman answered in Spanish. Sosa Nunez told her Salas is in favor of women's reproductive rights, including access to abortion.

"I'm not in favor of that procedure," the woman replied.

Sosa Nunez asked how much power the woman thinks her vote has to make a difference in her community.

"*Nada*," she said. None.

One in three voters in the 22nd District is Latina, Sosa Nunez told her.

"Our vote can really impact elections," she said. "I recommend that you do your research — and vote."

# Why the reported talks between Musk and Putin matter

Calls raise national security issues because of SpaceX's government contracts.

BY DAVID KLEPPER AND LISA MASCARO

WASHINGTON — Elon Musk, the billionaire owner of major government contractor SpaceX and a key ally of Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump, has been in regular contact with Russian President Vladimir Putin for the last two years, the Wall Street Journal reported.

A person familiar with the situation, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the sensitive matter, confirmed to the Associated Press that Musk and Putin have had contact through calls. The person didn't provide additional details about the frequency of the calls, when they occurred or their content.

Musk, the world's richest man who also owns Tesla and the social platform X, has emerged as a leading voice on the American right. He's poured millions of dollars into Trump's presidential bid and turned the platform once known as Twitter into a site popular with Trump supporters, as well as conspiracy theorists, extremists and Russian propagandists.

Musk's contacts with Putin raise national security

questions, given his companies' work for the government, and highlight concerns about Russian influence in American politics.

Here's what to know:

## What Musk and Putin talked about

Musk and Putin have spoken repeatedly about personal matters, business and geopolitics, the Journal has reported, citing multiple current and former officials in the U.S., Europe and Russia.

During one talk, Putin asked Musk not to activate his Starlink satellite system over Taiwan as a favor for Chinese President Xi Jinping, whose ties to Putin have grown closer, the Journal reported. Putin and Xi have met more than 40 times since 2013.

Russia has denied the conversations took place. In 2022, Musk said he'd only spoken to Putin once, in a call 18 months earlier focused on space.

The Chinese Embassy in Washington said Friday that it was "not aware of the specifics" of any requests made by Putin on China's behalf.

There was no immediate response to messages left with X and Tesla seeking Musk's comment.

## National security implications

Musk's relationship with Putin raises national security questions given the bil-

ions of dollars in government contracts awarded to SpaceX, a crucial partner to NASA and government satellite programs.

Trump also has vowed to give Musk a role in his administration if he wins next month.

Former U.S. Ambassador to Russia Michael McFaul said it's unusual for business leaders to be in contact with Putin without informing U.S. authorities. While corporate chiefs may often interact with foreign leaders, Putin stands apart, given his invasion of Ukraine, McFaul said.

"He's a war criminal who is slaughtering civilians. That makes this wrong in my view," McFaul said of Musk's talks with Putin. "You have to decide what team you are on. Are you on the American team or are you on the Russian team?"

Putin's request on Starlink as a favor to China is likely to get attention, given U.S. support for Taiwan and concerns about the growing partnership between the Kremlin and Beijing.

Musk, whose Tesla operates a gigafactory in Shanghai, has developed a close relationship with China's leaders. His remarks about China have been friendly, and he has suggested Taiwan cede some control to Beijing by becoming a special administrative region.

Moscow has growing ties to other American adversaries. The U.S. has accused

Russia of sending ballistic missiles to Iran and said North Korea sent troops to Russia, possibly for combat in Ukraine.

On Ukraine, Musk's views have shifted since he initially supported Kyiv after Russia's 2022 invasion and provided it with his Starlink system for communications. Musk then refused to allow Ukraine in 2023 to use Starlink for a surprise attack on Russian soldiers in Crimea. He also floated a peace proposal that would have required Ukraine to drop plans for NATO membership and given Russia permanent control of Crimea, which it seized in 2014. The plan infuriated Ukrainian leaders.

"The policy of the U.S. government is to try to isolate Vladimir Putin, and Elon Musk is directly undercutting that," said Bradley Bowman, a former West Point assistant professor who is now senior director of the Center on Military and Political Power at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, a Washington think tank.

"What is Putin doing with Musk? Putin is trying to reduce his international isolation and impact American foreign policy," Bowman said.

Asked about Musk's contacts with Putin, White House national security spokesman John F. Kirby told reporters Friday that he had no information to share. The Pentagon and U.S. intel-

ligence officials declined to comment. The State Department didn't respond to an email seeking comment.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov rejected the Journal's report and said Putin and Musk held an "introductory" phone conversation before 2022 that focused on "visionary technologies."

"After that, Musk had no contacts with Putin," Peskov said.

## Musk's ties with Trump

Musk recently appeared at a Trump rally, sporting a Make America Great Again hat and delivered a ominous warning that if Trump lost the race, "this will be the last election."

Last year, Musk mocked Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's request for aid and said in February that Ukraine couldn't win the war.

Trump, who has praised Putin's leadership and criticized the NATO alliance and U.S. aid for Ukraine, has raised questions about what he would be willing to concede if he's elected in a negotiation over Ukraine's future.

U.S. intelligence officials and private sector analysts have concluded that Russia is working to covertly support Trump with disinformation and propaganda targeting his Democratic opponent, Vice President Kamala Harris. Since Musk took over X, it has become a lead-

ing online source of Russian propaganda and disinformation aimed at Americans.

Trump has faced scrutiny over his own recent contacts with Putin, outlined in a new book by Watergate journalist Bob Woodward.

Woodward quoted an unnamed Trump aide who said the former president and Putin may have had as many as seven conversations since Trump lost reelection in 2020. Before one of the calls, the aide said they were asked to leave Trump's office to give the two privacy. The Trump campaign and the Kremlin have denied those calls occurred.

In response to questions about Musk and Putin, Trump campaign press secretary Karoline Leavitt called Musk "a once-in-a-generation industry leader" whose ideas could benefit "our broken federal bureaucracy."

Leavitt said in a statement, "President Trump has long said that he will re-establish his peace through strength foreign policy to deter Russia's aggression and end the war in Ukraine."

Ukraine's military told the AP that they would "refrain from commenting" about communication between Putin and Musk.

Klepper and Mascaro write for the Associated Press. AP writers Didi Tang in Washington, Daria Litvinova in Tallinn, Estonia, and Illia Novikov in Kyiv, Ukraine, contributed.

# Eatery struggles with nearby drug use, violence

[Lopez, from A1]

Yoshinoya manager Hortencia Garcia told me that when she gets to the restaurant each morning at the corner of Wilshire and Alvarado, there's often work to do before the food prep begins.

"We have to move all of these people and remove all the trash that's left behind," Garcia said.

Security guard Gabriel Sanchez, meanwhile, said he routinely shoos away people selling or using drugs in its parking lot, and he carries Narcan in his pocket to revive overdose victims. Altercations are part of the job, too.

"I've had knives pulled on me, I've had people try to stab me with a screwdriver, and just the other day I got hit with a wooden bat," Sanchez said.

Garcia lamented the fact that the fast-food establishment's name has become attached to the notorious alley that runs behind restaurant property and draws a shockingly brazen level of drug activity day and night.

"Yoshinoya Alley," Garcia said.

"It's unfortunately known to the mayor, LAPD, everyone," said Sanchez. "So our name is" associated with "the overdoses and all the craziness that goes on down there."

The scene in that alley doesn't look quite real. It's like the set of a movie about the darkest corner of hell. I've seen several dozen people gathered there at once under the haze of fentanyl smoke, bodies and faces ravaged, and I've wondered each time why there isn't a massive relief



MICHAEL BLACKSHIRE Los Angeles Times

**VENDORS SELL ITEMS** outside a Yoshinoya near MacArthur Park in L.A. on Friday. A security guard says he routinely shoos away people using drugs near the restaurant and carries Narcan to revive overdose victims.

effort under way — like you might see in an emergency response to a natural disaster.

"We have to respond urgently" to the crisis in MacArthur Park, Mayor Karen Bass told me in August.

It's almost November now, and I don't see it. Not for the sake of those who are badly addicted and flirt with death each day, and not for the sake of residents and merchants who need some relief.

Garcia said she has often complained about neighborhood conditions to city

officials, and the response has been "we have a plan." After two years, she said, "I'm still waiting for the plan."

In a statement from its corporate team, Yoshinoya said it is committed to staying in the community, taking steps to ensure the safety of employees and customers, and participating in neighborhood council meetings along with neighbors, city leaders and the LAPD.

Garcia and Sanchez said they call senior lead officers from the Rampart division when they have a specific

problem, and they can usually count on help arriving in a hurry. But Garcia doesn't understand why routine lawlessness in the area is generally tolerated by authorities.

Gang activity and the trafficking of stolen goods have plagued the MacArthur Park area for decades, including when Garcia raised her five children in the neighborhood. But she doesn't recall as much homelessness or open drug use back then, and "there were consequences" for illicit behavior. "Now everybody does whatever they want" and nothing is done about it, she said.

Early on the evening of Oct. 9, a middle-aged man overdosed on the sidewalk in front of Yoshinoya. I was working on a column about L.A. Fire Department's Station 11 — one of the busiest in the nation, partly because of overdose calls — and watched as paramedics pushed naloxone, an opioid overdose drug, through an IV line and revived him.

One of the most striking things about the scene was how routine it appeared. People walked by without pausing, or stopped to see if this one was going to make it, unlike dozens of other overdose victims who have died in Westlake in the last couple of years.

That was a busy night, Sanchez recalled. "After that one, maybe about an hour later, I had a girl right here at the gate," he said of a second overdose victim.

Both times, he said, he called 911. The second person recovered, as well as the first. But overdoses are so frequent, he has arranged for outreach workers from a social services nonprofit to regularly deliver him boxes

of Narcan — the nasal spray form of naloxone.

I asked if he'd had to use it often in his first year on the job.

"More than I could count," Sanchez said.

He said he keeps doses in his pocket, in the trunk of his car, and behind the counter at the restaurant in case a customer pays with cash that has traces of fentanyl on it. Fortunately, he said, no employee has had an accidental drug experience.

But the job isn't for everyone, Garcia told me. She's had employees quit because they didn't feel safe in the neighborhood, or commuting through the nearby Westlake/MacArthur Park Metro station, which has often served as a drug den.

One employee, in his 20s, lasted about 20 minutes.

"It was just too chaotic," Sanchez said. "That day, I was throwing people out. And [employees] were being yelled at by [customers]."

Sanchez said he often ends up working six or seven 12-hour shifts weekly because it's hard to find a guard willing to fill in for him on weekends. In the past year, he said, "we've had quite a few shootings" in the area. "Maybe two months ago, we had one mugging. ... And we had a stabbing a couple of weeks ago that was after hours."

Sanchez later watched that incident play out on the restaurant's surveillance system. He said it appeared to involve a drug transaction in which one man "goes up and stabs the guy dead center in the chest. ... He ended up walking away a few steps, dropped right there by the light post, and died right there."

Garcia said she's been

with Yoshinoya for 10 years and was assigned to the Alvarado franchise about two years ago. She said she told management a fence was needed to keep people from loitering on the property. She said an iron gate, about eight feet high, was installed at a cost of about \$45,000 and sidewalk vendors had to be pushed closer to the curb to clear a path in front of the restaurant.

A fortress was needed inside the restaurant, as well. A glass partition was installed to separate kitchen staff from customers.

"Our regulars do feel safe," Sanchez said. "I shake hands with them when they come in. ... But others have decided to go eat somewhere else because it's not worth the headache."

Garcia said business has been down, especially among families.

"I feel bad for the residents — for the ladies that walk their kids," said customer Daniel Leyva. "Have you seen that alley? That's crazy."

Customer James Wright said he lived nearby years ago, and "police had a handle ... on it" back then. "A couple of years ago it seemed like they just gave up. This is worse than downtown L.A."

Wright wondered why MacArthur Park can't be turned around the way Echo Park Lake has been in recent years.

"You gotta move some hipsters in," Sanchez said. "Let's be real."

Customer Debbie Wright said she used to sell heroin in MacArthur Park 20 years ago, before going to prison. The park was no paradise back then, she said, but it's worse now.

"I don't want to give up on society," she said, "but this is bad."

"Here's to hoping it will get cleaned up before anything bad happens," said Sanchez.

I asked why he didn't consider finding another job.

"The main reason I stay here is the relationship I've built with Hortencia," he said. "But it's rough. There are some days when ... I can't believe this is where I work."

In August, Mayor Bass did the right thing in going to Langer's for lunch and hearing out the owner, who is holding on for now to see if the city can deliver.

She should do the same at Yoshinoya, and take along Councilmember Eunisses Hernandez, the chief of police, a county supervisor or two, and all the city and county department heads who need to step up and do their jobs in Westlake.

They can meet Garcia, Sanchez and the rest of the crew, have lunch, and then get to work.

steve.lopez@latimes.com



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# Trump's list of once-unthinkable 'firsts'

[Trump, from A1] cal effect on their daily lives.

The analysts say it is incumbent on Harris to use the closing days of the campaign to explain why Trump's past failures should matter to them.

"I think for her it is about saying that this is a guy who brings chaos, who is unhinged, who is too out of control," said Patrick Toomey, a partner in BSG, a Democrat-aligned polling firm. "With that and his crazy vendettas and penchant for retribution, will he ever be focused on delivering help for average Americans?"

A longtime Republican pollster agreed. Greg Strimple of GS Strategy Group said the best possible messengers to make that case to the small group of moderate and wavering voters are the phalanx of Republicans and former Trump administration officials who say Trump is unfit for office.

Former Secretary of Defense Mark Esper, former national security advisor John Bolton, former White House Chief of Staff John F. Kelly and Gen. Mark A. Milley — the former chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff — are just a few of a large cadre of those who served during the Trump administration who have since signaled that they believe he is not fit to serve a second term. No other president in modern history has provoked so many high-level defections.

Strimple said those once handpicked by the former president to help him lead the country can deliver a powerful closing argument against Trump: "We saw it from the inside," they can say. "And it's worse than you think."

"Trump right now is doing what he needs to do to be successful, and that's making it an issues referendum on the last four years of Biden-Harris," Strimple said. "She really needs to find a pivot to get this back onto a referendum [about] character and the leadership style of Donald Trump."

The list is long of politicians who founded after a single misstatement or damning personal revelation. Texas Gov. Rick Perry's bid for the presidency disintegrated in 2011 after he froze on a debate stage when asked to name the three federal departments he had pledged to eliminate.

Trump's misstatements became so frequent, and his insistence on spurning cor-



**FORMER** President Trump heads to a New York courtroom in 2023. In May, the jury found him guilty of 34 felony counts involving hush money payments.

rections so adamant, that much of the U.S. media pushed back harder. It became common for Trump not just to be accused of being wrong, but of intentionally lying.

By the time he left the White House in 2021, the Washington Post had cataloged 30,573 Trump falsehoods during his four years in office. That amounted to 21 erroneous claims a day — what the newspaper called a "tsunami of untruths."

But Trump not only has transcended the fact-checking, he has turned his battles with the mainstream media, academics and other experts into a cudgel: Only he dared stand up to elites, who he contended did not understand, or care about, average Americans.

His most ardent followers see each ensuing condemnation from the media and the courts not as proof of guilt but as a continuation of a "witch hunt" against their hero. Evangelicals look past personal shortcomings because Trump delivered on his promise to overturn the abortion rights protected in Roe vs. Wade. Business leaders focus on tax cuts and deregulation. Working-class Americans remember that prices were lower when Trump was president.

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A partial list of some of Trump's impolitic and scandalous moments and how he

responded:

## 34 felony convictions

■ In May, a New York jury found Trump guilty of 34 felony counts involving his part in a cover-up of hush money payments to keep former adult film star Stormy Daniels from going public about her claim of having sex with him.

Trump is scheduled to be sentenced on Nov. 21. He continues to appeal, charging, among other things, that politics motivated prosecutors.

## Jan. 6: Impeached and indicted

■ On Jan. 6, 2021, having lost his November election against Joe Biden, Trump urged his followers to march to the U.S. Capitol and "fight" as Congress voted to certify the result. His loyalists stormed the Capitol, injuring about 140 police officers, while he watched on TV. It took three hours before Trump said in a Rose Garden video that his followers should "go home now."

Trump has repeatedly said he did nothing wrong because he told the crowd to march "peacefully and patriotically." He recently reframed the melee as "a day of love." But in his hourlong speech on Jan. 6, he invoked the word "fight," or variations, 20 times, saying at one point: "We fight like hell and

if you don't fight like hell, you're not going to have a country anymore."

The House voted to impeach Trump for inciting the insurrection, but the Senate acquitted him of the charges, allowing him to remain in office.

Special counsel Jack Smith led a federal investigation that resulted in Trump being charged with taking part in a scheme to interfere with the peaceful transfer of power. The prosecutor is trying to keep the case alive by showing that many of Trump's actions fall outside so-called official acts that the U.S. Supreme Court has said should be immune from prosecution.

Trump and his running mate, Sen. JD Vance (R-Ohio), continue to claim that Trump won in 2020 — a claim that dozens of courts and reviews have rejected.

## Georgia election indictment

■ In early 2021, as Congress prepared to certify former Vice President Biden's victory over then-President Trump, he called Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger, making various claims about ballots being "shredded" and his supporters being denied a chance to vote. Without offering proof of widespread abuses, Trump insisted: "I just want to find 11,780 votes. I need 11,000 votes, give me a break."

More than two years lat-

er, a grand jury in Fulton County, Ga., indicted Trump on charges of racketeering and other crimes, saying the former president had conspired to change the outcome of the 2020 election while participating in a "criminal enterprise."

A judge later threw out some of the counts against Trump, saying prosecutors failed to provide enough detail about the underlying felony he was accused of committing. Trump contends that the prosecution amounted to retaliation by a Democratic prosecutor, Fulton County Dist. Atty. Fani Willis. The case remains unresolved, in part because of the former president's efforts to disqualify Willis.

## Classified documents case

■ In June 2023, a special counsel filed dozens of felony counts against Trump, accusing him of illegally hoarding classified documents from his time in the White House. Special counsel Smith contended that Trump kept the documents at his Mar-a-Lago estate in Palm Beach, Fla., and then obstructed the FBI when federal agents tried to get the records back.

He pleaded not guilty and denied doing anything wrong. A federal judge appointed by Trump dismissed the case in July, saying that Smith had been improperly appointed by Atty. Gen. Merrick Garland instead of being confirmed by Congress.

## Found liable for sexual abuse

■ In May 2023, a New York jury found Trump liable for sexually abusing advice columnist E. Jean Carroll in 1996. She won a \$5-million judgment. Earlier this year, a jury awarded an additional \$83.3 million after concluding that the former president continued to defame Carroll on social media.

Trump's lawyers have tried to have the verdicts thrown out, contending that the trial court allowed jurors to hear improper and inflammatory evidence.

## Ukraine and the first impeachment

■ In 2019, Trump called Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and suggested his government should launch an investigation into former Vice Presi-

dent Biden, his Democratic opponent, and Biden's son Hunter. The request came at the same time that Trump was withholding crucial military aid to the struggling U.S. ally.

The Democratic-controlled House of Representatives impeached Trump for abuse of power and obstruction of Congress for what House prosecutors said was Trump's attempt to strong-arm the Ukrainians.

Trump said the House's investigation and impeachment amounted to "three years of sinister witch hunts, hoaxes, scams," with Democrats "trying to nullify the ballots of tens of millions of patriotic Americans." He was acquitted by the Senate.

## A \$355-million fraud judgment

■ In February, a judge ordered the former president to pay \$355 million, plus interest, after concluding that Trump lied for years about his wealth on financial statements. Those documents were used to obtain loans to support his real estate empire.

Appellate court judges signaled last month that they may have sympathy for some of Trump's arguments. They noted that none of the companies he did business with suffered financial harm and questioned whether the trial judge awarded too large a judgment.

::

Each time the media and other observers predicted that Trump had crossed a threshold he couldn't survive, he has proved otherwise. It's a pattern that has been repeated throughout Trump's life: He has moved ahead, despite reports of marital infidelity, multiple business failures, half a dozen bankruptcies and the airing of a video in which he boasted that he could grab women "by the pussy."

Trump's odd behavior lands the same way. He makes speeches with long and sometimes nonsensical digressions.

Just in recent days, he stopped a Q&A session near Philadelphia when a couple of people fainted, instead playing music for the crowd for more than half an hour while he swayed along on stage. He used a four-letter word to describe his opponent, Harris. And he ended a long digression about Arnold Palmer with a vulgar aside about the golf great's anatomy.

But even some who describe themselves as exhausted with Trump's misbehavior say they are more focused on other things. The two issues mentioned most commonly: inflation and illegal immigration.

"All of these [Trump failures] should matter. But commonsense arguments, arguments that worked in the past, have stopped working," said Strimple, who recently has completed polling for the Cook Political Report. "Right now, Trump has successfully made it a referendum on the Biden-Harris administration."

Strimple agreed with Toomey, the Democratic pollster, that Harris needs to put the focus back on Trump's most outlandish statements and actions.

But to truly be the "change" candidate that she needs to be, Harris also must make much clearer how her presidency would be different from that of Biden, whom she has served with for four years, said Strimple and Steve Schmidt, a one-time Republican political strategist and ardent Trump opponent.

Harris did serious damage to that effort when she went on "The View" this month and said that "not a thing that comes to mind" when she was asked if there was anything that she would have done differently from President Biden over the last four years, Schmidt said on his podcast, "The Warning."

Harris later has said she would appoint a Republican to her Cabinet and focus on housing and small business in new ways, trying to distinguish herself from Biden.

But Schmidt urged her to do even more to make her independence clear.

"What people want to know is what she will do differently from Biden," Schmidt said. "Unless and until you cross that bridge, you're going to fall short on election day."

# State will need to import more gas after refinery closes

[Refinery, from A1] after other refinery closures or conversions in recent years. With the loss of the Phillips plant, the state will need to import as much as 17% of its supply to make up the deficit.

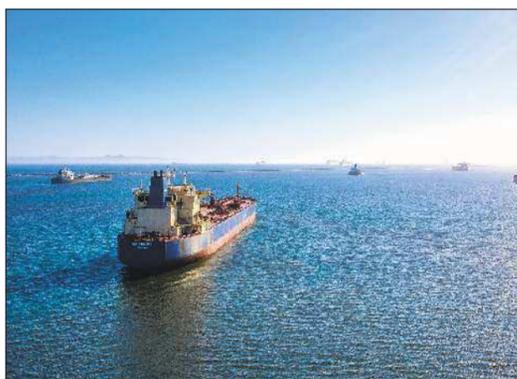
The potential sources include South Korea, Japan, India and other Asian refineries; Britain and the Netherlands; Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

A gasoline tanker's voyage to California from Singapore, another gasoline supplier, would take 30 to 40 days, York said, and supply chain snags — caused by a typhoon, or a war, or a worldwide outbreak of some virus — could add weeks to that lengthy schedule if not disrupting it entirely.

Even before the Phillips news, the state was fretting about possible supply shocks should more refineries shut down. When Phillips 66 announced the planned closure last week, it pledged to "work with California to maintain current levels and potentially increase supplies." No details were offered, either by the company or by state officials.

Unlike most states, California has no pipelines to import refined gasoline from other U.S. refineries, making the state what policymakers call a "fuel island." And there are no pipelines to move gasoline between Northern California and Southern California — making the Southland even more of an archipelago.

Gasoline refineries on the U.S. Gulf Coast are an unlikely source: The federal Jones Act requires that only U.S.-flagged ships may transit from one U.S. port to another, an expensive proposition given that the vessels must be manufactured in the United States and manned by U.S. crews. Even



ROBERT GAUTHIER Los Angeles Times

**CALIFORNIA** imports 8% of its gasoline. It'll have to boost that to as much as 17% after a refinery closes.

more unlikely is the opening of new refineries in California, given state mandates on all-electric cars and trucks.

Some replacement gasoline could come from refineries in Washington state, using Jones Act-approved vessels, but most gasoline will have to be shipped in from other nations, York said.

Shipping gasoline also adds to environmental problems. Ocean vessels are heavy polluters, most of them running on what's called heavy fuel oil — thick, tar-like residue left over after refining other petroleum products. And although the state is committed to major reductions in greenhouse gases, it doesn't count emissions released by ocean tankers sailing more than 100 miles from the California coastline, so most of the emissions from tankers delivering gasoline won't be included in the state's greenhouse gas reduction calculations, similar to the way the federal government counts emissions.

Most of the unrefined crude oil processed in California arrives by ships from foreign ports. State policies have drastically reduced the amount of crude pumped

from California's oilfields, and foreign imports account for more than 60% of the total, over a third of that from Iraq and Saudi Arabia.

The gasoline that California produces and imports is the world's cleanest — or least dirty, anyway. In the early 1990s California began requiring cleaner-burning gasoline, known as CARBOB. The state Energy Commission said the California blend has reduced pollution, cleaned the air and improved health — including an 80% reduction in cancer risk from gasoline pollution. But the state's unique blend comes at extra cost, and some overseas refineries may have to adjust their processes to accommodate increased demand.

For years, the state has anticipated the closure of gasoline refineries as car buyers turn to electric vehicles. That transition will take decades, though, and policymakers were hoping the pace of refinery closures would closely track a falloff in gasoline demand, keeping the need for imported fuel to a minimum.

So the Phillips 66 announcement came as a surprise.

The company said it's closing the Wilmington-Carson refinery for strategic reasons. A spokesman said it produces "lower profitability compared to other assets in our portfolio."

He declined to say why it's less profitable, but the company's most recent annual report offers some hints, saying that California's energy policy could lead to "potential adverse effects on our refining, marketing and midstream operations in California, which may be material to our results of operations, financial condition, profitability and cash flows." However, the spokesman said a recent price-gouging bill had no effect on the decision.

With the shutdown of the Phillips 66 facility, California will be down to eight refineries, from 11 five years ago.

In 2020, Marathon converted its Northern California refinery to renewable diesel, taking about 14 billion gallons of gasoline out of annual production. This year, Phillips converted its own Northern California refinery to renewable diesel, taking about 872 million gallons out. Already, the California Energy Commission said, gasoline imports have increased in the San Francisco Bay Area.

The decline of the refinery industry does have state officials concerned. In a report this year, the Energy Commission said that "peak demand and supply capacity for gasoline is very tight" and that "a strategy to bolster the State's imports of gasoline will be imperative to avoid potentially systematic undersupply problems."

Meantime, Gov. Gavin Newsom has gone on the warpath against the oil industry. He's called two special legislative sessions over two years to pass what he called "price gouging" legis-

lation. The 2023 bill created a special unit to investigate refinery pricing practices and potentially fine violators. This month, he signed a bill authorizing state agencies to require minimum levels of storage at California refineries.

Assemblymember Gregg Hart (D-Santa Barbara), author of the gasoline storage bill, acknowledged that costs to consumers are inevitable in any serious attempt to combat climate change. The costs of not addressing climate change are becoming clear as insurance prices rise for flooding and wildfire threats. "How we measure costs to consumers is a complicated thing and an easy thing to demagogue," he said. "We're trying to transition to electric vehicles to reduce climate emissions because we have to. There are not other options."

Such views draw counterarguments from state Sen. Shannon Grove (R-Bakersfield), who represents oil-rich Kern County. The state continues to hold the sixth largest oil reserves in the U.S., but she believes state policies are affecting refinery operators' investment decisions. She said she wonders how importing gasoline and oil by ship and importing gasoline helps the Energy Commission's stated goal of a "reliable supply of affordable and safe transportation fuels." State laws and regulations make California refineries more environment-friendly than substitute refineries overseas, Grove said.

"Instead of sending [oil] 120 miles in a pipeline to a refinery that delivers to a gas station, you're extending the supply chain which adds to volatility and expense," she said. "It's not as if we're not using [oil and gasoline] here, we're just not getting it from people who have jobs here."



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## BUSINESS

## Listeria recalls show limits of food safety

The pathogen is 'ubiquitous in the environment,' posing unique challenges for mass producers

BY ANDREA CHANG

Deli meats, grab-and-go salads and frozen meals are staples of the modern American diet — convenient and inexpensive options that shoppers readily toss into their carts during grocery runs.

But after hundreds of those products were flagged in major listeria-related recalls recently, nervous consumers have been left to scour their refrigerators for potentially tainted food as government inspectors try to piece together how the problems began.

Listeria contamination at a BrucePac processing plant this month and a deadly multistate outbreak linked to Boar's Head liverwurst over the summer led to the sweeping recalls. All told, about 20 million pounds of meat and poultry products sold nationwide at Trader Joe's, Walmart, Target, Ralphs and other businesses were affected, highlighting the public health challenges that come with producing food for the mass market despite significant advancements in sanitizing and testing.

"The messages that go out to consumers typically are, 'We have the safest food supply in the world,'" said Barbara Kowalcyk, director of the Institute for Food Safety and Nutrition Security at George Washington University. "What these back-to-back recalls show is we aren't where we thought we were."

Although listeria has been the culprit in many food scares lately — last week, TreeHouse Foods expanded a recall for hundreds of frozen waffle and pancake products for potential contamination — food safety experts said the string of incidents is merely coincidence.

"There's no evidence at all to suggest that our food supply is less safe than before — in fact, I would argue for the opposite," said Martin Bucknavage, a senior food safety extension associate at Pennsylvania State University's Department of Food Science.

The safety of mass-produced food has improved dramatically in the last three decades, experts noted, thanks to better sanitization procedures, increased regulation and the use of technologies such as whole genome sequencing to help detect pathogens quickly.

But listeria, a common and stubbornly persistent type of bacterium, presents unique hurdles.

Unlike many other foodborne pathogens, it thrives in the cool, damp conditions found in processing plants. Unsanitary facilities can cause contamination, but the bacteria can also be introduced through raw ingredients, water, soil tracked into a plant on a worker's shoe and even incoming air, said Brian Schaneberg, executive director at the Institute for Food Safety and Health at Illinois Institute of Technology.

"It is ubiquitous in the environment," he said.

Making things worse, listeria can spread easily if food comes into contact with contaminated surfaces and multiply rapidly despite aggressive cleaning and sanitizing, according to the USDA. Listeria has been found in products including cold cuts, hot dogs, sausages, unpasteurized milk, soft cheeses, smoked seafood and raw vegetables and fruits.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service has jurisdiction over the safety of meat, poultry and egg products. It requires manufacturers to develop and implement systems to prevent and reduce the occurrence and numbers of pathogens on their products and to decrease the incidence of foodborne illness.

Meat and poultry processing facilities are checked by federal inspectors at least once during every shift that a plant is in operation, according to a Food Safety and Inspection Service spokesperson.

For their part, food companies take preventive mea-



JOE RAEDLE Getty Images

**HUNDREDS** of products were flagged in listeria-related recalls in recent months, affecting millions of pounds of food sold nationwide.



STEVE HELBER Associated Press

**BOAR'S HEAD** said its processing plant in Jarratt, Va., was the source of a deadly outbreak that began in July.

## Food safety will 'never be perfect because pathogens are living things and all systems fail.'

— BARBARA KOWALCYK, director of the Institute for Food Safety and Nutrition Security at George Washington University

asures such as requiring workers to cover their shoes or step onto sanitized mats or into disinfecting foot baths whenever they enter a facility, and change their disposable aprons and gloves when moving from one production line to another.

They also conduct their own in-house testing, which can include extensive swabbing of surfaces, raw ingredients, finished products and areas where listeria is known to thrive, such as floor drains.

"No company wants to have an issue like this," Bucknavage said, referring to the recent spate of recalls. Listeria's ability to adapt and proliferate under varied conditions means "it's an ongoing battle," especially at large food-processing establishments like BrucePac, which churns out pre-cooked, ready-to-eat meat and poultry products in huge quantities.

"You've got chicken juices, you've got people moving around, you have a lot of different types of equipment," he said. "All of that has to be controlled down to the microbiological level."

BrucePac and Boar's Head did not respond to re-

quests seeking information on how they conducted their safety tests before the recalls.

Every year an estimated 48 million people get sick from a foodborne illness, 128,000 are hospitalized and 3,000 die, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which typically coordinates 17 to 36 investigations in multiple states each week.

Consumption of food contaminated with listeria can lead to listeriosis, a serious infection that primarily affects adults 65 and older, people with weakened immune systems, pregnant women and babies. Symptoms include fever, muscle aches, headache, stiff neck, confusion, loss of balance and convulsions sometimes preceded by diarrhea or other gastrointestinal issues. It is the third leading cause of death from foodborne illness in the U.S., the CDC said.

The Boar's Head outbreak, which began in July, has been linked to 59 hospitalizations and 10 deaths across 19 states. No illnesses have yet to be reported in the BrucePac and TreeHouse recalls.

There's also a steep fi-

nancial cost. The economic burden of foodborne illness was estimated to be as high as \$90 billion annually, according to a 2020 research paper published in the Journal of Food Protection.

Listeria is unusually hard to trace after an outbreak because it has a long incubation period — the CDC says it can take up to 10 weeks for some people to develop symptoms. Many people don't seek medical attention after they become sick, and those who do generally have trouble recalling what they ate several weeks ago.

Boar's Head, which produces and sells deli meats, cheeses and condiments, called the outbreak a "dark moment in our company's history" in a letter to customers in September.

"Comprehensive measures are being implemented to prevent such an incident from ever happening again," the Sarasota, Fla., company said.

Boar's Head has been working with the USDA, state government regulatory agencies and food safety experts to determine what went wrong. The investigation is still ongoing, and the results will include "what needs to be improved

and where policy changes are needed," the Food Safety and Inspection Service spokesperson said.

Boar's Head shared some preliminary findings last month, saying it had identified the root cause of the contamination as "a specific production process that only existed" at its facility in Jarratt, Va., and was used only to make liverwurst. As a result, it said it was permanently discontinuing the production of liverwurst and was closing the Jarratt plant for good.

Boar's Head also published a notice of suspension that the USDA sent on July 31, which laid out numerous "insanitary conditions" and other problems at the plant. Among them: beaded condensation dripping over products, employees moving racks of coolers between lines without changing personal protective equipment and a sample collected from a pallet jack that tested positive for listeria.

"Clear liquid was observed falling from a square patch in the ceiling," the notice said. "A black fan was mounted to the ceiling and was blowing the leaking clear liquid into the Blast Cell Hallway, where 9 trees of

uncovered Assorted Hams were stored."

Besides working with government inspectors to investigate contamination, food manufacturers also have to help track down products affected by their recalls, an unwieldy task in situations where hundreds of different items with various sell-by and best-by dates were sent to businesses around the country. In the BrucePac case, items were widely distributed to supermarkets, big-box discounters, wholesale clubs, restaurants, schools and other establishments.

Retailers like to say they have close relationships with their suppliers and buy only from vendors they trust. But issues still arise, leaving companies scrambling to get the word out to customers.

Trader Joe's, which is in the process of recalling several of its private-label salads, wraps and other items made with ready-to-eat BrucePac products, says it does "daily work to make certain our products meet our stringent food safety expectations."

"We voluntarily take action quickly, aggressively investigating potential problems and removing the product from sale if there is any doubt about its safety or quality," the company says on a food safety page on its website.

Yet another high-profile deadly outbreak was announced Tuesday, when the CDC issued a food safety alert after discovering an *E. coli* outbreak linked to McDonald's Quarter Pounders; there are currently at least 75 cases across 13 states, including 22 people who were hospitalized and one who died. The CDC, USDA, Food and Drug Administration and public health officials in multiple states are now investigating.

Although inspections and investigations are shared responsibilities between food manufacturers and government entities, "the onus is really on the company," Kowalcyk, of the Institute for Food Safety and Nutrition Security, said.

"If you look at the complexity of our food supply and the number of producers and the number of importers, it's growing exponentially," she said. "Do I think the agencies can do more? Yes. Do I think they have the resources that they need to do more? No."

Food safety will "never be perfect because pathogens are living things and all systems fail," she continued. "We've got to recognize we'll never get to zero, but we can get pretty close and that's what we should be striving for."

**PERSONAL FINANCE**

# How to recognize and stay safe from scams

By **ADRIANA MORGA**



JENNY KANE Associated Press

**OCTOBER** is Cybersecurity Awareness Month, a perfect time to learn how to avoid being scammed.

**NEW YORK** — October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month, which means it's the perfect time to learn how to protect yourself from scams.

"Scams have become so sophisticated now. Phishing emails, texts, spoofing caller ID, all of this technology gives scammers that edge," said Eva Velasquez, president of the nonprofit Identity Theft Resource Center.

As scammers find new ways to steal money and personal information, consumers should be more vigilant about whom they trust, especially online.

A quick way to remember what to do when you think you're getting scammed is to think about the three S's, said Alissa Abdullah, also known as Dr. Jay, Mastercard's deputy chief security officer.

"Stay suspicious, stop for a second (and think about it) and stay protected," she said.

Whether it's romance scams or job scams, impersonators are looking for ways to trick you into giving them money or sharing your personal information. Here's what to know:

**The tactics**

Three common tactics used by scammers are based on fear, urgency and money, said security expert Petros Efsthopoulos. Here's how they work:

**Fear** — When a scammer contacts you via phone or email, they use language that makes it seem like there is a problem that you need to solve. For example, a scammer contacts you over email telling you that your tax return has an error and if you don't fix it you'll get in trouble.

**Urgency** — Because scammers are good at creating a sense of urgency, people tend to rush, which makes them vulnerable. Scammers often tell people they need to act right away, which can lead to them sharing private information such as their Social Security numbers.

**Money** — Scammers use money as bait, Efsthopoulos said. They might impersonate tax professionals or the IRS, saying you will get a bigger tax refund than you expect if you pay them for their services or share your personal information.

**Common scams**

Simply being aware of typical scams can help, experts say. Robocalls in particular frequently target vulnerable individuals such as seniors, people with disabilities, and people with debt.

"If you get a robocall out of the blue playing a recorded message trying to get you to buy something, just hang up," said James Lee, chief operating officer at the Identity Theft Resource Center. "Same goes for texts — anytime you get them from a number you don't know asking you to pay, wire or click on something suspicious."

Lee urges consumers to hang up and call the company or institution in question at an official number. **Romance scams** — So-called romance scams often target lonely and isolated individuals, said Will Maxson, assistant director of the Division of Marketing Practices at the Federal Trade Commission. These scams can take place over longer periods of time — even years.

Kate Kleintart, 70, who lost tens of thousands of dollars to a romance scam over several months, said to be vigilant if a new Facebook friend is exceptionally good-looking, asks you to download WhatsApp to commu-

nicate, attempts to isolate you from friends and family, and/or gets romantic very quickly.

"If you're seeing that picture of a very handsome person, ask someone younger ... to help you reverse-image search or identify the photo," she said.

She said the man in pictures she received was a plastic surgeon from Spain whose photos have been stolen and used by scammers.

**Job scams** — These involve a person pretending to be a recruiter or a company in order to steal money or information from a job seeker.

Scammers tend to use the name of an employee from a large company and craft a job posting that matches similar positions. An initial red flag is that scammers usually try to make the job very appealing, Velasquez said.

"They're going to have very high salaries for somewhat low-skilled work," she said. "And they're often saying it's a 100% remote position because that's so appealing to people."

Some scammers post fake jobs, but others reach out directly to job seekers through direct messages or texts. If the scammers are looking to steal your personal information, they may ask you to fill out several forms that include information including your Social Security and driver's license numbers.

The only information a legitimate employer should ask for at the beginning of the process is your skills, your work experience, and your contact information, Velasquez said.

**Investment scams** — Lois Greisman, an associate director of marketing practices at the Federal Trade Commission, said an investment scam constitutes any get-rich-quick scheme that lures targets via social media accounts or online ads.

Investment scammers typically add different forms of "testimony," such as from other social media accounts, to support that the "investment" works. Many of these also involve cryptocurrency. To avoid falling for these frauds, the FTC recommends independently researching the company — especially by searching the company's name along with terms like "review" or "scam."

**Quiz scams** — When you're using Facebook or scrolling Google results, be aware of quiz scams, which typically appear innocuous and ask about topics you might be interested in, such as your car or favorite TV show. They may also ask you to take a personality test.

Despite these benign-seeming questions, scammers can then use the per-

sonal information you share to respond to security questions from your accounts or hack your social media to send malware links to your contacts.

To protect your personal information, the FTC simply recommends steering clear of online quizzes.

The commission also advises consumers to use random answers for security questions.

**If you're targeted**

**Don't pick up if you don't know who is calling** — Scammers often reach out by phone. Ben Hoffman, head of strategy and consumer products at Fifth Third Bank, recommends that you don't pick up the phone for unknown incoming calls.

"Banks don't ask you for your password," said Hoffman. If you believe your bank is trying to reach out, give it a call at a number listed on its website.

This makes it easier to know for sure that you're not talking to a scammer. As a general rule, banks don't often call unless there is suspicious activity on your account or if you previously contacted them about a problem.

**Use all of the technology at your disposal** — There are many tools at your disposal that can be used to protect yourself from scammers online.

■ Use a password manager to ensure you're utilizing a complex password that scammers can't guess.

■ Regularly checking your credit report and bank statements is a good practice since it can help you identify if someone has been using your bank account without your knowledge.

■ Turn on multifactor verification to make sure impersonators aren't able to access your social media or bank accounts.

**When in doubt, call for help** — If you aren't sure if a job recruiter is real or if your bank is actually asking you for information, find organizations that can help you, such as the Identity Theft Resource Center and the AARP Fraud Watch Network, Velasquez said.

**Report the scam**

If you or your family members become the victim of a scam, it's good practice to report it on the FTC's website.

Morga writes for the Associated Press.

**MONEY TALK**

# Skipping a Medicare drug plan now can mean paying more later

By **LIZ WESTON**

**Dear Liz:** I did not enroll in Part D prescription coverage when I enrolled in Medicare in 2005 because I was not taking any prescriptions at the time. When I enrolled a few years later, I was penalized \$11 per month for late enrollment and I must pay this penalty until I die. What is the reasoning and logic behind this rule except to benefit the insurance companies? I've complained to Medicare.

**Answer:** You can complain until you're blue in the face, but this is how insurance works.

Insurers — and the largest payer of healthcare services, Medicare — need a large pool of healthier people paying premiums to offset the costs incurred by the sicker ones. If only sick people bought insurance, premiums would skyrocket, making healthcare even more expensive.

**Living trusts need regular reviewing**

**Dear Liz:** My husband and I created a living trust about six years ago. How often do we need to review it with an attorney if we've had no major life changes?

**Answer:** You're already overdue.

The standard advice is to have your attorney review your trust every three to five years or after major life events, including marriage, divorce, a birth, a death, a change in your financial

status or a move across state lines. You also should review and update your schedule of assets to reflect accounts you've opened and closed in the intervening years.

**Rules for survivor, dependent benefits**

**Dear Liz:** My husband and I were married for 23 years before his passing in 2009. I am now 58 and have been told that I can only receive survivor's benefits at the age of 60. However, an earlier question from a woman stated she and her son received benefits when her husband passed after 13 years of marriage and she was only 34 at the time. I'm aware that the child would receive benefits as he is a dependent but how did she receive benefits also? I'm confused, should I already be receiving as well?

**Answer:** Only if you're caring for your husband's child and the child is a minor or disabled. Surviving spouses can receive Social Security benefits at any age if they are caring for a child under 16 or a child who was disabled before age 22. Otherwise, survivor benefits can begin at age 60, or at age 50 if the survivor is disabled.

**Handling medical bills in probate**

**Dear Liz:** My wife is in the process of being named executor for her late sister's estate. There are several medical bills, including some that have been sold to collection agencies. Our

understanding is that any negotiations or settlements should be done with those agencies as opposed to the original medical organization. Is this correct in general as well as in probate situations?

**Answer:** If a bill has been sold to a collection agency, that's the entity your wife will have to contact. However, not all medical bills are sold. Sometimes collection agencies work on behalf of healthcare providers. When that's the case, your wife may want to contact the original provider.

As executor, your wife can and should hire an attorney to advise her on administering her sister's estate. The estate will pay the cost for this advice and your wife will receive helpful, personalized counsel on dealing with every aspect of being an executor, including this one, which is particularly fraught.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau recently warned that some medical debt collectors are violating federal law by inflating bills, trying to collect on debts that aren't owed, demanding payment for services insurance has already covered and lying about consumers' rights to contest bills.

Liz Weston, Certified Financial Planner, is a personal finance columnist. Questions may be sent to her at 3940 Laurel Canyon, No. 238, Studio City, CA 91604, or by using the "Contact" form at asklizweston.com.

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OPINION

EDITORIALS

# ‘Three strikes’ is on the ballot — in Prop. 36 and D.A. race

Thirty years after Californians adopted the law that overfilled state prisons, the concept is back.

WHEN CALIFORNIA voters adopted the “three strikes” law in 1994, they accelerated a chain of events that ultimately led to unconstitutional state prison overcrowding and a federal court order to release 46,000 people.

As the 30th anniversary of the vote approaches, three strikes is back on the ballot in two unexpected ways.

The race for Los Angeles County district attorney will likely determine whether a challenge to the law will be heard by the state Supreme Court, or dropped.

And Proposition 36, if it passes, would allow two low-level misdemeanors, theft and drug possession, to be treated like third strikes and turned into felonies.

Without necessarily realizing it, voters are now deciding whether to double down on three strikes, and in so doing whether to saddle themselves with steeper jail and prison costs and a larger incarceration footprint in much the same way they currently are paying a high price for their three-decade-old vote.

Three strikes laws, as in the baseball rule of “three strikes and you’re out,” target repeat offenders with extra punishment. California’s version was adopted twice, first by the Legislature on March 7, 1994, and by voters later that year.

The law doubles the sentence of anyone convicted of a second serious or violent felony. A third conviction results in a sentence of 25 years to life.

In the law’s original language, the third conviction could be for any crime, including a nonviolent misdemeanor, and that provision allowed the notorious 25-to-life sentence for Jerry DeWayne Williams for stealing a slice of pizza from children at the Redondo Beach Pier.

Williams was released early when a judge reduced his sentence, but the episode inspired a 2012 ballot measure requiring the third strike to be a serious felony like the first two.

When Los Angeles County Dist. Atty. George Gascón was elected in 2020, he instructed his prosecutors not to seek second or third strike sentences, reasoning that punishment for the underlying crime should be sufficient to hold perpetrators accountable.

The prosecutors’ union — the Assn. of Deputy District Attorneys — sued Gascón, alleging that the three strikes law is not discretionary because it says that prosecutors shall — not may — “plead and prove” prior strikes. Lower courts agreed.

The union’s legal team included former federal prosecutor Nathan Hochman, who is now running to unseat Gascón in the Nov. 5 election.

The state Supreme Court has taken the

case to decide whether the interpretation violates constitutionally required separation of powers and prosecutorial discretion.

Obviously, three strikes critics argue, prosecutors can’t be required to “prove” their cases, because that would mean they’re always legally obligated to win — an outcome that is not within their control. So if the language cannot really require them to “prove” their case, it also can’t require them to “plead” — to seek sentence enhancements under the three strikes law.

But after two years, arguments have not yet been scheduled. And polling shows Hochman with a large lead. If he wins, he told The Times’ editorial board, he will drop the Supreme Court appeal and leave intact the ruling that the three strikes law mandates that prosecutors seek the longest possible sentence.

That outcome would strip voters in each county of the ability to elect a district attorney — such as Gascón — who believes justice and safety would be best served by less onerous prison terms.

Proposition 36 would add the two mini-three-strikes provisions, both of which turn a third misdemeanor into a felony, although not one punishable by anything approaching a 25-to-life term.

A person with two previous misdemeanor or drug convictions could be charged on a third offense with a “treatment mandated felony.” The person could choose to complete a court-approved drug treatment program and then have the conviction dismissed, or be sentenced to jail or prison.

Under a different Proposition 36 provision, a person with two prior petty theft convictions could be charged for a third offense with a felony and sent to jail. Stealing a slice of pizza would once again subject an offender to the possibility of a multi-year sentence.

In fact, drug and theft misdemeanors already carry jail time, but in counties with overcrowded jails such as Los Angeles, police, prosecutors and jailers reserve their efforts for more dangerous offenders.

That’s a smarter use of resources. County jails today are where state prisons were after three strikes and other tough-on-crime measures led to unconstitutional crowding. After federal judges ordered prison releases, California sent lower-level felons to local jails instead of state prisons, and counties were expected to make room in the jails by finding creative, safe and effective alternatives to locking up their nonviolent misdemeanor populations.

Progress has been slow. Some local officials in city and county governments and in law enforcement long for the days when they could send convicted felons to state prisons and wash local hands of the costs and responsibilities of housing them and altering their future behavior.

Proposition 36 does permit some repeat offenders to be sent to prison, but most will merely add to county jail populations, and drain local budgets of resources to find alternatives to incarceration.

Voters are now deciding whether to double down on ‘three strikes’ and saddle themselves with steeper jail and prison costs and a larger incarceration footprint.

ELECTION 2024

## The Times’ electoral endorsements for Nov. 5

Measure A: Yes  
Measure E: Yes  
Measure G: Yes

### LOS ANGELES COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

Seat 1: Andra Hoffman  
Seat 3: David Vela  
Seat 5: Nichelle Henderson  
Seat 7: Kelsey Iino

### LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

District 1: Sherlett Hendy Newbill  
District 3: Scott Schmerelson  
District 5: Karla Griego  
Measure US: Yes

### LOS ANGELES COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT JUDGES

Office No. 39: Steve Napolitano  
Office No. 48: Ericka J. Wiley  
Office No. 97: Sharon Ransom  
Office No. 135: Steven Yee Mac  
Office No. 137: Tracey M. Blount

### STATE LEGISLATURE

Assembly District 52: Jessica Caloza  
Assembly District 54: Mark Gonzalez  
Assembly District 57: Sade Elhawary  
Senate District 35: Michelle Chambers

### U.S. HOUSE AND SENATE

U.S. Senate: Adam B. Schiff  
27th Congressional District: George Whitesides  
30th Congressional District: Laura Friedman  
45th Congressional District: Derek Tran  
47th Congressional District: Dave Min

### STATEWIDE BALLOT MEASURES

Proposition 2: Yes  
Proposition 3: Yes  
Proposition 4: Yes  
Proposition 5: Yes  
Proposition 6: Yes  
Proposition 32: Yes  
Proposition 33: No  
Proposition 34: No  
Proposition 35: No  
Proposition 36: No

### LOS ANGELES CITY

City Council District 2: Adrin Nazarian  
City Council District 10: Heather Hutt  
City Council District 14: Ysabel Jurado  
Charter Amendment DD: Yes  
Charter Amendment LL: Yes  
Charter Amendment HH: Yes  
Charter Amendment II: Yes  
Charter Amendment ER: Yes  
Charter Amendment FF: No

### LOS ANGELES COUNTY

District attorney: George Gascón

LETTERS



PABLO MARTINEZ MONSIVAIS Associated Press

JOHN F. KELLY, chief of staff at the time, speaks with then-President Trump in 2018. The retired general now says Trump fits the definition of a fascist.

## Why a general’s warning is a big deal

Re “Ex-aide: Trump is unfit, ‘fascist,’ ” Oct. 24

I GREW UP IN CORONADO as a military brat. My male ancestors fought in every American battle for freedom and justice, from the Revolutionary War to the Korean War. My father and grandfather both served as Naval officers during World War II and emulated a steadfast allegiance to their country and its institutions.

I came of age questioning the Vietnam War. My father’s respect never wavered for the decisions made by two presidents. His upbringing and military training taught him to rely on the good intent and integrity of his commander in chief.

From the beginning of his term in office, former President Trump treated “his” military officials with disdain, and often demeans them in public. Bullies tend to target people who are a better version of themselves. The highest-level military leaders responded with restraint and dignity, in deference to the commander in chief.

A titanic change has occurred recently — high-ranking military officers are publicly speaking out regarding Trump’s fascist words and demeanor. When career military leaders can no longer remain silent, it’s because they’ve chosen to put their allegiance to the United States and Constitution above a danger to our country.

We must listen to what they are telling us.

MARY RIDER  
Idyllwild, Calif.

I cast my first vote for president (Dwight D. Eisenhower) in 1956, so you know it was with creaky joints that I walked to drop my ballot into the secure box at my county’s headquarters for the coming presidential election.

What a contrast with a man who as supreme Allied commander led the effort to free Europe from the dictatorship of Adolph Hitler. Eisenhower no doubt felt sorrow as he reviewed his young troops before the assault on Normandy. He was a worthy president when he won that office.

Contrast that with Donald Trump and the unworthiness he demonstrated as president.

I proudly swore an oath to democracy when I became a teacher. Now I fear that such a “loyalty oath,” should Trump be elected again, would be to a fledgling dictatorship.

I cannot fathom how so many fellow citizens have turned a blind eye to what should be their first priority in this election: fealty to our democratic ideals.

JOANNE OROARK  
Santa Barbara

For several years we’ve seen much head-shaking over Trump’s abiding hold on his voters, but I think we’ve missed the essence. His appeal is not fascism, it’s respect.

For decades liberalism has moved from championing open-mindedness to telling others to shut up and do as told because the elite must know better. I first noticed this mindset with a 1976 New Yorker magazine cover satirically depicting everything west of Manhattan as wasteland. Then there was disparagement of the heart of our country as “flyover states,” and let’s not forget the “deplorables.”

I’m rather well educated and told that I’m quite intelligent. I have known individuals who’ve not gone beyond high school and

who are not only intelligent but knowledgeable about social issues, economics, foreign policy and much more. Yet they all conveyed the denigration they feel from our formally educated dictators.

If we lose this election to Trump, it will be caused by our arrogance and willful ignorance. I hope we don’t, and I hope we learn.

PAUL MALYKONT  
Los Osos, Calif.

Is it possible young people don’t shudder at the mention of Hitler’s name?

I was 12 years old when World War II ended and my parents began receiving letters from Europe. They sat at the kitchen table and read them out loud, sobbing as they learned of siblings, cousins, aunts, uncles and neighbors, all slaughtered by Hitler. It was not only Jews, but also the infirm, the so-called deviants, political enemies, anyone he didn’t like.

When a retired general tells us that Trump wished he had Hitler’s generals, we should all shudder.

FLORENCE WEINBERGER  
Malibu

Trump should think twice if he wants generals with the same loyalty as Hitler’s. It was some of those generals behind the Operation Valkyrie attempted assassination of Hitler on July 20, 1944.

CARY ADAMS  
North Hollywood

Most Americans don’t understand fascism. They couldn’t tell you when or why World War II was fought.

This is what happens when history and government are no longer priorities in the school curriculum and social media becomes the substitute teacher.

MELISSA VERDUGO  
Rancho Palos Verdes

## Fly to Mars, wreck the Earth

Re “Musk’s dumbest idea: Sending colonists to Mars,” column, Oct. 20

Michael Hiltzik rightly dismantles Elon Musk’s fixation on sending humans to Mars, but he could have been more thorough.

Musk claims to want to save humankind from extinction by creating a colony of 1 million earthlings on the red planet. His plan hastens the destruction of a livable Earth through accelerated global warming, one of the threats for which, Musk believes, we need a Martian escape hatch.

Each launch of his company SpaceX’s Starship rocket burns super-cooled methane, generating the equivalent of more than 76,000 tons of carbon dioxide emissions, according to Space.com.

That’s like driving more than 15,000 gas-powered sedans 12,000 miles — the very sort of auto Tesla is supposedly trying to get off our roads and out of our environment.

While applauding the cost-saving reusable SpaceX rockets, advances in engine design and the company’s Dragon capsule, we should recognize the expensive but less visible mitigation costs from frequent launches of Starship, Falcon 9 and Falcon Heavy rockets.

CARL SELKIN  
Pasadena

Hiltzik writes that Musk’s desire to colonize Mars is a “whim” because Musk hasn’t “soberly pondered the obstacles.” In fact, Musk has spent the last 20 years pondering those obstacles and overcoming them, making him the richest person in the world.

NASA pioneered space flight, but it never gave thought to making it profitable. As missions grew in expense and complexity, public support for the Apollo program of the 1960s and 70s and the space shuttle program afterward waned.

From the founding of SpaceX, Musk understood he needed to make the economics work as well as the engineering. His determination to recycle boosters slashed payload costs dramatically and improved the carbon footprints of his rockets.

His engineering and financial successes have never caused Musk to lose sight of his Mars dream. From the founding of SpaceX, Musk insisted on methane fuel rather than the industry standard of kerosene, because methane could be made from hydrogen on Mars and thus harnessed to fuel return trips.

ROBERT HELBING  
Monrovia

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## OP-ED

# Persecuted to death by Putin, Alexei Navalny never lost hope

The dissident's posthumous memoir is funny, tragic and somehow optimistic

**ROBIN ABCARIAN**

IF YOU'VE EVER wondered what it's like to die by nerve agent — the kind of poison Russian President Vladimir Putin is known to use against his enemies — I highly recommend Alexei Navalny's posthumous memoir, "Patriot."



The story begins in the summer of 2020. Navalny, the charismatic Russian opposition leader and anti-corruption crusader, is on a plane en route to Moscow from Siberia, where he had been organizing candidates to run against Putin's United Russia party. He is watching an episode of "Rick and Morty" on his laptop when he is stricken midair. He isn't in pain, but his body and brain just seem to slowly shut down. The physical world no longer makes sense.

Soon, he is on the floor of the plane's galley, lying on his side and staring at a bulkhead. He has been poisoned, he tells a flight attendant, and he is about to die.

"Spoiler alert," he writes. "Actually I didn't."

The plane makes an emergency landing, and after a two-day pressure campaign spearheaded by his

wife, Yulia Navalnaya, Russian authorities allow Navalny to be flown to Berlin, where he will spend 32 days in a hospital, 18 of them in a coma.

Unlike in the movies, however, he didn't suddenly wake up.

"The whole process," he writes, "was like a long-drawn-out and highly realistic journey through the circles of hell."

A famous Japanese neurosurgeon was frequently at his bedside. The doctor shared a haiku that he had written in memory of his son, who had died in his arms at the age of 2. The poem so moved Navalny that he cried for days.

Later, Navalny discovered that there was no Japanese neurosurgeon, no dead toddler and no haiku. He had hallucinated the entire episode, even the poem that made him weep.

"When I'm asked what it's like to die from a chemical weapon, two associations come to mind," Navalny writes. "The Dementors from 'Harry Potter' and the Nazgûl in Tolkien's 'Lord of the Rings.'"

His memoir is divided into two parts: an autobiography beginning with his birth in Ukraine and early disillusionment with his government, starting with its lies about the 1986 nuclear catastro-



PAVEL GOLOVKIN Associated Press

**RUSSIAN OPPOSITION LEADER** Alexei Navalny during a protest in Moscow in 2019. Treated for poisoning in Berlin in 2020, he could have remained free but chose to return to his country.

phe at Chernobyl, which forced his family to move when he was 10; and a prison diary kept over the course of his three-year confinement at the hands of Putin.

Navalny's enduring idealism, optimism and humor — even as he suffers terribly in a penal colony in the Russian Arctic nicknamed "Polar Wolf" — are striking and inspiring.

**'Trump's agenda and plans look truly scary,' Navalny wrote to a friend shortly before his death in a Russian penal colony. 'What a nightmare.'**

"It's a real Russian spring day," he wrote on April 3, 2023. "That is, the snowdrifts are up to my waist, and it's been snowing all week-end."

He fought to stay hopeful, and he refused to let Putin imprison his mind the way he had imprisoned his body in freezing "punishment cells." He called his coping

strategy "prison Zen," imagining his incarceration as a kind of "space voyage."

"One day, I simply made the decision not to be afraid," he writes.

After his nine-year sentence for a variety of trumped-up "extremist activities" was extended an additional 19 years, he understood that he would probably die behind bars.

"I knew from the outset that I would be imprisoned for life," Navalny writes, "either for the rest of my life or until the end of the life of this regime."

The Russian authorities announced in February that Navalny had collapsed after a walk and died. No specific cause of death was ever confirmed, but he had been severely weakened by the 2020 poisoning, at least 300 days of solitary confinement in a punishment cell and a lack of adequate medical care.

Navalny could have avoided his imprisonment and death at 47. After he was poisoned, he could have stayed in Germany, or any Western country, with his wife and two children. On principle, however, he returned to Russia, to his country, his home, his mission.

"Our miserable, exhausted motherland needs to be saved," he

wrote on the two-year anniversary of his incarceration. "It has been pillaged, wounded, dragged into an aggressive war and turned into a prison run by the most unscrupulous and deceitful scoundrels. ... I'm not going to surrender my country to them, and I believe that the darkness will eventually yield."

Navalny's widow has been promoting "Patriot." She told the BBC that she hopes to return to Russia to carry on her husband's pro-democracy work and run for president one day. Until Putin is gone, however, she would risk meeting the same fate as her husband — arrest, imprisonment and death.

Appearing on "The View" on Thursday, Navalnaya was asked whether she had a message for American voters. Her response was diplomatic: Don't take anything for granted, she said. "You are still living in democratic country ... and just make the right choice."

Her husband was far more pointed in a letter to a friend last year.

"Trump's agenda and plans look truly scary," Navalny wrote. "What a nightmare."

He knew better than most.

Threads: @rabcarian

## There's a new reason your neighbors bought a weapon — gun culture 3.0

Americans on the left and the right are starting to arm themselves against perceived threats of political violence

By Jennifer Carlson

THE RUMORS AND CONSPIRACY theories in Hurricane Helene's wake came armed and dangerous: Government relief was a green light for property confiscation; funds had immediately run dry; the storm itself had been engineered by the government for the benefit of Kamala Harris' campaign. Meteorologists suffered death threats. In North Carolina, FEMA workers stopped knocking on doors out of fear that militia members were after them. In Tennessee, a church-group volunteer stood between federal helpers and angry open-carry gun-toting locals. And at least one arrest, of a man armed with a rifle and a handgun, took place in North Carolina.

The paranoia in hurricane country, with its undercurrent of violence, is just the latest sign of a new wrinkle in American gun ownership, something scholars have started describing as gun culture 3.0. The 1.0 version is firearm ownership based on hunting, often animated by a mythologized Western frontier. Gun culture 2.0 is self-defense-oriented, motivated by overwhelming concerns about violent crime that emerged in the 1960s. For years, gun-owning Americans have told pollsters that the No. 1 reason they own guns is to protect themselves in dangerous situations.

But that broad motivation conceals a shift in what many — though not all — gun owners feel they now need protection against. Borrowing from the militia movement, which identifies government tyranny as a key reason for firearms ownership, Gun culture 3.0 is all about perceived political threats unleashed by those no longer invested in normal guardrails — whether rogue government agents or rogue private individuals.

Of course, gun culture 3.0 raises the question of what will happen after Nov. 5. Regardless of what the American electorate does on election day, it's hard to imagine a scenario that doesn't enable violence.

In fact, it has already begun. In Arizona, where I live, the Democratic Party office in Tempe was shot up three times over the last two months — and closed this month, its staff worn down by the threat of sprayed bullets. In Pima County, the Democratic office reset its public hours in light of in-



EVA MARIE UZCATEGUI Bloomberg

**WHAT CONSTITUTES** danger to gun owners is broadening beyond worries about crime.

coming violent threats. Election workers scared for their lives are so common now, the change hardly made news.

Meanwhile, two assassination attempts against former President Trump almost feel unremarkable. Even the near-miss first attempt failed to register — one poll taken in the days after found that roughly 30% of Biden supporters (he was still in the race) downplayed the severity of the situation, suggesting that the attempt might have been staged. A similar slice of Republicans feel the same way about mass shootings.

Political violence and threats are looking like a feature, not a bug, of American politics.

Although gun owners are modestly more likely to believe that po-

**Americans across the spectrum are turning to firearms as a tool of last resort to regain a sense of control in an era of division and distrust.**

litical violence is justified than their non-gun-owning counterparts, they are not more likely to express willingness to engage in such violence.

Nevertheless, there is evidence that certain subgroups of gun owners may be. According to a recent study, 42% of assault-style-weapon owners say political violence could be justified, as did 56% of gun owners who carry all or most of the time.

Such attitudes betray right-wing distrust of government and a hard-line embrace of the 2nd Amendment. And yet, the same study reported that 44% of a different but potentially overlapping subgroup — new gun owners — also agreed that political violence could be justified. Disproportion-

ately, new gun owners are women and people of color, and they tend to lean liberal as compared with existing gun owners. They too are part of an emergent gun culture 3.0.

In fact, a study published this summer in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine found that new gun owners are much more likely to be motivated by political concerns with regard to protective force than other issues: They want protection during rallies and demonstrations, and they are especially worried about violence from people who don't share their political beliefs. Black gun owners — long-standing or new — in particular worried about police violence.

These data points suggest that Americans across the spectrum are turning to firearms as a tool of last resort to regain — as "bad feminist" and new gun owner Roxane Gay recently put it — "ways to not feel out of control." And our divisive and distrustful politics are driving them there.

Some think political violence resolves itself, that it is its "own worst enemy," because the backlash it causes renews people's commitment to civility, and a fundamental, despite-our-differences unity. But waiting for political violence to shock Americans back from the brink can't be the only way to stem the division and fear behind gun culture 3.0.

In Tennessee when armed antagonists approached aid workers in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene, the woman who stepped between them listened. "People just need to be heard," she told a reporter, "I said, 'I hear you.'" But she also pointed out what they could see for themselves: storm victims being helped, not exploited.

We can depolarize everyday life, calling out divisive behavior and labeling disinformation for what it is, even among our political allies, and working — no matter how hard it might be — to approach those on the "other side" with curiosity. Maybe even compassion.

Neither gun ownership nor gun limits will address the underlying fear and polarization that feeds gun culture 3.0. We have to address our withered capacity to live with one another.

JENNIFER CARLSON is the founding director of the Center for the Study of Guns in Society at Arizona State University and a 2022 MacArthur fellow.

## OPINION

## BOOKS &amp; IDEAS

# Two memoirs trace ways mental illness carves chasms in a life

By Lorraine Berry

**I**N TWO EXTRAORDINARY memoirs, Sarah LaBrie and Sarah Moss chronicle the ways in which mental illness carves canyons and chasms in a life. For both women, the gift of writing came with strings attached: the strands of DNA they carry from parents who were mentally unstable. For LaBrie, the fears of an inherited mental illness restricted her soaring creativeness. For Moss, a difficult childhood manifested in life-threatening anorexia. For both, the life of the mind offered an escape.

LaBrie's "No One Gets to Fall Apart" opens with a harrowing scene. "My grandmother in Houston calls me in Los Angeles to tell me my mother was recently found on the side of the freeway, parked, honking her horn, her car filled with notes in which she outlined federal agents' plan to kill her." It is, the author finds out, the last in a recent series of events in which her mother's untreated schizophrenia has hit yet another apogee.

For LaBrie, it is a frightening reminder of her childhood. Raised by her single mother, LaBrie received financial support and stability from her grandmother, an accomplished attorney who was featured in a 1978 edition of *Ebony* magazine as an exemplar of how, as one Houston official said, "For young Blacks with skills, this is the city of the 21st Century." At midlife, her grandmother gave up practicing law to open a combination naturopathic medicine and bookstore. Her resilience in response to the historical legacy of racism and her sense that success is the result of focus and drive did not equip her to understand her own daughter's mental illness.

LaBrie's childhood is a mixture of the benefits bestowed by her grandmother's money — which includes a beautiful house and a first-class education at an elite private school — and living with a mother whose schizophrenia has been labeled by family as a violent temper. In her family, she writes, "We loved and wanted the best for each other," even if "it was policy to let fate take each person where it would, even if doing so meant failing to avert di-

saster." LaBrie becomes the doubled self who presents a shiny façade to the world to hide family chaos and denial.

A stellar student, LaBrie goes away to Rhode Island to attend Brown University. She is beset with depression and an eating disorder, responses to the toxic levels of competition among wealthy white children who benefit from the affirmative action of legacy admissions and family entitlement. The racism of her Ivy League peers, couched in genteel politeness, corrodes the shiny self that she presents. LaBrie becomes friends with another Black student, Sadie, and the two of them provide each other with support and companionship.

In her 20s, LaBrie's life is structured by her pursuit of an MFA and her work on a novel that explores how the ideas of the vaunted philosopher Walter Benjamin affect the lives of her characters. She also enters a loving relationship with a young filmmaker. Novel writing serves as a refuge from her mother's deteriorating mental state. Outside of the manuscript, unresolved feelings about her family cause friction in her romantic and platonic relationships and burden her with the fear that she has inherited her mother's illness.

LaBrie brings a piercing astuteness and sensitive voice to the dilemma raised by the writer's desire to tell a story. Trying to separate a family's fictions from its realities is to enter locked closets full of redacted memories and erased stories that have been overwritten to hide the truth. Mental illness, despite our increased understanding of its causes and etiology, still causes shame. It can make a person doubt herself, make her question whether her perceptions are evidence of her own diseased mind. For a writer, the related ability to imaginatively interpret reality is turned inward.

In "My Bright Good Wolf," Sarah Moss' family is deeply affected by growing up in Britain during a period of social and political turbulence. Even more so, they are affected by Britishness: In the United Kingdom, mental illness has been stigmatized by imperialist pretensions that a "stiff upper lip" distinguishes British character above other nations.



**My Good Bright Wolf**  
by Sarah Moss



**No One Gets to Fall Apart**  
by Sarah LaBrie

In some ways sidestepping this stigma, Moss refuses the jargon of psychology, eschewing terms familiar to Americans such as depression, anxiety and trauma to focus instead on the cultural and intellectual forces that define who is seen as normal and abnormal within society.

When she teases apart the structural underpinnings that prescribe gender, her analytical skills are breathtaking. When she lets those structures tumble and gives voice to the child raised in a spartan emotional wasteland, she broke my heart.

Moss' mother, whom she calls "Jumbly Girl," and her father, "the Owl," were rigid in their worldviews, and those ideas were used to govern their children. They smash their intelligent, sensitive daughter into fragments.

Moss looks back on that childhood and extends a deep empathy to her mother. She sees her as part of "a generation generously educated right to the doctorate by the welfare state and then walled up in marriage, baited and switched after all." Her mother, like other second-wave feminists, raged against a system in which professional aspirations and passions were to be sacrificed in order to fulfill roles as parents and wives. Moss grew up knowing that she was "the trap" that kept Jumbly Girl at home.

Moss' mother used her intellect to become fanatical about domestic matters. She baked her own bread, grew a garden, rejected convenient processed foods and made clothes. Anger against her own domesticity pushed Jumbly Girl to practice a wellness doctrine that made her feel superior to the system she scorned. Family hiking and climbing trips nearly every weekend fed into her ethos of a prime healthiness.

The Owl fit the all-too-familiar model of men who showed progressive views at work but were misogynistic tyrants at home. He was obsessed with his wife's and daughter's weights and would not allow sugar or butter in the house.

When Moss loses weight during an extended bout of illness, instead of noticing the flu's ravaging effects and expressing concern, her father praises her new slimness and uses it as a cudgel against his "fat" wife.

And he's physically violent.

Moss escaped into novels. She read constantly, beginning with Laura Ingalls Wilder and the British children's adventure novels in which groups of kids explore the countryside with little parental supervision — tales to inculcate values of self-reliance — and proceeded into the 19th century canon of writers that includes Austen, the Brontës and Tolstoy. Living in an anxiety-producing home, where her parents fought constantly about food, she provides deep insight into the literary formation of an ideal heroine — slim, self-controlled and white, one who rejects the corruptions of luxury that bring dissolution and debauchery.

From the confluences of culture and family, Moss develops severe anorexia. For her, refusing her nutritional needs gives her control over her emerging adult body. Women's bodies are to be disciplined if they want to be taken seriously in a male world. The eating disorder followed her into adulthood and has had disastrous results.

Like LaBrie, Moss goes back into a dark past to bring forth childhood memories. Setting that childhood voice free comes at a cost. A second voice, rendered in italics, constantly challenges her memories, berating her for making up stories. She alternates that vulnerability with her mature intellect, which sees that the literature she read to escape actually enforced British imperialism's moral values of racial superiority, robust physical health and modest womanhood.

Both LaBrie and Moss wrestle with the limits that rationalism imposes on emotional health. LaBrie understands her mother's diagnosis, but that understanding does not lessen the pain of such knowledge. Writing fiction requires an author to harness voices in one's head that inspire characters and plots. How is that different from the free-rein voices that often accompany schizophrenia?

For Moss, creativity and intellect prove to be inadequate tools for controlling anorexia. "Understanding a problem is not the same as solving it," she writes. "The human capacity for getting used to things can be a terrible strength."

From those terrible strengths possessed by both LaBrie and Moss, terrible beauty is born.

LORRAINE BERRY is a writer and critic living in Oregon.

**N**O ONE IS A better candidate for a biblio-memoir than Glory Edim, the creator of Well-Read Black Girl, a book club with close to half a million Instagram followers. Fans of her club, which foregrounds Black female writers, will likely want to read about the authors who shaped this self-made literary titan. But "Gather Me: A Memoir in Praise of the Books That Saved Me" delivers much more: a dramatic life story full of hairpin turns and interwoven leitmotifs that might seem ingeniously crafted if it weren't all true.

Edim grew up in Arlington, Va., the daughter of an architect and a teacher, both Nigerian immigrants. Her mother read to her as a baby, and Edim read to her younger brother, Maurice, after her parents divorced when she was 8, her father disappeared mysteriously and her mother took two jobs to support the family. Together they savored "Corduroy," "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" and "Charlotte's Web," and they vanished into the stacks of the Arlington Public Library, quietly calling out "brother" and "sister" to find each other when it was time to leave.

After her mother's remarriage and the arrival of another sibling, Edim became a virtual preteen parent, changing diapers, picking up her brothers from day care and school, feeding them and putting them to bed. But her experience wasn't shared by anyone she knew — or reflected in the many books she read.

And her life got harder and harder. Her emotionally corrosive stepfather hammered away at her self-esteem, telling Edim she was doomed to be "knocked up by 15" even though, she writes, "I was a churchgoing teenager whose biggest rebellion consisted of trying to steal a little extra time to read."

When Edim, then 11, saw footage of Maya Angelou reading at Bill Clinton's 1993 inauguration, it was a revelation.

"Imagine being a pubescent child suffering under the eye of a stepfather who made it his personal quest to make sure I was thoroughly ashamed of my own body and its nascent sexuality," she writes. "And then imagine ... the shock and thrill" of reading Angelou, "who led me



A MURAL of Maya Angelou, who shaped author and book community leader Glory Edim.

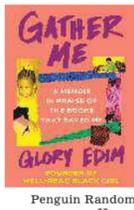
## The seeds of the Well-Read Black Girl book club

By Margot Mifflin

back to the person I had once been." She memorized poems such as "Still I Rise" as if she were "taking notes on my impending womanhood." Through Angelou, she found Nikki Giovanni, James Baldwin, Ntozake Shange and Toni Morrison.

Edim encountered the poet again in high school, when her beloved, white Advanced Placement English teacher (she had no Black teachers) assigned "Catcher in the Rye," which she detested, as if it were a "sacred offering" and accused Angelou, her favorite writer, of bad grammar. But the teacher listened patiently as she explained why this was a misreading of Angelou's vernacular style, even helping her formulate her argument against him. He thereby helped cultivate the critical thinking that made Edim see the curriculum's broader flaws — even if he didn't. "I sometimes find myself still arguing with Mr. Burns in my head," she writes.

As a teenager, Edim effectively



**Gather Me: A Memoir in Praise of the Books That Saved Me**  
by Glory Edim

became a single parent not only to her brothers but also to her mother, whose divorce from her second husband sent her into a debilitating depression. A "shuffling zombie," her mother largely stopped getting up, going out and, most significantly, talking — for five years. Edim had no adults to turn to; the one family friend she approached pronounced her mother "possessed."

A snapshot of Edim's life as an undergraduate at Howard University during this time should make any professor think twice about judging students who nod off in class. She was up at 5 a.m. to wash and feed her mother and confer with Maurice about who would pick up their younger brother from school and shop for food. Then, she writes, "I had my own classes to attend, a tutoring session to run, the daily challenge of pretending to be an average, happy, functional senior in college, not a desperate, exhausted caretaker, sister and daughter who

could barely keep the lights on."

She also worried about her brothers' safety in the wake of the Rodney King beating and other incidents of police brutality. Baldwin's "The Fire Next Time" gave her "the vocabulary to describe that helpless impulse to try to protect the people you love from a system that you can't control."

As Edim struggled to make sense of both the mother she had and the mother she had lost, she read Audre Lorde's "Sister Outsider," and a switch flipped. "My own mother taught me to survive from a very early age by her own example," Lorde writes. "Her silences also taught me isolation, fury, mistrust, self-rejection, and sadness." Survival, the writer adds, is the greatest gift, and "sometimes, for Black mothers, it is the only gift possible."

With Lorde's help, Edim came to grips with the fact that she was now truly motherless — coincidentally, while she was on a plane to Nigeria to reconnect with her father and become, after more than a decade of separation, "somebody's child once more." Ultimately, both her parents returned to her life through a nearly miraculous series of events best enjoyed without spoilers.

Edim's first book, "Well-Read Black Girl: Finding Our Stories, Discovering Ourselves," is an anthology of writing by Black authors answering the question "When did you first see yourself in literature?" "Gather Me" is her own answer.

You could read it for its spectacular narrative arc alone, but don't. Read it to see how libraries can be a crucial refuge for children whose home lives are unmanageable. Read it to see how white-dominated high school curricula can erase and invalidate Black students. Read it because so many of the books that nurtured, guided and empowered Edim are the ones MAGA Republicans want banned.

And read it because, as Baldwin once said, "You think your pain and your heartbreak are unprecedented in the history of the world, but then you read."

MARGOT MIFFLIN is a professor at the City University of New York and the author, most recently, of "Looking for Miss America: A Pageant's 100-year Quest to Define Womanhood."

## OPINION

## BOOKS &amp; IDEAS

# THE QUESTION OF ‘WHO GETS TO BE NATIVE IN AMERICA’

By Lorraine Berry

“THE INDIAN CARD” begins with a statistical puzzle: In the 2000 U.S. census, 4.1 million people indicated Native American heritage. But in 2020, that figure had swelled to 9.7 million. And yet there had been no baby boom.

Here’s another wrinkle: There were only about 1.9 million enrolled members of tribes in the contiguous U.S. in 2020.

In these gaping discrepancies, author Carrie Lowry Schuettpelz saw a need for stories to be told. An enrolled member of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina who served in the Obama administration, Schuettpelz is an expert on Native policy and homelessness. Data have been her stock in trade. So how does she find meaning in these anomalies? By finding context.

“The Indian Card” amplifies the accounts of many who have been affected by a flawed one-size-fits-all notion of identity. Following along, one can begin to imagine how the number of Americans claiming Native identities might fluctuate by millions, even in a decade.

Schuettpelz gathers the testimonies of individuals about bonds that tie them to their tribe and how membership grounds them. She also recounts experiences that led to greater alienation and isolation, as some people were denied membership in tribes with which they identified or as whole tribes were denied federal recognition.

To be meaningful, a conversation about Native American heritage must take place at this level of granularity, Schuettpelz writes, because there are 347 recognized tribes in the contiguous United States: “Treating ‘Native America’ as a monolith is a bit like claiming interest in ‘Asian culture.’ There isn’t just one.”

The federal government has its own complicated processes for recognizing tribes. Regardless of that status, each tribe and nation can determine whom to include. Decisions could hinge on patrilineal or matrilineal descent, a direct relative’s name on a 19th century federal list of tribal members or other documents that tie an individual to a tribe. Some tribes determine the fraction of one’s bloodline that justifies membership. Historically, others have defined their people through shared oral traditions or shared languages, or consanguinity or habitation.

Questions of identity are personal for Schuettpelz. She grew up in



Flatiron  
**The Indian Card: Who Gets to Be Native in America**  
by Carrie Lowry Schuettpelz

Iowa, more than a thousand miles from the territory of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina. Her parents enrolled her as a tribal member when she was a little girl. Her family’s trips back to North Carolina brought her into a community of kinship, a permanence tied to a homeland, personal stories that gave her a sense of belonging that contrasted with her family’s isolation in Iowa.

As the book opens, she is trying to make a decision about her own two young children. What would it mean in their lives to be recognized for their kinship in that tribe? In what ways does it matter that the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina is not yet recognized by the U.S. government?

At the heart of tribal recognition is the notion of sovereignty, a word this book describes as a love language full of cultural and historical meaning. In simplest terms, it’s the ability of a tribe to govern itself, to have jurisdiction over its lands, a right to determine its own future. In this country’s bloody history, tribal sovereignty is a testament to survival and a source of pride.

For the federal government, however, defining tribes and counting Native Americans became crucial only because of brutal policies under President Andrew Jackson in the 1830s, evicting individuals who had been enumerated on “muster rolls.” But the rolls themselves were shoddy, often based on cursory observations of supposed racial markers such as the color of skin, facial structure and hair texture, or on lists of members that tribal leaders provided under treaty terms.

After World War II, the government began a new policy that simply terminated recognition of hundreds of tribes, stripping away any claimed tribal sovereignty over their lands. Despite a later effort at correcting this, in California alone, 12 tribes were terminated and still have not had their tribal rights restored. A tribe’s struggle for recognition can be arduous.

Individuals’ relationships with their own Native identity are complicated in their own ways. Consider the almost 8 million Americans who identified as Native on the 2020 census but are not members of recognized tribes. Why would they check the “Native” box? Some are members of unrecognized tribes. Some may be embracing unverified family lore, perhaps of a distant Cherokee ancestor. Others might claim a minority identity in the hope of preferential treatment in hiring or college admissions, or for cultural cachet. Whether most of these peo-

ple descend from pre-Columbian Americans is anyone’s guess.

Some “pretendians,” historically, are motivated by greed. One pernicious old myth is that being Native American brings abundant federal subsidies or income from mineral rights or casinos — think “Killers of the Flower Moon” and Osage oil money. Tribal offices receive calls from strangers claiming Native American DNA and demanding some of that mythical money, Schuettpelz relays.

The reality, however, is that Native Americans endure rates of poverty and homelessness many times higher than those of white-identified Americans. “The Indian Card” finds real benefits that can derive from tribal membership, but instant wealth is not among them. And the pursuit of belonging can be painful.

Calculations of “blood quantum” are still common among many tribes, but the formula has been rigged against Native Americans from the start. Unlike racist crackpot notions such as the supposed “one drop” rule that determined who could be enslaved or who would be subject to Jim Crow apartheid, when it came to determining who qualified as Native American, the white supremacist government held itself arbiter of who *wasn’t* Native based on certain percentages of white ancestry. The government wanted to diminish the numbers of Native Americans and replace tribal identity with whiteness.

For more than 500 years, Native Americans and individuals from Europe and Africa have been blurring and redrawing the lines between their peoples, and across those centuries, millions of individuals have had millions of reasons for identifying with one or more sides of their ancestry. Before the 2000 census, that complexity was officially invisible, because each resident could declare only one race.

For 200 years, the federal government has wielded official recognition as a weapon and a wedge; in all that time, many tribes themselves have tried to abide by long-discredited old Eurocentric notions of race, with tragic results.

So of course Schuettpelz can’t offer a simple explanation for the book’s opening puzzle about what changed between 2000 and 2020. When it comes to Native American identity, change has been the only constant. Only the 7.8 million individuals themselves could explain why they identified as Native in 2020 but were not officially members of a recognized tribe. The big questions that drove Carrie Lowry Schuettpelz to examine the data, to seek out individual stories and collective histories, can be only partially answered. The most satisfying explanation may lie in the microcosm she generously shares with readers: Unpacking the ways that she knows herself as Lumbee, she establishes the ways her kids will know and be known by her community.

LORRAINE BERRY is a writer and critic living in Oregon.

The aggregate data about Native identity are baffling. The real answers are found in the accounts of individuals.

## Truth about the West’s last outlaws is better than fiction

‘Bandit Heaven’ details late 19th century hideouts in Wyoming and Utah and the colorful cast who hid there

By Chris Vognar



St. Martin’s  
**Bandit Heaven: The Hole-in-the-Wall Gangs and the Final Chapter of the Wild West**  
by Tom Clavin

varmint themselves. Cherokee Bangs. George “Big Nose” Parrott (that’s just not nice). George “Flatnose” Currie (is that any kinder?).

The press could get in on the act as well. When homesteaders Ella Watson and James Avrell were lynched at the hands of avaricious ranchers who wanted their land, one newspaper headline summed up the crime thus: “Blaspheming Border Beauty Barbarously Boosted Branchward.”

As Clavin describes, the violence of the period often was perpetrated by consortiums of big land owners intent on swallowing up their smaller competition. The year 1891 saw the start of the Johnson County War, in which Wyoming cattle barons hired an assassination squad to eliminate small ranchers who had the temerity to erect barbed-wire fences around their land and cattle. The barons often had law enforcement in their pockets; as Clavin writes, “Even in the last days of the Wild West, there could be a thin line between lawman and outlaw.”

The Johnson County War was the basis of the 1980 movie “Heaven’s Gate,” a notorious flop that all but bankrupted its studio, United Artists, but remains ripe for reconsideration. The practice of cutting ranchers’ barbed-wire fences is an

instigating plot point in the great 1940 Gary Cooper western “The Westerner.” But the true movie-stars-to-be in “Bandit Heaven” are Bob Parker and Harry Longabaugh, better known as Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid. Here, too, Clavin applies a bit of myth-busting. Parker/Cassidy certainly rode with Lonabaugh/Sundance, but his “best friend and chief sidekick in outlaw gangs he led” was a different man altogether, named Elzy Lay, who wasn’t blessed with a pithy moniker. The rather glib 1969 movie about Butch and Sundance (which came out the same year as a far superior western about the end of the frontier, “The Wild Bunch”), has forever cemented our conception of the duo as charming quipsters, a depiction that seems to have at least some basis in reality.

In the words of Ford’s “The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance,” “When the legend becomes fact, print the legend.” But Clavin is generally more interested in the fact, and if he doesn’t necessarily render it with poetry or great imagination, he knows how to grind it out piece by piece, episode by episode. He does eventually get to Butch and Sundance, the Hole-in-the-Wall Gang and their pursuers, including Pinkerton detective Charlie Siringo, who

infiltrated the gang (and was also on the scene of the 1886 Haymarket bombing and its aftermath in Chicago). When he wasn’t going after Western outlaws, Siringo was rounding up union members; at times it was hard to say which struck more fear in the hearts of government and law enforcement.

Clavin makes clear that cattle rustling was a routine operation in these times, often seen as a form of skimming from big ranchers by the cowboys hired to work the herds. Sometimes crime went unpunished in these late days of the frontier. And sometimes vengeance was taken with savage ferocity. “Bandit Heaven” is at its best when Clavin unleashes an anecdote of macabre detail. Which brings us back to our friend George “Big Nose” Parrott.

The unfortunate outlaw was hanged from the crossbeam of a telephone pole after he and his train-robbing gang gunned down a pair of lawmen and Parrott attempted to escape from jail. Then things got weird. Two doctors decided to study his brain and its possible criminal inclinations. Clavin writes: “A death mask of Parrott’s face was created and skin from his thighs and chest was removed. The skin, including the dead man’s nipples, was sent to a tannery in Denver, where it was made into a medical bag and a pair of shoes.” One of the doctors, John Osborne, wore the shoes to his inaugural ball when he was sworn in as Wyoming’s first Democratic governor in 1893.

Who needs legend when the historical record offers such riches?

CHRIS VOGNAR is a freelance culture writer.

WE LIKE TO mythologize our Western outlaws and their catchy nicknames, which often include the designation of “Kid” (Billy the Kid, the Sundance Kid or, if you’re a fan of John Ford’s “Stagecoach,” the Ringo Kid). Tom Clavin, the author of several books about the Old West, including “Dodge City,” “Tombstone” and the new “Bandit Heaven,” is after something more elusive: the facts, or at least something close to them. He isn’t a revisionist historian in the vein of, say, Richard Slotkin, whose books, including “Gunfighter Nation” and “Fatal Environment,” examine the foundational, blood-drenched myths of the United States. But the true stories Clavin recounts — and “Bandit Heaven” often reads like a series of enthralling yarns — are based in deep research.

Which doesn’t mean they aren’t fun. In telling the tale of three late 19th century hideouts in Wyoming and Utah — Robbers Roost, Brown’s Hole and Hole-in-the-Wall — “Bandit Heaven” reminds us how colorful language was used to describe even the most dire circumstances. For instance, the winter of 1886-87 was so brutal, killing off people and an estimated 90% of cattle on the northern ranges of Wyoming, Montana and the Dakota Territory, that it came to be known as the Big Die-Up. If you’re gonna go, you might as well go in something called that.

Sometimes a random place name is enough to tickle the fancy. I’m rather partial to the town of Chugwater, Wyo., home of Two Bar Ranch. And of course there are the names of the miscreants and

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# CALIFORNIA

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2024 :: LATIMES.COM/CALIFORNIA



NASH WEERASEKERA For The Times

## Showing the real L.A. as the city prepares for the Olympics

It might be time to ditch the Hollywood sign and palm trees to reveal the metropolis' true essence

By Thomas Curwen

Los Angeles is well-versed in deception. Bring water to the desert, and everything will turn green. Build miles of freeway, and no place will be out of reach. Promise a dream, and the city will grow.

So when Tom Cruise dropped from the sky this summer, landing next to the Hollywood sign, and when a skateboarder coasted down the Venice boardwalk, ending up in Long Beach, few cried foul. In the name of entertainment, all's fair (doubly so for the sake of promotion, as in this case: Paris handing off the Olympics to Los Angeles).

But when the cameras went dark, some were left wondering why the truth is so hard to bear.

Los Angeles is a congested city on the verge of drought. Opportunity is scattershot and dreams hard to realize. Yet here, millions have found a way to live with one another — sometimes in harmony, sometimes in discord — creating a polyglot mosaic of communities that mirror the nations of the world.

If Paris can tackle its dark history — revolution, beheadings, barricades — and still celebrate its beauty, then the city that invented noir should be up to the challenge when its turn comes to play Olympic host.

From Tovaangar to today, Los Angeles has [See Real, B8]

## Times owner defends editorial decision

Subscribers cancel, staffers resign over presidential race non-endorsement.

By James Rainey

A decision by the owner of The Times not to endorse in the 2024 presidential race — after the paper's editorial board proposed backing Kamala Harris — has created a tempest, prompting three members of the board to resign and provoking thousands of readers to cancel their subscriptions.

Times owner Dr. Patrick Soon-Shiong said that his decision not to offer readers a recommendation would be less divisive in a tumultuous election year.

"I have no regrets whatsoever. In fact, I think it was exactly the right decision," he said in an interview with The Times on Friday afternoon. "The process was [to decide]: how do we actually best inform our readers? And there could be nobody better than us who try to sift the facts from fiction" while leaving it to readers to make their own final decision.

He said he feared that picking one candidate would only exacerbate the already deep divisions in the country.

Members of the editorial board protested that the non-endorsement was out of step with recent precedent at the newspaper, which has picked a presidential candidate in every election since 2008, and with The Times' previous editorial position, which has been ardently opposed to former President Trump.

Editorials Editor Mariel Garza resigned Wednesday as a result of the decision. Editorial board members Robert Greene and Karin Klein tendered their resignations from The Times the following day. Greene won the Pulitzer Prize for editorial writing in 2021 for his writing about criminal justice reform.

"How could we spend eight years railing against Trump and the danger his leadership poses to the country and then fail to endorse the perfectly decent Democrat challenger — who we previously endorsed for the U.S. Senate?" Garza wrote Wednesday in her letter of resignation to Times Executive Editor Terry Tang. "The non-endorsement undermines the integrity of the editorial board and every single endorsement we make, down to school board races."

"I'm disappointed by the editorial [board] members resigning the way they did. But that's their choice, right?" Soon-Shiong said in the interview.

The medical technology billionaire, who bought The Times in 2018, posted on the social media site X on Wednesday that he believed he had offered his opinion writers a reasonable alternative to a traditional endorsement. He said they should "draft a factual analysis of all the POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE policies by EACH candidate during their tenures at the White House, and how these policies affected the nation."

"In addition, the Board was asked to provide their understanding of the policies and plans enunciated by the candidates during this campaign and its potential effect on the nation in the next four years," he added. "In this way, with this clear and non-partisan information side-by-side, our readers could decide who would be worthy of being President for the next four years."

"The Editorial Board [See Times, B2]

## Democrats in close House races back Prop. 36

By Anabel Sosa

Democrats running in California's six fiercely competitive congressional districts, seats that may determine the balance of power in Washington, are aligning themselves with their Republican rivals in support of a tough-on-crime ballot measure that voters will decide in the November election.

That unity indicates the political vulnerability Democratic candidates may face over the issue of crime, particularly in tight races. Recent polls show broad voter support for the initiative, Proposition 36, which would impose stricter penalties for retail theft and crimes involving fentanyl.

At stake are a half-dozen congressional seats in Orange County, the Inland Empire and the Antelope and San Joaquin valleys, regions of California that are neither far-left nor far-right. The races are among a handful across the U.S. that both parties see as pivotal in determining control of Congress.

The Democratic candidates have the perilous task of responding to voter concerns over drug addiction. [See Prop. 36, B10]

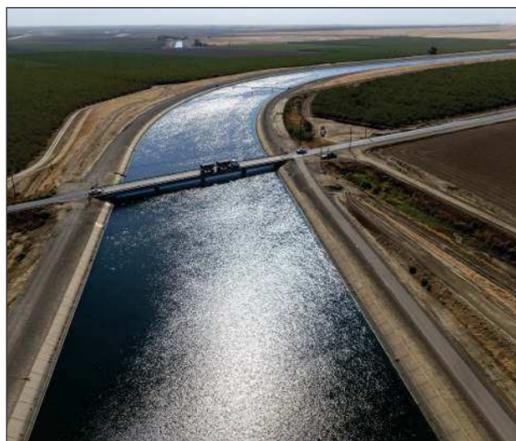
## New plans for water delivery in motion

Biden and Newsom administrations are preparing for overhaul that is fueling debate.

By Ian James

The Biden and Newsom administrations will soon adopt new rules for California's major water delivery systems that will determine how much water may be pumped from rivers while providing protections for imperiled fish species.

But California environmental groups, while supportive of efforts to rewrite the rules, are criticizing the proposed changes and



Brian Van der Brug Los Angeles Times

Environmental groups say the proposed changes fail to protect fish species facing extinction.

warning that the resulting plans would fail to protect fish species that are declining toward extinction in the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta and San Francisco Bay.

As the preferred proposal is laid out in a federal draft environmental review, the new rules "would make things worse," said Jon Rosenfield, science director for the group San Francisco Baykeeper.

"We are deeply concerned that six endangered species in the Bay Delta are on the verge of extinction or headed in that direction," Rosenfield said.

The rules under revision govern dams, aqueducts [See Water, B4]

## D.A.'s decision just one step on long road in Menendez brothers' quest for freedom

By James Queally and Richard Winton

Los Angeles County Dist. Atty. George Gascón's blockbuster announcement that he will seek to have Erik and Lyle Menendez resentenced for their parents' brutal murders marks the first time the brothers have hope of leaving prison since their convictions nearly 30 years ago.

It's also simply the first step in a long process.

Although Thursday's announcement drew praise from the brothers' celebrity supporters and loved ones — and condemnation from critics who think Gascón is pulling an "October surprise" to boost his flagging reelection bid — the brothers' hopes of release still hinge on decisions from a series of arbiters: an L.A. County judge, the state parole board, Gov. Gavin Newsom and potentially a new district attorney in December.



Allen J. Schaben The Times Gascón's move could help his bid for reelection.

The brothers were convicted in 1996 of murder with special circumstances in the shotgun killings of their parents, Jose and Kitty Menendez, in their Beverly Hills home.

The only punishments for that crime under California law are the death penalty or life without parole.

But on Thursday, Gascón said he would seek to have the brothers resentenced on a simple murder charge, which would make [See Menendez, B3]

Times owner defends decision not to endorse in 2024

[Times, from B1] chose to remain silent, Soon-Shiong contended in his X post, "and I accepted their decision."

The three journalists who resigned said they were not silent but, rather, disagreed with the owner's proposal.

"The 'opportunity' to instead present a both-sides analysis would properly be done by the newsroom, not by an editorial board, whose purpose is to take a stand and defend it persuasively," Greene said in a statement.

"I left in response to the refusal to take a stand," Greene wrote, "and to the incorrect assertion that the editorial board had made a choice."

In a statement Saturday to the New York Times, the owner's daughter said her family made "the joint decision" not to endorse in the presidential race.

"As a citizen of a country openly financing genocide, and as a family that experienced South African Apartheid, the endorsement was an opportunity to repudiate justifications for the widespread targeting of journalists and ongoing war on children," Nika Soon-Shiong said in the statement.

Patrick Soon-Shiong responded Saturday, saying his daughter did not play a role in the endorsement.

"Nika speaks in her own personal capacity regarding her opinion, as every community member has the right to do. She does not have any role at the L.A. Times, nor does she participate in any decision or discussion with the editorial board, as has been made clear many times," he said in a statement.

In his interview with The Times on Friday, Soon-Shiong said the decision was not tied to the war in Gaza and his daughter's views were "her opinion."

For many news consumers, the very existence of editorial writers and editorial boards is a point of confusion.

They are generally veteran journalists who write editorials that express the position of their news outlet. Though written by one indi-



ALEX BRANDON Associated Press

THE TIMES is not endorsing in the election between Donald Trump and Kamala Harris, the first time since 2008 the paper has not endorsed in a presidential race.

vidual, the resulting essays are usually not signed because they express the consensus of the board.

At The Times, the eight-member editorial board is overseen by Tang, though Garza led day-to-day operations. Soon-Shiong sits on the board, though he attends its thrice-weekly meetings only occasionally. It is understood that, as owner of The Times, he is entitled to change editorials or prevent them from being published.

Several individuals familiar with The Times' board say that Soon-Shiong intervened only on occasion, including in the 2020 presidential primary season, when he decided that The Times should not name a favorite.

The Times' stable of in-house columnists and the paper's editorial stances are generally liberal.

The owner said Friday that he has been pushing for some time to bring more conservative and centrist voices into the mix. He noted that Republican political strategist Scott Jennings has recently been writing more opinion pieces for The Times, which he said was a bonus for readers.

He said he hoped the conflict over the presidential endorsement would lead to "deep reflection" about the

role of journalists.

"Is this just groupthink, brainwashing or what, on either side?" he said. "I think we stand for more than that. We should be an organization that stands up and says the facts," and also presents views across the political spectrum. He added: "I think that the country needs that desperately."

The Chandler family owned The Times for more than a century, from its founding in 1881. During that long stretch, the family and Times leadership set a stolidly conservative agenda. The newspaper routinely endorsed Republicans for president and most other offices.

The Times backed former Vice President Richard Nixon, a Californian and a Republican, for president in 1972. But after the Watergate scandal brought President Nixon down in 1974, The Times editorial board agreed to no longer endorse in presidential races.

That policy held through eight elections, until 2008, when The Times urged readers to vote for Democrat Barack Obama. It endorsed Democrats in every presidential election since then.

The newspaper backed former Vice President Joe Biden over then-President Trump in the 2020 election. Soon-Shiong made no effort

to change the editorial board's decision. After the Democrat's victory became clear, The Times owner posted a message on social media: "Congratulations President-Elect Biden and Vice-President Elect Harris. Historic day. Now time for our nation to heal. #PresidentElect #AmericaDecides."

Four years earlier, Soon-Shiong congratulated Trump on his victory. "Incredible honor dining w/ Pres-elect @realDonaldTrump last night," he wrote on the site then known as Twitter. "He truly wants to advance #healthcare for all."

A native of South Africa who grew up under apartheid, Soon-Shiong has spoken out passionately in the past about his belief in civil rights. But he has been less vocal publicly about his thoughts on elected officials.

He told Spectrum News last week that some might "look upon me or our family as ultra-progressive or not." But he said he considered himself a political independent, adding in his interview with The Times that — despite speculation — his stand is not based on any singular issue or intended to favor either of the major party candidates.

Soon-Shiong said he has heard from people who sup-

ported his decision as well as many who strongly opposed it.

"That's the whole value of democracy. You can voice your opinion, but I hope they understand by not subscribing that it just adds to the demise of democracy and the Fourth Estate," he told Spectrum.

Many other newspapers continue to endorse in the presidential race. The New York Times recently published an editorial warning about the dangers of a second term for Trump.

But the Washington Post decided, for the first time in 36 years, not to pick a candidate for the White House this year, prompting one board member to resign Friday.

As with the Los Angeles Times decision, the Post's non-endorsement was met with an immediate backlash from many readers and threats of subscription cancellations.

Former Post Editor Martin Baron criticized the Washington paper's move, saying Friday that "history will mark a disturbing chapter of spinelessness at an institution famed for courage." Post Publisher Will Lewis said the paper would allow readers to make up their own minds.

The Trump campaign quickly tried to use word of the L.A. Times' non-endorsement to its advantage. "Even her fellow Californians know she's not up for the job," the Republican's campaign said.

That position flew in the face of statements from Garza and others about their intention to back Harris.

A little more than two months after Trump took office in 2017, the editorial board published a series of scathing essays under the headline: "Our dishonest president." One editorial described Trump's initial actions as "a train wreck" that "will rip families apart, foul rivers and pollute the air, intensify the calamitous effects of climate change and profoundly weaken the system of American public education for all."

Several thousand customers, including actor Mark Hamill, dropped their subscriptions last week in protest over the non-endorsement.

The owner's intervention did not sit well with other Times employees, including many of those who work for the news pages. The morale of many of the workers already had been at a low ebb, given two rounds of layoffs — including the departure of 115 journalists early this year, more than 20% of the newsroom — following a period of growth and hiring since 2017.

The Times — like virtually every other American newspaper — has been struggling to find a viable fi-

nancial model, given the massive downsizing of print advertising. Soon-Shiong's willingness to underwrite tens of millions of dollars of losses per year has made cuts at The Times, though painful, less extreme than at some of the country's biggest newspaper chains.

The union representing Times journalists, which has been without a contract and pay raises for more than two years, demanded that management give a fuller explanation of the failure to endorse.

"Those of us who work in the newsroom, rather than on the Editorial Board, do not have a position on whether a presidential endorsement should have been made," said a letter to Soon-Shiong signed by nearly 200 Times journalists. "However, we all expect The Times to be transparent with readers."

Longtime columnist Robin Abcarian said in an interview that it was "patently absurd" for the newspaper that had written dozens of news stories and opinion pieces about the dangers of Trump to belatedly pull back from endorsing Harris.

"Refusing to endorse for president at a moment when democracy is imperiled is a betrayal of what our editorial pages do: tell the truth, say what we believe and why," Abcarian said.

Abcarian sympathized with readers lashing out at the paper's ownership. But she also called on subscribers to keep supporting the hundreds of journalists who played no role in the decision.

"The Los Angeles Times is so much more than a single endorsement," she said. The staff "still manages to turn out extraordinary coverage."

In an X post, leaders of the union representing Times journalists agreed. "Before you hit the cancel button," they wrote, "that subscription underwrites the salaries of hundreds of journalists in our newsroom. Our member-journalists work every day to keep readers informed during these tumultuous times. A healthy democracy is an informed democracy."

The debate over the non-endorsement left some readers and officials asking for more transparency over how the decision was made and what factors went into not endorsing Harris.

"I think the paper should be clear about what was motivating their decision not to make an endorsement, when over the course of the last several years, they have properly sounded the alarm about what a threat to our democracy Donald Trump poses," Rep. Adam B. Schiff (D-Burbank), a candidate for U.S. Senate and a leading Trump critic, said in a statement Saturday.

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Home of late 'Friends' actor Matthew Perry sells for \$8.55 million

By CLARA HARTER

Matthew Perry's former Pacific Palisades home has been sold in an \$8.55-million, off-market deal — almost a year to the day since the actor was found dead on the property.

The four-bedroom, 3,500-square-foot, mid-century modern home was sold to Anita Verma-Lallian, a movie producer and real estate developer based in Scottsdale, Ariz., a representative told The Times.

She intends to use the property as a vacation home, her representative said.

Perry purchased the property in 2020 for \$6 million, records show.

Verma-Lallian bought the home through a trust and was represented by Brooke Elliott Laurinkus of Christie's International Real Estate Southern California, her representative said. The listing was held by Greg Holcomb of Carolwood Estates, he added.

Perry was found unresponsive in his backyard hot tub in October 2023. While his death at 54 was initially classified as a drowning, an autopsy revealed that the level of ketamine in his blood was about the same as

would be used during general anesthesia.

In August, Perry's live-in personal assistant, two doctors and two alleged drug dealers were charged with providing ketamine that led to Perry's death.

Ketamine is a legal medication commonly used as an anesthetic, but is also abused recreationally for its calming and dissociative effects. Federal prosecutors allege that the defendants took advantage of Perry's addiction to enrich themselves.

News of Perry's death was met with an outpouring of grief. The beloved comedic actor starred as Chandler Bing in all 10 seasons of the hit sitcom "Friends."

Verma-Lallian received her master's in business administration from USC and is the founder and chief executive of a commercial real estate consulting firm called Arizona Land Consulting, which specializes in securing and developing land in the Greater Phoenix area.

In August, she facilitated a \$136-million purchase of a 2,100-acre site to house data centers for the AI-powered platform Tract.

That same month, she closed two real estate deals in Buckeye, Ariz., totaling almost \$20 million.

# Brothers face more hurdles to freedom

[Menendez, from B1] them eligible for parole because they were under 26 years old when they committed the double murder.

In a 57-page motion made public late Thursday, Gascón's prosecutors argued that the brothers are no longer a threat to public safety and should be released given their exemplary behavior while in custody.

Both brothers got married and obtained college degrees in prison, according to the motion, and started programs that benefit other inmates, including meditation groups and a "green space" project. Corrections staff rarely had to discipline them, with only one allegation of violence being made against either brother in their nearly 30 years in prison, according to the motion.

In recent months, much of the attention on their case has focused on a habeas motion seeking to overturn their convictions altogether. Mark Geragos, their lawyer, revealed new documentation to corroborate the brothers' claims that the killings were motivated by years of sexual abuse by their father. At their trial, prosecutors contended Erik and Lyle had killed their parents to gain access to their inheritance early.

But legal experts say that the brothers might have a more direct path to freedom through resentencing.

"Assuming that they've played by the rules, and they've been in custody as long as they have and they have only minor violations, that would fit the profile of someone who qualifies for resentencing," said Laurie Levenson, a professor at Loyola Law School in Los Angeles and a former federal prosecutor.

Veteran L.A. County Superior Court Judge William Ryan plans to review the case by the end of this year. He could immediately grant



ALLEN J. SCHABEN Los Angeles Times

**RELATIVES** of Kitty Menendez listen as Dist. Atty. George Gascón recommends Thursday that her sons, convicted of killing her and her husband, be resentenced.

the petition, but it's more likely that he would hold a hearing where many of the family's loved ones could speak, along with prosecutors opposed to Gascón's decision.

Gascón acknowledged Thursday that there was not "universal agreement" in his office on the case, with some prosecutors opposed to letting the brothers be resentenced. Another faction in the office had pushed Gascón to seek to resentence the brothers for manslaughter, which would have made them eligible for immediate release if Ryan granted the petition, according to two sources with direct knowledge of Gascón's thinking.

The sources requested anonymity in order to discuss the case candidly. Experts said that move might go too far and backfire with Judge Ryan.

"Gascón's decision was probably the safest avenue he could pick," said Levenson, the Loyola Law professor.

If Ryan grants the petition, the state parole board would then weigh in.

Kathy Cady, a victims rights attorney and former prosecutor who represents Kitty Menendez's oldest brother, said the parole board tends to approve releases if an inmate's prison record is as nearly spotless as what's described in the motion for the two brothers.

As of Oct. 23, the board had granted parole in approximately 31% of the cases it heard this year in which it rendered a decision, according to California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation data.

But Newsom could intervene. Under California law, the governor can block the board's decision to grant inmates parole if he finds evidence that their release would pose an "unreasonable risk to the public."

Newsom has blocked the release of a number of high-profile defendants in the California prison system, including Sirhan Sirhan, convicted of killing Robert F. Kennedy in Los Angeles. He also blocked the release of Charles Manson devotee Leslie Van Houten on three different occasions before stepping out of the way of an appellate court decision last year.

A Newsom spokesperson referred questions about the Menendez brothers to the corrections department.

Van Houten's attorney Nancy Tetreault said she believes Newsom will block the brothers' release due to the intense media attention on the case. But if he does so, she said, it would trigger a lengthy court battle.

"When you have a high-profile client, you can expect to have several parole hearings, because it is my experience that the governor will

likely reverse the release," she said. "When that happens you have to go to [the] Court of Appeal and show why the governor is wrong."

Gascón's decision could also be upheld if he is no longer in office by the time the process plays out in court.

Some polls show his challenger in the Nov. 5 election, former federal prosecutor Nathan Hochman, leading by as much as 30 percentage points among likely voters. Hochman has not taken a public position on the Menendez case, but has said he intends to review the decision if he replaces Gascón.

"I would analyze the thousands of pages of confidential prison records, the transcripts from both trials and the voluminous exhibits, as well as speak to the prosecutors, law enforcement, defense attorneys, experts and victims' family members," Hochman said in a statement. "Only at that point would I be in the position to properly evaluate whether the resentencing request is correct."

Loyola's Levenson said it's unlikely that Hochman could intercede if he wins, however, if the judge grants the resentencing petition before Gascón's term is up in early December.

Times staff writer Salvador Hernandez contributed to this report.

# Study finds wildfires are spreading and intensifying faster

By TERRY CASTLEMAN

Just from what they've experienced over the years, California residents may suspect that wildfires have gotten more extreme amid a warmer and more drought-prone climate.

A new paper in the journal Science puts that sentiment to the test, with startling findings: California fires spread almost four times faster in 2020 than they did in 2001.

The study by scientists from the University of Colorado, UC Merced and UCLA also found that across the West, fires grew 250% more quickly in 2020 than they did in 2001.

"People are pretty good at putting out all fires," said Park Williams, a UCLA professor and study co-author, but "the faster the fire, the more easily it can escape control."

Although intuitive, the relationship between the speed at which a fire spreads and the damage it causes to structures and land was difficult to quantify until recent developments in satellite technology, Williams said.

Now, scientists can plot "trends in the daily growth rates," he said. Using daily fire spread imagery for some 60,000 fires from 2001 to 2020,

they were able to determine a relationship between damage and speed, Williams said.

"During this 20-year study period, fires in the U.S. did indeed on average begin moving faster," he said.

The 3% of fires with the fastest daily growth rates made up around 90% of property loss in the two decades studied.

"In California more than most places in the U.S., people are being confronted with the changes in fire behavior," Williams said.

Many Californians live in proximity to flammable vegetation and are increasingly put in harm's way.

The study gave several possible explanations for the increase in fire speed.

"Fires may be growing faster due to warming trends, vegetation transitions to more flammable fuels, or the co-occurrence of high winds with increasing human-related ignitions," the study posited.

Recent wildfires in California have caused death and destruction and brought the home insurance industry to the brink of crisis.

With the 2024 fire season ending, all eyes will be on next year.



ALLEN J. SCHABEN Los Angeles Times

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# Federal, state leaders prepare new water plans

[Water, from B1] and pumping plants in California's two main water systems, the Central Valley Project and the State Water Project, which deliver water to millions of acres of farmland and more than 25 million people. Pumping to supply farms and cities has contributed to the ecological degradation of the Delta, where threatened and endangered fish species include steelhead trout, two types of Chinook salmon, longfin smelt, Delta smelt and green sturgeon.

The rewriting of the rules, along with supporting biological opinions, began nearly three years ago after California and environmental groups successfully challenged the Trump administration's previous rules in court, arguing that 2019 biological opinions failed to provide adequate protections for endangered fish.

Federal and state agencies are now aiming to lock in new rules in the coming weeks amid uncertainty about the presidential election, which in the event of a victory by former President Trump would probably bring new attempts to weaken protections for fish.

"The Biden-Harris administration and the Newsom administration, which said that we're going to do better than the illegal Trump administration plan, have actually produced a less protective plan that will accelerate the path to extinction for many of these fish species," Rosenfield said. "No doubt a Trump administration would seek to weaken these protections, but that is not an argument to lock in obviously inadequate protections."

State officials disagreed, saying their plan for the State Water Project will better protect fish species.

The state Department of Water Resources has been working for the last several years with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and counterparts at state and federal fish agencies to complete a new permit — called an incidental take permit — for the State Water Project, said Karla Nemeth, the department's director.

Nemeth said the DWR's proposal for operating the system "includes a portfolio of actions designed to reduce impacts to listed species while ensuring water supply reliability amid a changing climate."

That permit for the State Water Project is separate from the forthcoming biological opinions for the federally operated Central Valley Project.

Nemeth said state officials are working with fed-



BRIAN VANDER BRUG Los Angeles Times

**U.S. AND CALIFORNIA** agencies are aiming to lock in new rules in the coming weeks amid uncertainty about the results of the upcoming presidential election.

eral partners to ensure the rules governing operations of both systems "are aligned to benefit listed and endangered fish species while continuing to provide water to millions of Californians."

The development of the new operating rules has involved more than two and a half years of consultations and analysis through a "multi-agency state and federal team with regular engagement and opportunities for feedback," said Mary Lee Knecht, a spokesperson for the Bureau of Reclamation. She said the proposal focuses partly on "striking a reasonable balance among competing demands for water, including the requirements of fish and wildlife, agricultural, municipal, and industrial uses of water."

The time allotted for updating the rules is coming to an end. For the last three years, federal and state officials have operated the water systems under a court-ordered interim operations plan, which will expire in December.

The federal environmental review — called a draft environmental impact statement — includes several alternatives, and environmental groups have urged officials to consider one that they say would provide stronger environmental protections than the Biden administration's preferred alternative.

Trump has said in recent campaign speeches that water in California is "horribly mismanaged" and that if he is elected, he would deliver more water to farmers and cities. He has indicated he would again seek to weaken environmental protections, lamenting that because of "a little tiny fish called a smelt, they send millions and millions of gallons of water out

to the Pacific Ocean." Vice President Kamala Harris, in contrast, would probably seek to maintain stronger environmental protections.

Such arguments over water in the Delta have long pitted Central Valley farmers and agricultural water districts against environmental groups, fishing advocates and Native tribes.

The California Farm Bureau, the state's largest agricultural organization, raised various concerns about the proposed rules in a recent letter, saying the federal analysis ignored the fact that farms face state-mandated limitations on groundwater pumping in the coming years.

Alexandra Biering, the Farm Bureau's senior policy advocate, wrote in the letter that agricultural water users have been frustrated by "politically driven regulatory uncertainty" and have been "left in a limbo of sorts about the future operational conditions of the projects" as officials have pushed for re-writing the rules.

"I continue to be dismayed about the fact that this is a political football,

and it just keeps getting kicked from one side to the other," Biering said in an interview. "Everybody wants to lock something in before the potential for a change in administration, which I understand, but I think it inevitably leads to this perception that politics is what's driving those decisions."

That's unfortunate, she said, because the same public officials have been tasked with revising the plans for years under different administrations. Biering said she'd like to see the process be "a little bit more insulated from politics."

Large urban water agencies that depend on the State Water Project have also been weighing in.

Adán Ortega Jr., board chair of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, said leaders of the agency would like to see state and federal permits "that have consistent terms across them." He said the district, which supplies water for 19 million people, supports the inclusion of proposed negotiated agreements — called Agreements to Support Healthy Rivers and Landscapes — in which

water agencies have pledged to forgo certain amounts of water while also funding projects to improve wetland habitats.

Those proposed deals, also called the "voluntary agreements," have been supported by Gov. Gavin Newsom and his administration but strongly opposed by environmental groups, who have argued this approach would mean reduced flows in the Delta and would be detrimental to fish and the ecosystem. Instead, they have called for science-based flow requirements to help fish populations recover.

"The science is very, very clear, and has been for a long time, that without additional flows into, through and out of the Delta to San Francisco Bay, these species will continue to decline," Rosenfield said.

Another key water policy framework is now being developed by the State Water Resources Control Board, which on Friday released a draft review of potential options for updating the state's plan for managing flows in the Delta. It includes options for incorporating the voluntary agreements proposal.

The state water board has not yet decided which option it will adopt in the updated Bay-Delta Plan. Board members will hear comments from the public at a series of meetings in November, December and January.

The board has not set a date for adopting the plan but is aiming for sometime in summer or fall of 2025, said Eric Oppenheimer, the board's executive director.

Whatever approach the board ultimately takes, legal challenges are expected.

Potential litigation also looms as the federal government finalizes the rules for operating the Central Valley Project. Environmental groups have said the Biden administration's preferred plan is built on the controversial voluntary agree-

ments, and the analysis failed to properly assess the environmental effects of two proposed infrastructure projects — Sites Reservoir and the Newsom administration's plan to build a \$20-billion water tunnel — both of which the groups are fighting.

A coalition of environmental groups raised other concerns in a recent letter, condemning the federal government's proposed rules for excluding environmental impacts on the Trinity River and its fish. The groups said that "creates an overestimate of the water available for export" and will result in uncertainty and potentially more litigation.

"They're going to make it worse for fish in California," said Tom Stokely, water policy advisor for the group California Water Impact Network.

Max Gomberg, a former state water official who resigned in 2022 over differences with the Newsom administration, said the proposed rules would "essentially maintain the status quo," which has harmed the Delta's ecosystem and fisheries, and would allow "environmentally destructive levels of water exports."

"The only real beneficiaries are a few wealthy Central Valley growers," said Gomberg, a board member of the California Water Impact Network.

State officials disagreed with the claims that the proposed rules would be less protective of the environment.

"We believe the proposed State Water Project operations will better protect threatened fish species by incorporating new science and addressing climate change impacts," said Ryan Endean, a spokesperson for the Department of Water Resources. He said the improvements partly come through commitments to restore marsh and floodplain habitats, as well as other efforts to support the recovery of fish species.

## WEATHER EXPLAINED

# As Santa Ana 'devil winds' blow, Southern California takes cover

BY NED KLEINER

There may be no weather pattern more iconically associated with Los Angeles than the Santa Ana winds.

One of the earliest written descriptions of the Santa Anas comes from the diary of Commodore Robert Stockton on the night of Jan. 6, 1847; the next day his forces captured Los Angeles on behalf of the United States.

And as the city has grown to assume a prominent place in American pop culture, it has given global renown to this local phenomenon, name-dropped by Raymond Chandler, Nancy Meyers and the Beach Boys.

The Santa Ana winds are notorious for being hot, dry

and dusty — traits that have earned them the nickname "devil winds" — but the quality that really defines them is their direction.

Unlike the prevailing winds in Southern California, which flow generally from west to east, carrying temperate air from the Pacific, the Santa Anas flow from northeast to southwest out of the Mojave Desert. What causes this reversal, and why does it produce such a diabolical result?

To form the Santa Ana winds, the typical first ingredient is a chilled autumn day in the high desert of southern Nevada.

The chill creates cold, dense air, which is squeezed from aloft by a high-pressure system. Normally the surface air would be contained within the Great Basin formed by the Sierra Nevada and Rocky Mountains, but the second ingredient is a low-pressure system off the California coast, which creates enough gravitational potential to force the air out of the basin and pull it west toward the Pacific.

As it flows downhill, the air is compressed due to the higher weight of the atmospheric column above it. The ideal gas law (PV=nRT, if high school chemistry is just a hazy memory) tells us that when the pressure on a gas increases, its temperature does too. The result is that the descending air heats up by almost 30 degrees Fahrenheit for every vertical mile it sinks.

The dry desert air, warmed by its descent, rushes toward the coast. But the Transverse Ranges

stand in the way, so the air seeks the path of least resistance through the Cajon and San Geronio passes. Like water spraying through a narrow nozzle, the winds are accelerated as they enter the canyons, often reaching gale-force strength by the time they exit into Los Angeles and San Bernardino.

A mild Santa Ana wind can be irritating, giving people nosebleeds and blowing sand in their eyes, but the more severe events can have deadly consequences. The most obvious risk is the high winds — during a particularly forceful episode in December 2011, gusts in excess of 50 mph toppled trees, damaged hundreds of buildings and knocked out power to hundreds of thousands of people.

The atypical wind direction can pose a specific risk for boats and maritime infrastructure, as harbors that are usually well protected on the leeward side of the Channel Islands are suddenly exposed to forceful gusts and waves.

An even greater danger comes from the increased potential for wildfires. Hot, dry air can rapidly extract moisture from vegetation, especially when that air is being continuously replenished by strong desert winds.

The Santa Anas often bring triple-digit temperatures and a relative humidity below 10%, leading to drier fuel that can ignite more easily. Moreover, strong winds cause fires to grow and spread more quickly, since the winds provide a steady supply of oxygen, carry

sparks and even bend the flames closer to the unburned material ahead of the fire.

In the last few decades, Santa Ana winds have been associated with several large wildfire clusters, including the 2007 Witch Creek fire, the 2008 Sayre fire and the 2017 Thomas fire, which was the largest wildfire in state history at the time.

Until recently, the Santa Ana winds were thought to be one of the few bright spots in climate change; a paper from 2019 predicted a future decrease in the frequency of Santa Ana winds, particularly in September and October, because of a projected northward migration of the "Great Basin high" that tends to form over Nevada.

However, recent analysis published two years later by the same authors suggested that the decreasing trend was mostly confined to a distinct "flavor" of Santa Ana winds that, while they originate from the same location, are caused by a different mechanism and bring intense cold to Southern California instead of heat.

Although these "cold Santa Anas" can still cause wind damage, they are not typically associated with wildfire activity, and a decrease in frequency would have little effect on fire risk. Unfortunately, it seems those hot, dry days when the wind stings your eyes and sparks fly are here to stay.

Ned Kleiner is a scientist and catastrophe modeler at Verisk. He has a doctorate in atmospheric science from Harvard University.

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Some positions may allow for telecommuting. Software Engineers (Job Code: I-8242N) Apply software development practices to design, implement, and support individual software projects. Expected base pay range: \$122,500-\$165,500/yr. Intuit provides a competitive compensation package with a strong pay for performance rewards approach. The expected base pay ranges for these positions are listed above. These positions will be eligible for a cash bonus, equity rewards and benefits, in accordance with our applicable plans and programs (see more about our compensation and benefits at intuit.com/careers/benefits/full-time-employees). Pay offered is based on factors such as job-related knowledge, skills, education, experience, and work location. To drive ongoing pay equity for employees, Intuit conducts regular comparisons across categories of ethnicity and gender. To apply, email resume to open\_roles@intuit.com. You must include the job code on your resume/cover letter.

### Manager, Software Engineering sought by Snap Inc. (Santa Monica, CA)

"Hybrid work permitted - Snap practices a "default together" approach & expects team members to work in Santa Monica office at least 80% of time (avg 4 days/wk). Lead a team of mobile engs to dvlp high perf. mobile media infra. Base salary: \$226,034 - \$303,000/yr. Eligible for discretionary performance-based bonus award. Eligible for equity in form of RSUs. Our Benefits: https://careers.snap.com/benefits. Email Resume: apply2snap@snap.com. Ref. Job Code #MSWE-SM-0924-JN. EOE

### Amgen Inc.; Specialist Software Engineer - 3888; Thousand Oaks, CA

Design, develop & deliver high-quality, scalable, robust software products & components in collaboration with product management, partners & engineering teams. May telecommute. Supervised direct reports. Interested candidates email resume to Talent-Mobility@amgen.com. Must reference, Attn: Talent Mobility Job # 20516.3888. The annual salary range for this position in the U.S. is \$119,693.00 - \$158,227.00 per year. Also, this position offers stock, retirement, medical, life and disability insurance and eligibility for an annual bonus or for sales roles, other incentive compensation. For more details visit https://careers.amgen.com/life-at-amgen/benefits/.

### Amgen Inc.; Specialist Software Engineer - 524; Thousand Oaks, CA

Design, develop & deliver high-quality, scalable, robust software products & components in collaboration with product management, partners & engineering teams. May telecommute. Supervised direct reports. Interested candidates email resume to Talent-Mobility@amgen.com. Must reference, Attn: Talent Mobility Job # 20516.524. The annual salary range for this position in the U.S. is \$139,693.00 - \$158,227.00 per year. Also, this position offers stock, retirement, medical, life and disability insurance and eligibility for an annual bonus or for sales roles, other incentive compensation. For more details visit https://careers.amgen.com/life-at-amgen/benefits/.

### Manager, Merger and Acquisition Tax (Mult Pos, PwC US Tax LLP, Los Angeles, CA)

Hlp clients mng their tax obligations across evr but evr-chngng tax spclties. Req: Bch's deg or foreign equiv in Acc't, Tax, Law, Bus Admin or rel. + 5 yrs post-bach's progress rel work exp; OR a Master's deg or foreign equiv in Acc't, Tax, Law, Bus Admin or rel + 3 yrs rel work exp. Certifs req: US CPA lic or foreign equiv, Enroll'd Agent, Member of the Bar. 80% telecommuting permitted. Mst be able to commute to designated loce. Domestic and/or intl travel up to 20% req. Salary: \$193,000 - \$229,000/yr. Please apply by sending your resume to US\_PwC\_Career\_Recruitment@pwc.com, specifying Job Code CA4426 in the subject line.

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### Employment

Ingram Micro Inc. seeks Associate Database Administrators in Irvine, CA. Design, develop, implement, & maintain Oracle databases & programming components of the Oracle Data Warehouse. Optimize & tune SQL queries to maximize performance, monitor transaction deadlocks & long-running queries. Verify & ensure data of the highest quality for business users. Maintain database security infrastructure. Telecommuting / working from home may be permissible pursuant to company policy. \$99,341.00/yr-\$124,800.00/yr. CONTACT: Search by title and apply online at https://www.ingrammicro.com/en-us/careers/work-for-us.

### TikTok Inc. Data Scientist (Mult.Pos.), Culver City, CA

Build rules, algorithms, & machine learning (ML) models to identify & extract valuable business insights/information from raw data & data sources. Salary Range: \$136800 - \$228000 per year. To apply & info, on benefits offered visit: careers.tiktok.com & type Job ID A24448 in search bar. Contact lprumesses@tiktok.com if you have difficulty applying.

### Corgan Associates, Inc. seeks an Interior Design Project Specialist in Culver City, CA.

Proactively engage in design competitions for the company, specifically Request for Proposals (RFP) or business for Qualifications (RFQ), to generate fast-track conceptual design solutions. Salary range: \$86,000 - \$98,770 per year. Qualified applicants, please apply at https://www.jobpostingtoday.com/application/136727/apply search bar. Contact lprumesses@tiktok.com if you have difficulty applying.

### TikTok Inc. Senior Data Scientist (Mult.Pos.), Culver City, CA

Develop analytic framework in partnership with internal teams to quantify business impact, diagnose issues, & to bring insights using internal & external data. Salary Range: \$190950 - \$375516 per year. To apply & info, on benefits offered visit: careers.tiktok.com & type Job ID A24648 in search bar. Contact lprumesses@tiktok.com if you have difficulty applying.

### Experian Health, Inc. in Costa Mesa, CA is seeking to fill the position of Software Development Engineer Senior to collaborate with development, departments

and end-user requirements and specifications. May telecommute. Pay range for this role is \$126,942.00-\$169,377.00 with actual pay based on work location, job-related skills, experience and education. Role incl. various internal data science or platform/chall mgmnt. Mst hav 4 yrs of exp in each of the following skills: Analytics and visualization tools (Google analytics, Looker, Tubular), Standardizing reporting/analysis template, Building customized dashboards for a variety of functions, Project management, and Presentation and training skills to communicate across senior executives and cross functional audiences. Dmstc & intrntnl trvl reqd 10% of the time. Rate of pay \$157,700 - \$156,700 / yr. To apply, send resume to Red Bull Media House North America, Inc. HR at talentacquisition\_rbmh@redbull.com. Indicate AM-CA-2024. EOE.

### Adir Intl (Curacao) LA, CA Tech Project Mgr. Manage projects to dev security solutions. BS in CS, Cyber Sec or rel. 2 yrs PM, Tech Mgr or rel. 2 yrs exp: app testing, security testing w/Qualys, Nessus, Burp, UAT, Qualls testing. AP Testing SoapUI & NetWork Security, Test Mgmt, Agile Delivery, Build, CI/CD Test plans, Jira/Azure DevOps/Jenkins, Packet Storm, \$92k/yr. Apply at jobs@icuracao.com

### Vice President Cloud sought by Solnost LLC dba Xcentium in Irvine, CA

for translating customer reqmts through research, dsgn, technology leadership, dvlpmnt. Req: BS/foreign equiv + 10 yr exp. Telecommuting permitted. Salary: \$200,164 - \$205,000 /yr. Resumes to: resumes@xcentium.com, REF: SC-24.

### Market Research Analyst (Bellflower) - Perfom market research for construction services. Bachelor's in Economics/Statistics related. \$48,693/yr.

Resumes to: Design Studio Meta, 9630 Alondra Blvd, Bellflower, CA 90706

### NMSI Inc/Marketing Specialist. Ensuring consistent branding across digital & traditional channels using mktng tools. Working closely w/ the sales team to dvlp eff. mktng campaigns. Dsgn & maintained co's perf report for mkt eval. Reqs: Master deg. in Bus. Analytics or rel. field; Exp: 4 mos exp. in mktng or rel. field; Mail resume to 2975 Wilshire Blvd, 6th Fl, Los Angeles, CA 90010. Salary from \$67413/yr.

### Sr. Marketing Research Analyst - Duties: Use R, Python & Tableau & SQL statistical analysis tools to conduct mktg analytics research for pharmaceuticals. Marketing industry incl research & track prod capabilities & performance; identify mkt trends & opportunities for new pharmaceutical s/ware prod dvlpt & sales; assist w/ analyses for mkt segmentation & prod positioning; generate case studies to analyze prod positioning towards competition; dvlp brand mgmt & mktg communication strategies; track operational metrics on markets & mktg initiatives; create custom reports & generate case studies in support of product research & mktg plans; & present analyses, research findings, forecasting & recommendations to sr. mgmt. Reqs: Master's in Bus Analytics, Stats or rtd field that incl exp utilizing R, Python & Tableau for data visualization to perform mktg analytics research. Salary range \$86,125 - \$89,475. Located in Lancaster, CA but allows for work from home office anywhere in the US. Reqs 20% travel to various unanticipated locs throughout US. Respo to Simulations Plus, Inc. to Lindsay Luke at Lindsay.Luke@simulations-plus.com. Ref SMRA in response.

### City National Bank has multiple job openings for full Stack Eng (Tech & Innovnt). Ref# 7852397 - \$149,136.00/yr - \$172,355.00/yr; Cloud Security Sr Engr, REF# 7563408 - \$119,344.00/yr - \$155,119.50/yr; Full Stack Sr Engr, REF# 8030626 - \$176,134.00/yr - \$187,843.50/yr. 3rd-Party Tech and Auto Lead, REF# 7563478 - \$140,358.00/yr - \$156,880.00/yr; EDM Platform Engr, REF# 7040213 - \$88,317.00/yr - \$125,068.50/yr; Mngr of Audit I-IT/Cyber, REF# 7774148 - \$139,486.00/yr - \$156,880.00/yr. Above job opps may wrk from our HQ office in Los Angeles, CA or reside anywhere in the US & wrk remotely from home. May wrk at other US locats not prsntly known. Job optns by Mngr of Audit, Data Analy, REF# 7971954 - \$124,800.00/yr - \$156,880.00/yr. Position based in Los Angeles, CA. Hybrid position requiring work in the office with the ability to telecommute on days when not in the office. Email resume w/Ref# to TalentAcquisition@cncb.com. Must be legally auth to work in the US w/o spnshp. EOE

### City National Bank has a job oppy for an Assistant VP, Salesforce Bus Analyst. \$86,109.00/yr - \$138,965.00/yr. Min req: BS+3 yrs exp. May wrk from our HQ office in Los Angeles, CA or reside anywhere in the US & wrk remotely from home. May wrk at other US locats not prsntly known. Job optns by Mngr of Audit, Data Analy, REF# 7971954 - \$124,800.00/yr - \$156,880.00/yr. Position based in Los Angeles, CA. Hybrid position requiring work in the office with the ability to telecommute on days when not in the office. Email resume w/Ref# to TalentAcquisition@cncb.com. Must be legally auth to work in the US w/o spnshp. EOE

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### Employment

CUSTOMER SUCCESS MANAGER CSOD has an oppy for a Customer Success Mgr. Acting as a trusted partner for post-go live customers on process and product functionality. \$87,339.00/yr to \$143,500.00/yr. Up to 30% dmstc trvl reqd. May wrk from our HQ office in Santa Monica, CA or reside anywhere in the US & wrk remotely from home. May wrk at other US locats not prsntly known. E-mail resume w/Ref# 7387655 to recruitment.to@csod.com. Must be legally auth to work in the US w/o spnshp. EOE.

### Brand Marketing Manager (Glendale, CA) Bach + 2 yrs exp Marketing or Bus. Dev. Resume to N. Serobian, 70 Spa Laser & Aesthetics Center, 1648 W. Glenoaks Blvd., #102, Glendale, CA 91201.

### Artisan Vehicle Systems, Inc. in Camarillo, CA seeks a Configuration Management Specialist (Job Code R0071944)

to develop, maintain & manage configuration management processes and procedures and maintain the Teamcenter and SolidWorks PDM systems. Salary: \$128,398 to \$169,224/year. Apply online at https://www.home.sandvik/en/careers/ under job openings in United States of America for the Configuration Management Specialist (Job Code R0071944). EOE. No recruiters.

### Senior Manager, Platform Insights @ Red Bull Media House North America, Inc. (Santa Monica, CA) F/T. Apply gbl knowledge of the Red Bull Media Ntwrk locally in the US mkt, guiding & recommending data-driven busnss strategies that will ultimately lead to growth of our prsnl in our dglt ntwrk of websites, apps, YouTube, and Twitch & others. Pstr req: Bchlr's deg or the frgn eqvnt in busnss admsntrtn, economics, mathematics, communicatn, statistics, or rtd flds & 4 yrs of exp in Data analytics, insight, data science, or platform/chall mgmnt. Mst hav 4 yrs of exp in each of the following skills: Analytics and visualization tools (Google analytics, Looker, Tubular), Standardizing reporting/analysis template, Building customized dashboards for a variety of functions, Project management, and Presentation and training skills to communicate across senior executives and cross functional audiences. Dmstc & intrntnl trvl reqd 10% of the time. Rate of pay \$157,700 - \$156,700 / yr. To apply, send resume to Red Bull Media House North America, Inc. HR at talentacquisition\_rbmh@redbull.com. Indicate AM-CA-2024. EOE.

### Adir Intl (Curacao) LA, CA Tech Project Mgr. Manage projects to dev security solutions. BS in CS, Cyber Sec or rel. 2 yrs PM, Tech Mgr or rel. 2 yrs exp: app testing, security testing w/Qualys, Nessus, Burp, UAT, Qualls testing. AP Testing SoapUI & NetWork Security, Test Mgmt, Agile Delivery, Build, CI/CD Test plans, Jira/Azure DevOps/Jenkins, Packet Storm, \$92k/yr. Apply at jobs@icuracao.com

## CITY &amp; STATE



MYUNG J. CHUN Los Angeles Times

L.A. COUNTY renters were at least 14 percentage points more likely than homeowners to support rent control, affordable housing construction and the use of housing vouchers in their neighborhoods, the survey found.

## L.A. renters, owners differ on homelessness, poll finds

Tenants more likely than buyers to favor affordable housing nearby, survey says.

BY LIAM DILLON

Poll after poll shows that just about everyone in Los Angeles believes homelessness is one of the biggest problems facing the region.

But a key factor determining what Angelenos believe needs to be done about it is whether they're homeowners, according to a new USC survey.

Renters in L.A. County were at least 14 percentage points more likely to support rent control, affordable housing construction and the use of housing vouchers in their own neighborhoods than homeowners, the survey found, while homeowners backed encampment sweeps more than renters. For instance, 71% of renters in the survey said they would back affordable or public housing construction on their block compared with 53% of homeowners.

Opinions between the two groups were closer on general support for the policies. The survey found backing among homeowners for affordable housing construction overall was more

than 20 percentage points higher than the level of support for building in their own community.

The results reflect homeowners' and renters' divergent interests, said Kyla Thomas, a USC sociologist and director of the university's LABarometer survey. Homeowners, she said, are concerned about property values and are resistant to policies they believe might adversely affect them, while tenants want to see rents decrease and have more affordable housing available.

"There are a lot of homeowners in L.A. who lean left, are sympathetic to the problem of homelessness and are generally supportive of these solutions," Thomas said. "But on a neighborhood block, they're incentivized quite differently."

The homeowner-renter divide was the survey's most significant social cleavage in attitudes toward the construction of affordable housing, rent control and universal basic income, mattering more than differences in race, income and education.

The finding isn't new. A poll of city voters conducted in the spring by the Los Angeles Business Council Institute in partnership with The Times saw similar disparities between homeowners and renters.

More than 6 in 10 renters

in that survey believed that the lack of affordable housing in the city was so serious that the state government should penalize local governments that block construction. Only 42% of homeowners agreed.

The divide has substantial policy implications, Thomas said. Renters are a majority in L.A. County, according to U.S. census data, yet homeowner preferences often dominate political debates over housing.

"The constant challenge in L.A. is these competing groups, and the power disparity between those groups," Thomas said. "Renters make up a higher percentage of Angelenos, but they're much less economically empowered. I think that just creates this real tension."

The LABarometer survey on livability and affordability is an annual poll that selects from a demographically representative online panel of L.A. County adults. This survey of 1,507 residents was fielded from July 24 to Oct. 15, with a margin of error of plus or minus 2.5 percentage points, and higher margins for questions among subgroups.

There are about 75,000 people who are homeless in L.A. County, 55,000 of whom are unsheltered, according to the most recent point-in-

time count of the homeless population.

The survey described the pervasiveness of homelessness in Los Angeles. Of those surveyed, 82% said they see someone who is homeless on at least a weekly basis.

Nearly 1 in 10 polled said they'd been homeless themselves. Almost a quarter said they'd couch-surfed, lived in their car or a motel, or had to move in with friends or family as an adult — statuses frequently considered homeless under the federal government's definition.

"The common experience of housing insecurity is a cornerstone of L.A.," Thomas said.

The survey revealed warning signs about further stress on tenants. There's been a steady upward trend among Angelenos saying they moved because their landlord raised the rent.

In October 2020, just 7.5% of those who moved in the previous year said it was because of a rent increase. That percentage has increased in each of four subsequent surveys, growing to 34.8% in this version.

During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, many policies temporarily restricted rent hikes, including a ban on them in rent-controlled apartments in the city. But those rules have expired.

## Power returns to 28 Palos Verdes homes as landslide risk eases

BY GRACE TOOHEY AND KAREN GARCIA

More than two dozen homes in and around ongoing landslide movement in the western Palos Verdes Peninsula are set to have their electricity restored weeks — and, in some cases, months — after they were cut off from the vital utility.

The decision comes days after Rancho Palos Verdes officials reported significant slowing across the area's long-standing landslides. For months, the movement had been accelerating and expanding, damaging homes, cracking roadways and upending life across the Portuguese Bend area. The movement has also repeatedly required electric and natural-gas utilities to repair their infrastructure, prompting them to shut off services to almost 300 homes.

But recently, Southern California Edison for the first time announced plans to restore electricity in the area, with 28 homes in Rancho Palos Verdes and Rolling Hills set to regain electricity beginning as early as Friday.

"Assuming that we can do so safely ... as early as tomorrow we will be re-energizing some customers there in the Palos Verdes Peninsula," Gabriela Ornelas, a spokesperson for Southern California Edison, said Thursday afternoon. Ornelas said the homes that were expected to have their power restored had been notified, though she said it could take some time to re-power some homes because of safety concerns with the equipment of homeowners who had installed off-grid power options.

On Saturday, an SCE spokesperson said the utility had begun the process of restoring power to the 28 homes. But while some now have electricity, others will have to wait until the work is complete, which could be several days as the utility conducts safety inspections.

The spokesperson did not say how many homes have had their power restored.

The utility company had previously cited dangerous land movement as the reason it could no longer safely provide power to the area. Ornelas continued to call it a dynamic situation.

"Future conditions could require us to turn power off again due to public safety," she said.

But she said there was also the possibility that more homes in the area could regain power. After the 28 homes are restored, that

still leaves more than 250 without power.

"We will be assessing future restoration where possible," Ornelas said.

Ornelas said she wasn't aware of any plans by the utility company to compensate residents for the weeks-long shutdowns or for any alternative power systems they may have installed in the meantime. Many residents have spent thousands on solar power systems — some still under construction — to remain in their homes without electricity.

Southern California Gas Co. does not have plans to reinstate gas service homes on the peninsula that have been without service. More than 220 homes have had their service indefinitely cut off, some since July. Many are the same homes that lost electricity.

"Unfortunately, we do not know when it will be safe to restore service in these areas but will continue to evaluate our ability to serve impacted homes," Brian Haas, spokesperson for SoCalGas, said in a statement.

He said the company continued to coordinate with city officials, public safety agencies and others responding to the ongoing land movement.

Mike Hong, a Portuguese Bend resident who has been living without electricity for almost two months, owns one of the homes that was scheduled to regain power Friday. When he received the call from Edison, Hong said, it felt unreal, and although he feels jubilant from the news, he does feel guilty about neighbors who aren't getting power back.

"We get together every Sunday and talk about the issues and try to help each other," he said. "There's a great sense of community here," he said of those in his homeowners association.

Hong credits the city for the re-energizing effort by Edison.

The Rancho Palos Verdes City Council last week called on utilities to figure out what movement would be considered manageable to restore service, especially given that conditions in the area had — for the first time in months — started to dramatically improve.

In the last few weeks, the city installed six deep wells near the coastline to pump out groundwater — the impetus for landslide movement — which combined have been pumping out 550 gallons per minute, the report said. Geologists this month found that the rate of movement was decreasing fastest around the new wells, according to the city's latest staff report.

## Former DEA agent released with ankle monitor

Saugus man is accused of road rage, choking his wife and having illegal firearms.

BY JAMES QUEALLY

When Los Angeles County sheriff's deputies searched a former Drug Enforcement Administration agent's home last month, court records show they found DEA credentials modified to make it appear that he was still on active duty, along with 30,000 rounds of ammunition, several grenades and a cache of 15 different firearms — including a sawed-off shotgun and four others illegal to own under California law.

Inside the Saugus home of James Young, L.A. County prosecutors said, the deputies also discovered a disturbing scene: footage of a "gang execution" playing on "loop replay" on a screen.

Now the subject of investigations by three law enforcement agencies, Young has been accused of assault, threatening California Highway Patrol officers, brandishing a gun during a road rage incident and choking his estranged wife, according to court documents filed by prosecutors this month.

Arguing to keep Young jailed until trial following his Sept. 30 arrest, prosecutors described him as an "unacceptable risk" to public safety in a motion filed recently. L.A. County Deputy Dist. Atty. Jacqueline Redruello expressed concern about Young's mental health after his erratic behavior and allegedly expressing a desire to die by suicide, records show.

Despite expressing "grave concern" about Young's mental state on Oct. 9, L.A. County Superior Court Judge Bernie LaForteza set him free.

Within hours, authorities said, Young was detained by the Sheriff's Department again on suspicion of breaking into the Saugus home, which he once shared with his wife.

LaForteza is barred from commenting on his rulings by the state's judicial ethics code.

A spokesman for the court system declined to comment further.

"After careful consideration of the risk factors outlined by California case law, the court appropriately granted Mr. Young's release on his own recognizance," Young's attorney, L.A. County Deputy Public Defender Chanel Call, said in a statement. "The decision re-

flects a thorough evaluation of all relevant factors, and consistent with the presumption of innocence, his release is both fair and justified."

The incident that seemingly cost Young his job at the DEA was more than two years ago, when he allegedly jabbed his loaded service weapon into the abdomen of a fellow agent, according to court records.

Although Young was attempting to be "playful," according to L.A. County prosecutors, the other agent disarmed and physically subdued Young, who was ordered to surrender his gun and soon retired, ending his 25-year career.

The DEA declined to answer specific questions about Young, including what steps the agency took to ensure he no longer had access to government credentials.

In an e-mailed statement, DEA spokeswoman Katherine Pfaff said the agency "is firmly committed to upholding our high standards of conduct each and every day. The vast majority of our men and women do so."

Young's recent issues began on Sept. 12, when he got into an argument with a motorist in the HOV lane on the 405 Freeway, records show.

According to the bail motion filed by the district attorney's office, Young bumped the other car with his vehicle twice, then brandished a handgun in the other person's direction.

The other driver was able to identify the make, model and license plate on Young's vehicle, and Young told CHP detectives that he was the only person who used that car, according to court records.

Less than two weeks later, Young called a friend he worked with at the DEA and made "vague, yet concerning, threats, regarding the CHP officers" investigating the road rage incident, according to court documents. Young had gone as far as to find their home addresses, the document said.

A Highway Patrol spokesman did not respond to a request for comment. A spokeswoman for the district attorney's office said the case is under review for possible filing.

The day after the incident on the 405, Young allegedly attacked his estranged wife, according to court documents. Prosecutors said Young choked her and placed her in a "full nelson" wrestling hold, which involves applying pressure to the head and neck.

His wife was granted a

criminal protective order barring Young from contacting her or his three children, court records show.

On Oct. 1, sheriff's deputies responded to a report of a shooting at Young's Saugus home.

They found no evidence of a gunshot, but discovered Young's weapons collection and the "gang execution" video, according to the motion.

The former agent was arrested and jailed until Oct. 9, when he appeared before LaForteza in a San Fernando courthouse.

While Redruello, the prosecutor, pleaded with the judge to keep Young behind bars due to his collection of weapons and recent behavior, LaForteza noted most of the guns Young owned were legal to possess, and described the smoke grenades as "inert."

"I am trying to understand how possession of assaultive weapons and sawed-off shotgun, how does that deem this defendant such a danger to the public that the court should set a preventative detention and no bail?" LaForteza asked.

LaForteza also said Young's weapons had been seized and wondered why the defendant had yet to be charged in either the road rage case or the September

2022 incident at the DEA where he allegedly pressed a gun to another agent's ribcage.

Those cases remain under review, according to the district attorney's office.

Young's co-worker in the 2022 incident filed a report with the Los Angeles Police Department, according to court records. An LAPD spokeswoman said the criminal case was investigated by the DEA.

The DEA declined to answer questions about the incident.

Within hours of his release on Oct. 9, Young was detained on suspicion of residential burglary at the Saugus home, according to a statement from the Sheriff's Department.

Authorities said Young was not arrested because he had yet to be served with a protective order barring him from being at the residence.

Representatives for the Superior Court system and the district attorney's office did not respond to questions about who failed to serve Young with the protective order before he was released from jail.

Young remains free, while wearing an ankle monitor, until his next court appearance in San Fernando on Oct. 29.

# Obituaries

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**Jane Marie Crail**  
February 8, 1927 -  
October 2, 2024

Jane Marie Crail, a lifelong resident of Los Angeles, passed away at the age of 97. Born to Scott and Maurine Crail, she earned her BA in elementary education from UCLA in 1952 and dedicated 39 years to teaching, primarily in Brentwood with the LAUSD. Beloved by her students, many maintained lifelong connections with her.

Jane was an active member of Westwood United Methodist Church, where she sang in the choir and volunteered. She enjoyed singing, dining with friends, befriending her Cheviot Hills neighbors, and doting on her pets, including Truffles, Lucy, and Stella. Jane will be remembered as a kind and dedicated teacher, friend, and storyteller.

She is survived by her cherished memories and the many lives she touched. Her memorial service will be Monday, November 04, 2024 at 11:00am at Westwood United Methodist Church, with an interment to follow at Inglewood Park Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, Memorial gifts may be made to the Westwood UMC or a charity of your choosing.

**Deirdre Ruth Harris**  
July 3, 1960 -  
October 12, 2024

Deirdre Harris passed on October 12, 2024, at her home in Redondo Beach, California. Deirdre was born in Inglewood, California, to Tedd Beecher Harris, Jr. and Suzanne Harris. An elementary school teacher in the greater Los Angeles area for over 35 years, she taught at several schools from Bel Air to South Central. In her more recent years with the Los Angeles Unified School District, she served as a union representative for United Teachers of Los Angeles. She was beloved by her students and colleagues alike for her kindness, warmth and positivity. Deirdre will be dearly missed by those who remember and love her.

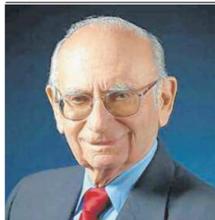
**James Tsuyoshi ICHIKAWA**

Memorial services for the late James Tsuyoshi Ichikawa, 86-year-old, Maui Island born, resident of Carson who passed away on June 24, 2024, will be held on Saturday, November 2, 11:00 AM at Faith United Methodist Church, 2115 W 182nd St, Torrance, CA 90504. Predeceased by his wife, Carol Ichikawa, and son, Wesley Ichikawa.

Beloved father of Cheryl Ichikawa-Kaya; grandfather of Evan and Carene Kaya; brother of Ralph and Kenneth Ichikawa; uncle of Kyle and Lance (Naomi) Ichikawa, Ryan (Michele) Suzuki of Maui, Hawaii; granduncle of Samantha and Stephanie Ichikawa, Mitchell and Miya Suzuki of Maui, Hawaii; also survived by other relatives here and HI.

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**Los Angeles Times**



**George A. Bekey**  
June 19, 1928 -  
October 17, 2024

Robotics pioneer, world religions scholar and beloved humanist George A. Bekey, Ph.D, has died in Los Angeles of complications of old age. He was 96.

A father of robotics, Dr. Bekey oversaw creation of the world's first four-legged walking machine in 1968 and co-developed the first humanoid, five-fingered robotic hand in the 1980s. He served on the University of Southern California's Viterbi School of Engineering faculty for 40 years, including as vice dean for research and chair of Electrical Engineering Systems, Computer Science, and Biomedical Engineering.

Dr. Bekey authored or co-authored more than a dozen books, including on robot ethics – of which he was an early proponent – and about 250 professional articles. He was an IEEE Fellow, recipient of numerous scientific honors, and a University Professor, USC's highest interdisciplinary honor. Many of his Ph.D. students have gone on to leadership roles at universities and the NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory. He hired USC's first female engineering professor and advocated for many others.

Born in Bratislava, Slovakia (then Czechoslovakia) in 1928 to an engineer father and chemist mother, he grew up in Bratislava and Prague. In 1938, his secular Jewish family fled Prague with false papers on the last train after the Nazi invasion, escaping near-certain death when the conductor missed their row.

The family settled in La Paz, Bolivia, for five years before emigrating to California. Despite his heavily Spanish-accented English, Dr. Bekey quickly joined the high school debating team – characteristic of the optimism, curiosity and creative problem-solving for which he became known.

Dr. Bekey subsequently earned his bachelor's, master's and Ph.D. degrees at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) and UC Berkeley, pausing to marry his treasured wife Shirley. He also nearly completed a world religions degree at USC and retained a lifelong interest in Buddhism, Hinduism and other wisdom traditions. Dr. Bekey avidly backpacked, did Chinese brush painting, and was a George-of-all-trades electrician and carpenter.

During ostensible retirement in his seventies and eighties, Dr. Bekey kept an office at USC, advised the College of Engineering at California Polytechnic State University at San Luis Obispo, and taught world religions. At USC, his devoted graduate students coalesced into the self-titled "Bekey Tribe" of individuals spanning 40 years.

He is survived by his son Ron (Ramona Holmes), daughter Michelle (Ron Fryer), brother Ivan (Marlene), and cousins, nephews and nieces. We are grateful to Belmont Village Westwood for dementia care during his last years. In Dr. Bekey's spirit of peace, cooperation and patience, kindly donate to TreePeople of Los Angeles.



**Ann Thomas Mispagel**  
March 21, 1939 -  
October 19, 2024

Ann Thomas Mispagel passed away peacefully at home on the morning of October 19, 2024, surrounded by her loving family. Born March 21, 1939, in Los Angeles, Ann's life was marked by her deep faith, her devotion to her family, and her passion for justice. First and foremost, she was a devout Catholic who held her faith close throughout her life.

Ann attended Immaculate Heart High School in Los Angeles. She enjoyed staying in touch with her classmates and considered herself a lifelong Panda. She attended the University of Southern California for her bachelor's degree in education and was a loyal member of the Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority. After college, she began her career in elementary school teaching.

In 1967, Ann married Mark Mispagel, and they built a life filled with love and adventure, beginning in Fort Worth, Texas, where Mark was a pilot at Carswell AFB. Together, they raised two children, Heather and Patrick, in Sacramento, California. Ann juggled motherhood, a teaching career, and eventually a stint in real estate.

But Ann's adventures didn't stop there. At the age of 50, she entered law school in Sonoma County and embarked on a third career that would become one of her greatest passions, advocating for the elderly as an attorney.

She became the director of Senior Legal Services at the Sonoma County Council on Aging, where she was recognized for her dedication and awarded for her contributions to the community. Later, in private practice, Ann continued to fight on behalf of seniors, focusing on elder law, consumer advocacy, and estate planning.

One of Ann's greatest passions was tennis, which she learned to play as a young girl with her best friend Linda. For more than eight decades, Ann enjoyed good tennis with many groups of friends; all "great gals." Even as illness forced her to step away from the court, she always spoke of her desire to return to the game she loved.

Ann also had a keen interest in the stock market. She often said that her next career would be as a stockbroker.

Ann will be remembered for her love, tireless advocacy, and devotion to her family, faith, and community. She was fearless and devoted to whatever she was working on. Some of her favourite sayings included "Onward and Upward", "Watch Your Step", and "Put your feet up".

Ann is survived by her husband Mark of Windsor, CA; daughter Heather (Fabrizio) of Italy; son Patrick (Bryon) of England; beloved granddaughter Grace of Italy; and beloved grandson Thomas of New York City. She is also survived by her brother Peter (Christine) of New Jersey, as well as many close extended family members and dear friends. She was predeceased by her mother, Dorothy; father, Harold; and twin brother, Dennis.

A rosary will be held for Ann on Wednesday, October 30, 2024, at 6:00 PM at Daniels Chapel of the Roses Funeral Home, located at 1225 Sonoma Ave, Santa Rosa, CA. Ann will be interred following services on Monday, November 4, 2024, at 12:30 PM at the Risen Christ Chapel located at Holy Cross Cemetery in Culver City, California. In lieu of flowers, please consider contributing in Ann's name to SupportAbility ([www.supportability.info](http://www.supportability.info)).



**Toshiko Mizuguchi**  
October 11, 1933 -  
October 19, 2024

Toshiko Mizuguchi passed away peacefully the morning of October 19, 2024 at the age of 91. Toshi was born on October 11, 1933 in Lahaina, Maui, Hawaii to Einosuke and Shizue Nishino. She spent her childhood in Lahaina and was a proud graduate of Lahainaluna High School.

Toshi earned a bachelor's degree and teaching credential from the University of Hawaii, Manoa. After college, she moved to Los Angeles where she met George Mizuguchi, whom she married in 1960. They settled in Torrance, where they raised their four children. Toshi retired from teaching in 1994, enjoying many years of retirement.

Toshi was predeceased by her husband, George, and her older brother, Eichi. She is survived by her children, Lori, Kent, Joel, and Stacy (Garreth); her three grandsons, Daniel, Brett, and Kevin; her brother, Aki; her sister, Jane; cousins, nieces and nephews. In lieu of flowers or koden, donations can be made to an organization of your choice.

**Fusaye Helen MIYAMURA**

MS. FUSAYE HELEN MIYAMURA, 83, California born native, a faithful member of Venice Free Methodist Church since the age of 16, passed away peacefully on September 24, 2024.

She is predeceased by her loving parents, Ralph Mitsuo and Fusako Miyamura.

She is survived by her loving family; sister, Janet Lee; niece, Sharon (David) Miyako; great-niece, Hannah Miyako; uncle, Jimmy Nitao.

Private family celebration of life service was held on October 23, 2024, at Rose Hills Memorial Park with Rev. James Miyabe of Venice Free Methodist Church officiating.

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**Sang Wook Nam**  
September 13, 1938 -  
September 13, 2024

Sang Wook Nam, born September 13, 1938, age 86 came from South Korea to USA with his wife, two daughters and one son in 1982. He was a resident of Lakewood, California since 1985. He worked as a farmer, tailor, and also owned and managed a mini market. He is a proud grandpa of four grandchildren. His life was full of joy because he always enjoyed spending time with his grandchildren. Now he is in heaven with God. Thank God.

He was born in a small town called Dopyung, located in Gyeongbuk of South Korea in 1938. On September 13, 2024, he passed away peacefully surrounded by his family in Lakewood, California. He returned to God on his 86th birthday and as a Christian he was a role model.



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**Irving Jacob Goldberg**  
November 21, 1927 - October 18, 2024

Irving Jacob Goldberg, 96, of Encino, California was born in Youngstown, Ohio on November 21, 1927 to immigrant parents Ben and Mary. Oldest brother to Meyer, Norman and Joe, Irving's mother was his role model. From humble beginnings, he overcame adversity to become a visionary entrepreneur whose lifelong mission was to improve people's lives and give them peace of mind. He savored 62 years of marriage with his beloved wife and partner Esther, and adored their three talented children: Beth, Michael and Robert. They were overjoyed by their seven equally adored and even more talented grandchildren, Maya, Mia, Ari, Sophie, Asher, Avery and Jonah.

Irving left high school to join the U.S. Army and was honorably discharged in 1948. Beginning his studies at Youngstown College (now Youngstown State University), he transferred to a joint degree program in business and law at the Ohio State University and Ohio Northern where he was a member of Alpha Epsilon Pi. His education was cut short when his father Benjamin suffered a heart attack. Irv took his place at the family's grocery store and transformed the business to serve the community and become profitable.

Irving met the love of his life, Esther Shub, an ardent elementary school teacher, while visiting family in Springfield, Massachusetts in 1954. He was stunned by her intelligence and beauty, and readily endorsed her wish to be equal partners. The couple wed in June 1955 surrounded by family. They had Beth, Michael and Robert, and moved to Longmeadow, Massachusetts. Irving founded his first insurance business, Hampden Insurance, which became a flourishing regional brokerage. The couple relocated to Encino, California in 1969. By 1979 all of Irv's younger brothers had joined him near Los Angeles, bolstering the promise he made to his mother to look out for them.

A gifted salesman and insurance visionary, Irving established the National Specialty Marketing Division and negotiated an alliance with the Lone Star Life Insurance Company with the help of his brother Norman. He trained a national network of agents and clients with missionary zeal. His entrepreneurial spirit was surpassed only by his dedication to family. Irv enthusiastically supported and celebrated his children's successes. He grew closer to his wife Esther and revered her achievements fighting to improve public education and women's equity.

Following Irv's retirement in 1986, the couple traveled the world and enjoyed summers in Santa Cruz with family. Irv continued to be an advocate for liberal and social causes. He founded the pioneering interfaith nonprofit, Transplant for Life, after his son Michael received a life-saving kidney transplant. He was an open-minded, voracious reader and remained a famously handsome guy throughout his life. He loved his children's spouses, Ben, Elizabeth and Karen. He built mutually delightful friendships with each of his grandchildren and believed fiercely in their abilities. He was sustained by friend Terry, cousin Greta and the many friends and relatives who stayed in touch. He found unexpected friendships with his late-in-life caregivers.

He always honored the lives of the loved ones he'd lost: his brothers Joe, Norman and Meyer; his best friends, Jerry, Eugene, Irv, Jim and Arnold; and most painfully, his beloved son Michael and dearest wife Esther.

Seemingly immortal, Irving passed away just a month shy of his 97th birthday. Until his final days, Irv brought buoyant love and care to those around him. May we continue to discover his love's mighty depths.



**V. Paul Slavich**  
June 29, 1937 -  
October 14, 2024

Vladimir Paul Slavich died peacefully in the comfort of his home in Redondo Beach, CA on October 14th at the age of 87. Born to Croatian immigrants Ludvig and Antonia Slavich on June 29, 1937, he was the youngest of 5 children. He grew up in Everett, WA and attended Perpetual Help and Everett High schools. After graduating high school in 1955 he attended the University of Washington and received his bachelor's degree in 1959 majoring in mathematics. He worked for Boeing until he joined the first wave of Peace Corps volunteers in 1962. Assigned to Ghana he taught high school mathematics. After Ghana he returned to the U.S., attended the University of Wisconsin at Madison and received his masters degree in mathematics. He relocated to southern California where he had an extensive career as a software engineer at McDonnell Douglas and Hughes. During this time Paul met his future wife Alice Donovan. Together they lived in Redondo Beach CA for over 45 years before her death earlier this year.

Preceded in death by his wife Alice, brothers Lou and Rudy, and sister Mary. Brother Ed, numerous nieces and nephews, and Alice's children and grandchildren survive him.

For complete obituary and to leave memories go to [www.dignitymemorial.com](http://www.dignitymemorial.com).

**Grennie M. UCHIDA**

Grennie M. Uchida, age 83, passed away on September 18, 2024. Beloved father of Ginelle (Chris) Sebastian and Garrett (Lyssa) Uchida; grandfather of Natalie, Kristal, Chanelle, Jason Sebastian; great-grandfather of Miles Melendez; brother of Delcene (Tom) Kuwata; brother-in-law of Patty (Stan) Abe; cousin of Dr. Russ (Pam) Shimizu; also survived by many other loving family members.

Private funeral services were held on October 26, at Venice Hongwanji Buddhist temple, officiated by Rev. Kory Quon.

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**Priscilla Yablon**  
October 7, 1927 -  
October 19, 2024

Priscilla Yablon was a pistol. Funny, at times irreverent, always spoke her mind, never boring, and had a unique and fun sense of style. She was a wonderful wife and mother. A New Yorker at heart, she was born in the Bronx in 1927. When she was a teenager her family moved out to California due to her father Meyer's failing health, and they settled in City Terrace, and later, in Hollywood. A child of fierce civil rights activists, Priscilla instilled in her children the importance of standing up for and respecting others. In mid-life she went back to school and received a degree in Social Work, where she first worked with the elderly at The Freda Mohr Center on Fairfax, and later became Activities Director at Sunset Hall, a home for "the free thinking aged." A documentary was made about the special charm of the senior center, and Priscilla had a big role in it, and was loved by the residents. She also had a talent as an actress and singer, and was in several productions of original Jewish plays at the Westside Jewish Community Center, where her performances always stood out. She enjoyed a beautiful marriage with her deceased husband Louis for over 60 years, where they traveled, and resided in Beverly Hills. With their naturally fun and socially engaging personalities, they made many friends there out and about in restaurants and on the tennis courts at Roxbury Park. They instilled Jewish values in their deeply grateful three children, Marc, Andi, and Sharon. Priscilla is also survived by her grandchildren Noah, Daniel, and Sarah. She was a memorable, lovable and nearly unsinkable person who will be missed by her family and will always remain in their hearts.

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**Los Angeles Times**



**Edward BLEIER**

IT HAS BEEN ONE YEAR WITHOUT MY BELOVED HUSBAND OF 50 YEARS,  
MY DEAR EDWARD BLEIER.  
THE BRILLIANT AND GENEROUS MENTOR FOR SO MANY...  
FOR 35 YEARS, THE SO ADMIRING AND RESPECTED  
DEVOTED EXECUTIVE AT WARNER BROS...  
IT HAS BEEN HARD TO LIVE WITHOUT YOUR LOVE, YOUR GREAT MIND, AND YOUR EXTRAORDINARY KINDNESS, GENEROSITY AND  
YOUR EVER SINGING TO ME "OUR LOVE IS HERE TO STAY".  
DEAR ED, YOU ARE IN MY AND OUR FAMILY HEARTS FOREVER.  
YOUR "LOVY", MAGDA

*Honor a Life*

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# A clear-eyed reckoning on L.A.

[Real, from B1] straddled the line deftly between utopia and dystopia, boosterism and nihilism, hope and resignation. While the past cannot be forgotten — nor the tragedies experienced over the decades — the city's cultural vitality remains a critical through line.

Not long after the Watts riots, Ed Ruscha burned a gas station on canvas. Just as a Compton mayor got out of prison for corruption, Kendrick Lamar rapped about a Mad City. A year into the shut-downs of the pandemic, Los Lobos took to an empty hilltop in Lincoln Heights to record a video for its ballad to the city: "I dream about the day you'll take me back / I'm your native son."

Today, Los Angeles is under a state of emergency over homelessness. Copper thieves have left some streets dark. Smash-and-grab mobs plunder department stores. Yet still the old myths hold sway.

Perhaps the palm trees and the Hollywood sign have led to a state of arrested development, as architect Michael Maltzan suggests. Perhaps we need to cut them down to reveal the Los Angeles the world should see when the Summer Olympics arrive in 2028.

Before we do anything rash, The Times asked 11 public intellectuals — poets, historians, urbanists and artists — to talk about the real city of today, a city more tethered to reality, and a reality more worthy of being celebrated, than is popularly accepted.

The time has come, they argue, for a clear-eyed reckoning — minus the clichés of the past — of what Los Angeles is, especially in the third decade of the 21st century.

Interviews have been edited for length and clarity.

## Michael Maltzan

Principal architect, Michael Maltzan Architecture

The 2028 Olympics give us a chance to answer questions about our civic life, much as they did in 1932 when they put L.A. on the map and made buildings like the Coliseum the civic and cultural icons they are today, and as they did in 1984, when they took a new and more inclusive, democratic approach to the design of the Games, threading the city together so that you felt their presence no matter where you went.

I think we should similarly see the '28 Olympics as a once-in-a-generation opportunity to address the issues that define us today — especially the challenges we're facing like housing, transportation, sustainability — and create a more cohesive identity, not just for the world to see but, even more importantly, for us as well.

I was disappointed with the handoff — from Paris to L.A. — that we saw during this year's closing ceremonies. The beach, the ocean, the lifeguard stations — fantasy keeps us from understanding our potential.

I've often thought that we should get rid of the palm trees and the Hollywood sign, because as icons of the city, they keep us in a state of arrested psychological development.

Maybe they had a place, but now they are emblems of a clichéd sensibility, of Los Angeles as some sort of dreamland, that doesn't capture or express the depth of this city, its uniqueness, its complexity, its messy, sprawling beauty. We need to capture that and tell it to the world.

## Jessica Kim

Professor of history at Cal State Northridge

My dad arrived as a new immigrant in Koreatown in the 1970s. He and his parents were part of the diaspora, displaced by war and economic hardships on the Korean Peninsula.

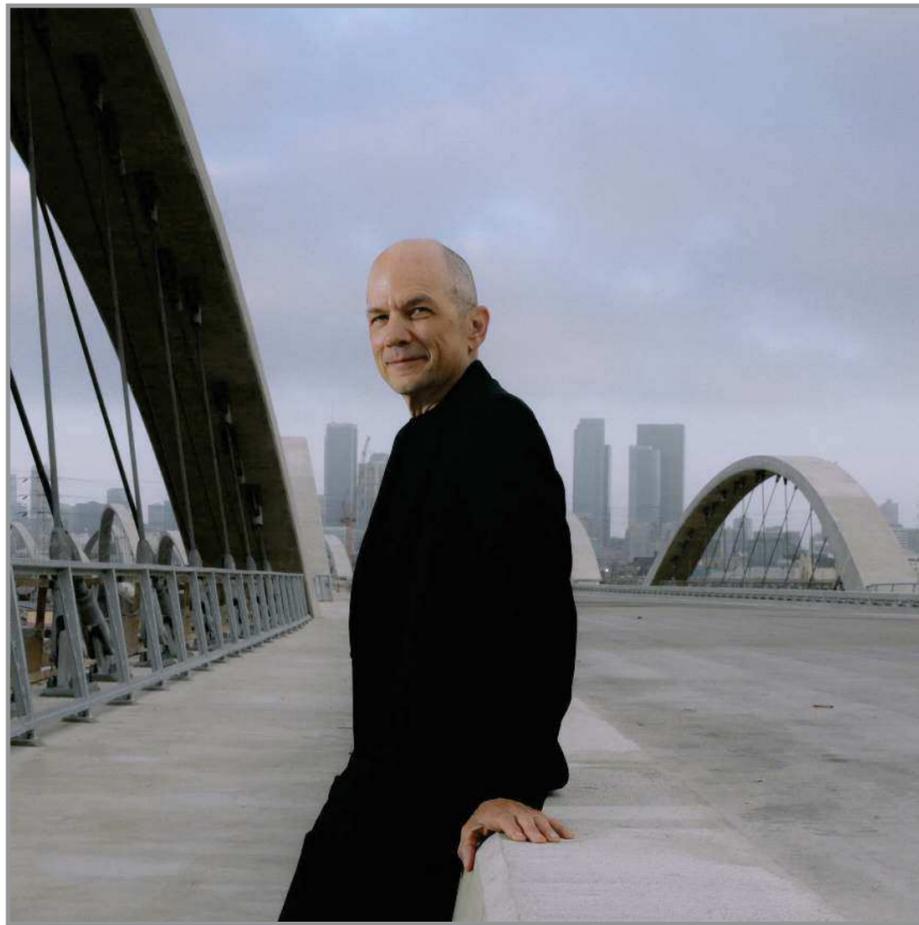
The glossy presentation of Los Angeles is a celebratory story of a city of immigrants in a nation of immigrants. But when you read neighborhoods historically, you get a more nuanced sense of Los Angeles' connection to the world and how world events have shaped this city.

How economic hardship and revolution in Mexico in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, prompted by American — even Angeleno — exploitation, brought a wave of migrants and workers to Los Angeles, who created a center of Mexican life in East L.A.

How the defense industry in Los Angeles after World War II was key in the Pacific Cold War, contributed to the Korean and Vietnam wars, and created economic migrants drawn to Southern California.

How American foreign policy in Central America fostered war in Guatemala and El Salvador that led immigrants to Los Angeles, who then revitalized neighborhoods such as MacArthur Park.

By understanding American power around the globe, you arrive at a better understanding of Los Angeles. Displaced migrants have remade the city, turning communi-



IRFAN KHAN Los Angeles Times

**ARCHITECT** Michael Maltzan, designer of Los Angeles' 6th Street Viaduct, thinks we should see the 2028 Olympic Games as a once-in-a-generation opportunity to address the issues that define the city today — especially housing, transportation and sustainability.



MARCUS UBUNGEN Los Angeles Times

**JESSICA KIM**, a professor of history whose father came to Koreatown in the 1970s, views Los Angeles as a celebratory story of a city of immigrants in a nation of immigrants.

ties faced with deindustrialization and white flight into more vibrant places.

## Thom Mayne

Architect and founder of Morphosis

If our playbook for 2028 starts with found things — palm trees, the Hollywood sign or the Venice boardwalk — then you begin with a yawn. We must begin with creativity.

Los Angeles is a place where every generation is looking for a future that never arrives. I find it's the perpetual search for the next thing that makes L.A. so unique.

The upcoming Olympics should encourage architects and urban planners to talk this out. This is an event that will leave a legacy, but what will that be? Will we be talking about cost? About whether L.A. broke even? Or will L.A. make an investment that will give something back to the city that will last for decades? Will it be about the money or about our contribution to the urban fabric?

The 2028 Olympics should trigger a conversation about what Los Angeles needs — upgraded infrastructure, more housing, more public space — as well as take advantage of what we have.

Just look at what Los Angeles represents in the current political climate — where ethnicity, gender, the culture wars are at the center of so much debate — and you'll see we're a case for celebrating diversity and heterogeneity. We are a global city, and the athletes who will participate in the Games in Los Angeles in 2028 should see themselves in our neighborhoods and communities.

## Jay Lynn Gomez

Visual artist

Seeing Los Angeles is not easy. It comes to us in edited fragments on our TVs, our phones, on video posts to social, a random meme. We saw that during the closing ceremonies of the Paris Olympics. That video — Tom Cruise sky-

diving to the Hollywood sign — made no sense, and yet it did. The clichés are comfortable. They are familiar, and we thrive off of them. But they also muddy the water for people who buy into them.

In Los Angeles, there are so many people we see but don't value. Everyone is in constant movement in this city. We are always going somewhere. Permanence and impermanence are interwoven. That person we see selling oranges on a street corner one day is gone the next day.

We need to bridge this disconnection between how we see L.A. and what L.A. is. Beverly Hills by day is not Beverly Hills by night. We see the fabulous homes and yards, but we don't see the child care managers, the gardeners, pool cleaners. We may thank them. In another context, we called them essential. But did they get our support?

How will we invest in these communities? How will we support them? That's our challenge as we move toward 2028.

## Héctor Tobar

Author, "Our Migrant Souls: A Meditation on Race and the Meanings and Myths of Latino"

Watching the Paris Olympics, I felt like someone who is going to host a party and is looking at the person who hosted the party before, wondering how are we going to top this. But much as Paris celebrated the history that made it a world-class city, I think we have to ask, what has made Los Angeles into a world-class city? It is its neighborhoods.

We are the product of many different diasporas. The Iranian, Armenian, Jewish, Salvadoran, Mexican, Chinese diaspora — they all led to this place. This is why so many nationalities claim Los Angeles as one of their largest cities. We're the largest Iranian city outside Iran. We're the second-biggest Guatemalan city after Guatemala City.

But the L.A. story is complicated. It is hard to tell it in a way that isn't dark, grim or sentimental. That has been the challenge for

As you get older, you realize that most of real life doesn't happen in this dream world, but these places still exist simultaneously.

The beauty of Los Angeles is in possibility and the limitlessness of imagination. However, there are different rules for different people. There is room for everyone to ascend, but the window is smaller for some than for others. Even in Compton, you have this legacy of creativity and success, despite the gangs and the police and corruption. Think about Serena Williams and Kendrick Lamar.

When we think about 2028, we can represent the dream, palm trees and all, but we have to be honest about what is going on. We have to respect the contradictions. We have Beverly Hills and Skid Row. We have wealth and poverty. The beauty of affluence and fame can be quite ugly. If we are not honest, we are not going to grow. We will impose stagnation upon ourselves and lose the dream entirely.

## D.J. Waldie

Author, "Becoming Los Angeles: Myth, Memory, and a Sense of Place"

Critics, going back to the 1920s, have long made the claim that Los Angeles is something less than real. The myths of sunshine and noir are part of our reality. They can't be unseen any more than the palm trees or the Hollywood sign or shelterless Angelenos sleeping on a downtown sidewalk. What we can do, however, is read our history: the dispossession of Indigenous people in the 18th century, all the familiar, degrading prejudices that the Midwestern immigrants to Southern California brought here.

When I first started writing about my hometown, Lakewood, it was denigrated, dismissed, despised by critics of suburbia, much as Los Angeles has been. But I also made a commitment to these disregarded places.

In 1984, the image that Los Angeles projected to the world was sunny confidence. The aesthetics of those Olympic Games were charming rather than impressive. Traffic flowed. What happened since 1984 — civil unrest, wildfire, earthquake, economic recessions, the disaster of COVID — has refigured how Los Angeles is seen.

In 2028, Los Angeles could make use of all of that history by bringing forward the people who embody what Los Angeles has become.

Angelenos are all kinds of people. We're all from somewhere else, mixed in our races and ethnicities, speaking a strange combination of languages, a mixed sensibility, not beholden to any tribal allegiance. And we should be everywhere in the decor of the Games — just being ourselves.

I won't care if there's a palm tree or two in the background. If the city's image to the world could be, "This is us; we are this place," it might not change the world's opinion of Los Angeles, but it could change how we see ourselves.

## Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris

Interim dean, Luskin School of Public Affairs, distinguished professor of urban planning, UCLA

The flashy Hollywood imagery of L.A. is often what the world sees. It's the CityWalk and the Disneyland versions of sanitized public spaces. This imaginary world gives you elements of our streets and public spaces, but a lot of the reality of what is out there — the real people going about their everyday lives, the street vendors, the unhoused — is missing.

Los Angeles is so much more than what the outside world [See Real, B9]



KURT ISWARIENKO

**ARCHITECT** Thom Mayne says L.A. is always searching for the next thing.

L.A. artists for decades. The entertainment industry has tried, but it hasn't looked at L.A. in a very deep or textured way. So when people imagine L.A., they think of the city west of La Cienega Boulevard. They think of the beaches and Beverly Hills. And when they think of the Eastside and Southside, it's in a very clichéd way.

I grew up in various L.A. neighborhoods: East Hollywood, Montebello and South Whittier. I moved away for school and a job, and when I came back to work at The Times in the late 1980s, I saw the city as never before, as an incredible stage of human drama, of poverty, inequality, anger, violence and resilience.

So what are we going to say about Los Angeles in 2028? Sometimes it takes a big event like this for a city to wake up to its own richness.

## Venita Blackburn

Author, "Dead in Long Beach, California: A Novel"

The common presentation of Los Angeles is of a high-gloss fantasy, dream-like world. Growing up in Compton, I could see that despite the urban problems — the drugs, the gangs, homelessness — there was a magic to this city. We were living our ordinary lives, but there was potential for the extraordinary. That possibility is the magic.



GINA FERAZZI Los Angeles Times

**SEEING** Los Angeles is not easy, says visual artist Jay Lynn Gomez. Everyone is in constant movement in the city, and permanence and impermanence are interwoven.

# Teachers union opposes arms sale to Israel

BY HOWARD BLUME

The governing body of the L.A. teachers union has weighed in on the ongoing Israel-Hamas war, voting Wednesday to support a congressional effort to block the sale of more than \$20 billion in U.S. weaponry to Israel on the grounds that American-supplied arms were being used against civilians.

The United Teachers Los Angeles union vote calls for Sens. Alex Padilla and Laphonza Butler “to pledge their support” for a government action called a “Joint Resolutions of Disapproval,” which, according to its sponsors, including Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), would halt the sales of specific armaments to Israel. The issue is expected to be taken up after the Senate reconvenes in November.

UTLA’s stated goal is “to promote a peaceful solution to the expanding war in the Middle East in line with our March 2024 call for a cease-fire in Israel and Palestine.”

Union materials prepared for a board of directors meeting, which were obtained by The Times, state the rationale for taking such a stand: “the arms named have been used in violations of U.S. and international law, indiscriminately killing large numbers of civilians, many of them children.”

The rationale also asserted why it was appropriate for UTLA to take up the matter.

“As educators, we have watched for one year as Israel has decimated the education system for current and future Palestinians, destroying every university in Gaza and forcing children to attend school in refugee camps or not at all,” the document explaining the union’s rationale for the resolution states.

The union did not immediately release the vote tally, but it passed easily among those members of the union’s House of Representatives who attended the virtual meeting, sources said. UTLA’s House of Representatives is its official governing body.

On Oct. 7, 2023, a Hamas-



ALLEN J. SCHABEN Los Angeles Times

## VIEW TO A THRILL

Dodgers fans Matthew and Jovanna Bugbee of Irvine cheer while watching Game 1 of the World Series against the Yankees at Dodger Stadium on Friday. The Dodgers triumphed in the 10th inning with a walk-off grand slam by first baseman Freddie Freeman.



BRIAN VAN DER BRUG Los Angeles Times

**UNITED** Teachers Los Angeles members rally at school district headquarters downtown in 2022. In March the union called for a cease-fire in the Gaza Strip.

led attack in southern Israel killed about 1,200 people and took some 250 others hostage. More than 42,000 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip have died in Israeli retaliatory attacks, according to the Gaza Health Ministry, and the ongoing war has brought on a humanitarian crisis and left the territory in ruins.

“It is our duty as educators to speak up for the protection of education and all young people and their families,

especially when it is our tax dollars fueling this destruction and our government providing the arms,” according to the rationale provided to the board of directors, which the union said was not provided to members of the House prior to its vote.

“Furthermore,” the document continued, “this directly affects our members; many UTLA rank and file have loved ones who have lost their lives or livelihoods

due to this conflict.”

Israel has blamed Hamas for the high casualty count, saying the militant group has stationed its fighters, supplies and weapons in civilian areas, where even targeted attacks would result in serious harm to the civilian population.

Those against the UTLA resolution included Scott Mandel, a member of the union’s board of directors, who shared a statement he said he read at the meeting.

“Please understand, criticizing Israel is NOT anti-Semitic,” he said in part. “Criticizing the Jewish State while NOT condemning the Hamas atrocities IS an anti-Semitic act!”

“If this motion passes,” Mandel added, “not only will we lose many Jewish and Israel-supporting members, but the negative P.R. that will result will be tremendous,” including potential harm to candidates that the union is endorsing for the Board of Education.

At least two union members requested a postponement of the vote because some Jewish members were not present due to the Jewish holiday of Shemini Atzeret.

In March, UTLA called for a cease-fire.

In September 2021 the teachers union shelved a resolution that would have condemned Israel and supported Palestinians.

Instead, the union’s governing body overwhelmingly passed a substitute motion to set up voluntary forums for union members to discuss the issue. At the time the union leadership said its decision was “based on the concern that this is an extremely divisive issue that would seriously damage union unity at a time where we need solidarity in our coming contractual battles.”

The rationale for the new resolution also calls attention to steps taken by other unions, including a July call to “immediately halt all military aid to Israel.” The unions that signed that earlier letter were the Assn. of Flight Attendants, American Postal Workers Union, International Union of Painters and Allied Trades, National Education Assn., Service Employees International Union, United Auto Workers, and United Electrical Workers.

In a rare, direct warning from the Biden administration, the president told Israel this month that it must allow humanitarian aid into the besieged Gaza Strip or risk cutbacks to the flow of U.S. military armaments. Biden’s deadline for action is after the November presidential election.

Sanders introduced the congressional resolutions with one or more of them co-sponsored by Sens. Peter Welch of Vermont and Jeff Merkley of Oregon, both Democrats. For the military aid to be blocked, the resolutions must be passed by both houses of Congress and signed by Biden.

The targeted arms include 120-millimeter tank cartridges, 120-millimeter high-explosive mortar cartridges and 50 F-15IA aircraft.

# L.A.’s cultural vitality remains a critical through line

[Real, from B8]

knows. When we, as outsiders, think about Paris, we see the Eiffel Tower and the river Seine. But Paris is much more than that. No city is as sanitized as the tourist or movie industry wants us to believe.

We have to be talking about our diversity, about our multiple identities and cultures. Somehow — and this is what makes L.A. unique — we have a city that is a fusion, a mix of many things. It would be great if we could highlight our collection of diverse neighborhoods and not show only the clichés or put everything under a bright, sanitizing light.

We want to show the world our unique cultures — from the various ethnic cuisines to our public spaces, our murals, our art. It would be a missed opportunity if we don’t highlight these. Wouldn’t it be wonderful to invite various neighborhoods — from Little Armenia to Chinatown, Little Tokyo, East L.A., Watts, the Valley, to name a few — to tell us who and what they are?

## Luis Rodriguez

Los Angeles poet laureate (2014-2016)

Imagine a new Los Angeles! Imagine the next Los Angeles!

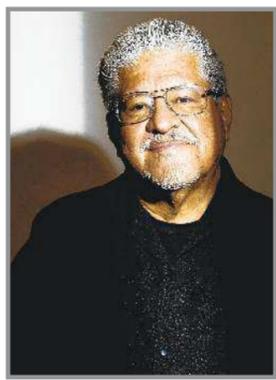
Los Angeles has a unique story, a character and life that go well beyond the superficial representations so often rolled out to visitors. I learned this as a teenager when I was homeless and living downtown. I learned this in my 20s when I was trying to get away from gangs and crime by finding work in the now-long-lost industrial corridor of Southeast L.A. Now I’m living in the northeast San Fernando Valley, the once-named Mexican side of the Valley.

We shouldn’t have to whitewash these truths — that the Spanish missions enslaved and tried to erase the First Peoples, that this land was taken from Mexico, that



CHRISTINA HOUSE Los Angeles Times

**WENDY CHENG**, a professor of ethnic and American studies, would like to see recognition that many of L.A.’s most celebrated things have come from racism and oppression.



JAY L. CLENDENIN Los Angeles Times

**POET** Luis Rodriguez says the truths about L.A. shouldn’t be whitewashed.

host the Summer Games for the third time, we should celebrate the good with the bad, the dark with the light in a harmony of arts and athletics. There should be art, song, dance, theater, poetry and more poetry.

## Wendy Cheng

Visiting Professor of American Studies and Ethnicity, USC

Typical representations of L.A. go from downtown to the Westside, highlighting Hollywood and the beaches — pretty much what we saw in the handoff video. But that picture of the city erases and omits South L.A., the Eastside and the San Gabriel Valley, which happen to be where the majority of Black, brown and Asian people live.

Where are the taco trucks, the strip malls with businesses run by immigrants from all over the world? Where are the boba shops and world-class second-generation Asian American restaurants? Where is the vibrant, working-class street culture of East L.A.? The Afrofuturist worlds of Octavia Butler, born and raised in Pasadena?

I grew up in San Diego in a majority-white suburban neighborhood, but as Taiwanese immigrants, we came to the San Gabriel Valley to buy Taiwanese groceries and eat in restaurants. When I would go there, I became aware that many people in L.A. live in a way that is radically different from the dominant ideas of what it means to be American. In the L.A. I love, they are not aspiring to be anything other than who they are.

We know that the Olympics will reshape the city, but how can the Olympics benefit all of the people of L.A.? I’d like to see the stories of the Tongva, the Zoot Suiters and [mountain lion] P-22 told by the communities to whom they belong. I’d like to see recognition that many of the most celebrated things about L.A. have come from racism and oppression, like world-famous

rap and hip-hop coming out of the intense anti-Black segregation and policing of South L.A. This will be a rare moment when people and cultures — such as lowriders, taco trucks — toward whom the city has had a contentious relationship can be celebrated.

But we need even more than that. We need to make sure the Olympics employ people from communities that need jobs. Build infrastructure that can help unhoused and marginalized communities.

## Aaron Paley

President and co-founder of Community Arts Resources and co-founder of CicLAvia

We don’t tell each other stories about how complex this place is, how complicated, how disjointed it is. Even the most experienced of us end up with just a sliver of understanding of this place.

We can’t do with our Olympics what Paris did. But we can do what L.A. does. We have a history of innovation. We make things up in scrappy ways — and on the cheap. We’ve never had enough money to do all that we dream.

We can celebrate all our amazing communities, from Pomona to Pacoima, Lancaster to Long Beach with public spaces and events. Let’s create a 10-week-long car-free zone from Exposition Park to Chinatown, or from SoFi to the Coliseum, and allow Angelenos to move across town without their cars. Let’s create neighborhood ambassador programs where young people are trained on the history of the area. Let’s allow street vendors to move across town without their cars. Let’s create programs where young people are trained on the history of the area. Let’s allow street vendors to move across town without their cars. Let’s create programs where young people are trained on the history of the area. Let’s allow street vendors to move across town without their cars.

The Olympics can be an opportunity to celebrate and acknowledge our diversity and provide the unity that we’re missing.

So as Los Angeles prepares to

THE WEATHER

Today in Southern California

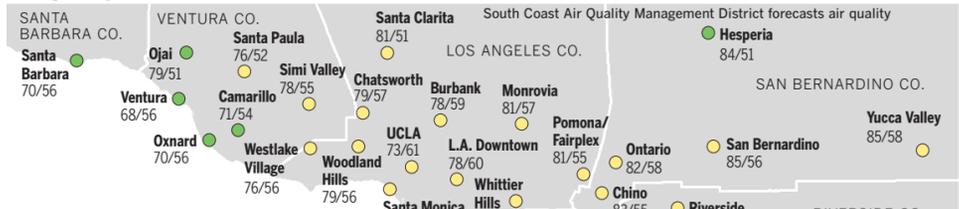
Cooler air approaching: A slight cooldown will be felt across Southern California, with the greatest difference along the coast, as a low pressure system approaches from the Pacific.

5-day forecasts

High/low temperatures are average forecasts for entire zone.

Table with 5 columns: L.A. Basin, Valleys, Beaches, Mountains, Deserts. Rows: Today, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday.

Air quality



Surf and sea

POINT CONCEPTION TO MEXICO Inner waters: Light winds, becoming NW 10-20 kt, gusts up to 25 kt, in the afternoon seas 3-4 ft.

Surf zone: The potential for strong rip currents is high at Ventura, S.D. and O.C. beaches, moderate at L.A. County beaches and low elsewhere.

Table with 5 columns: County, Height, Period, Direction, Temp. Rows for Santa Barbara, Ventura, Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego.

Tides

Table with 5 columns: Day, Time, Height, Direction, Low. Rows for Today, Mon.

UV index

Minutes to burn for sensitive people Las Vegas, 45 Phoenix, 45 Los Angeles, 45 San Francisco, 60

California cities\*

Table with 5 columns: City, Sat. Hi Lo, Today Hi Lo, Mon. Hi Lo. Lists various California cities.

Sun and moon

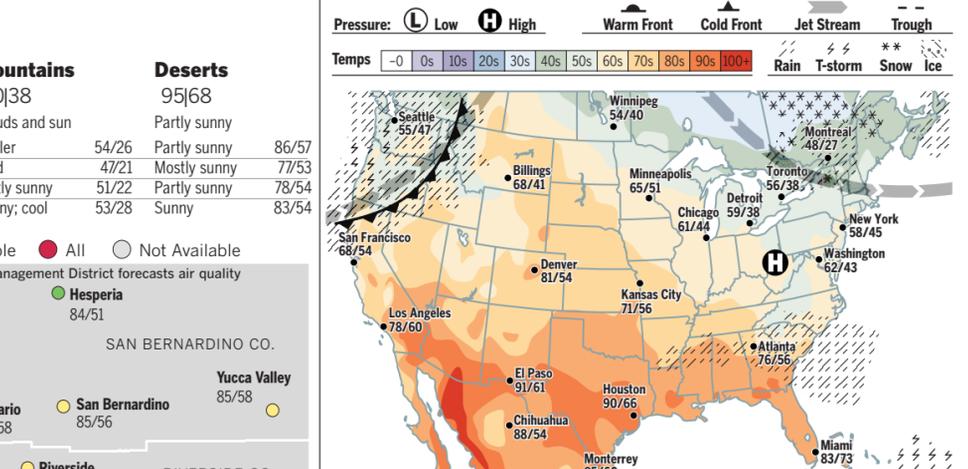


Almanac

Table with 5 columns: Temperature, Los Angeles, Fullerton, Ventura, Precipitation. Rows for High/Low, Normal, Record.

Today in North America

Warm and dry in the Plains and Northeast: Warm, dry air will expand across the Plains ahead of an advancing cold front.



U.S. cities

SATURDAY'S EXTREMES AS OF 2 P.M. FOR THE 48 CONTIGUOUS STATES High 98 in Phoenix, Ariz. Low 15 in Walden, Colo.

Large table with 5 columns: City, Saturday Hi Lo, Today Hi Lo, Sky, City, Saturday Hi Lo, Today Hi Lo, Sky. Lists major U.S. cities.

Democrats in close House races back Prop. 36

[Prop. 36, from B1] organized retail theft and homelessness — without alienating their liberal and left-of-center base of support.

"I would think that a Republican opponent would love it if a Democratic candidate opposed Prop. 36 because it would make it very easy for them to paint them as soft on crime," said Jared Sichel, a strategist for Republican, conservative and independent candidates in Orange County.

"If you are a Democrat that is opposed to Prop. 36, that will hurt you in November," he said.

Sichel suggested that most of these swing races are outside big cities and cover swaths of Orange County and the Central Valley, where you have a "healthy mix of Republicans and Democrats" who "don't want to live in disorder."

"Most residents in other counties in California would like their law enforcement and government stance towards crime to resemble more Orange County, than San Francisco or Los Angeles," he said.

Overall, property crimes are on the decline in California. Those crimes have decreased in 46 counties and increased in six of the 15 largest counties, including Orange County, which saw as little as a 1% increase in 2023.



BUSINESS OWNERS and neighbors in Venice rally for Proposition 36 on Sept. 30. California Democrats have been divided over the tough-on-crime ballot measure, which aims to retool parts of Proposition 47 from 2014.

fornia's overcrowded prisons by reclassifying some non-violent offenses from felonies to misdemeanors. It would also mandate drug treatment as an option — as opposed to jail time — for those who commit certain drug offenses.

Opponents call the measure costly and say there are already tools that law enforcement and prosecutors can use and that the drug treatment component is largely unfunded, which will result in most people opting for jail time instead of treatment.

In California's 13th Congressional District in the Central Valley, where issues around agriculture and public safety are key concerns, Democrat Adam Gray is running against Republican incumbent Rep. John Duarte and has expressed his

support for Proposition 36. Gray is running in the highly watched swing district after being defeated by Duarte in 2022, despite Democrats having a strong voter registration advantage.

Gray told The Times he thinks the measure will "restore accountability for repeat offenders" and provide law enforcement the tools to enforce that.

In another battleground race in the Inland Empire's 41st Congressional District, Democratic hopeful Will Rollins is running for a second time against Rep. Ken Calvert, the longest-serving Republican in California's congressional delegation.

A Public Policy Institute

of California poll published in late September found that 71% of likely California voters said they would vote in favor of Proposition 36.

Support was even stronger in San Diego and Orange counties, where 74% of voters would vote for the measure. That same survey found that 44% of registered voters in California's 10 most competitive congressional districts said that the outcome of Proposition 36 is "very important."

In the San Joaquin Valley, part of the Central Valley, 82% of voters support Proposition 36, according to a UC Berkeley Institute of Governmental Studies poll co-sponsored by The Times.

"The congressional candidates can't avoid talking about Prop. 36," said Mark Baldassare, the lead pollster from PPIC. "It's what people say they're most interested in."

Michael Wagaman, a Democratic consultant, said

it's unsurprising for candidates to respond to voters' fears over drug and property crimes. Along with Republicans hammering Democrats on the crime issue this election, including former President Trump in his bid to return to the White House, voters can see the impact when they see items on locked-up shelves in drug and grocery stores.

"Constituents obviously have concerns about things like razor blades locked up behind plexiglass and fentanyl found in school backpacks," Wagaman said. "So people running for office are aware of those concerns and responding to those is not a surprise."

In California's 47th Congressional District, which includes Irvine, Newport Beach, Costa Mesa, Laguna Beach and Huntington Beach, state Sen. Dave Min (D-Irvine) and Republican Scott Baugh are vying for an open seat. The seat is vacant

after Rep. Katie Porter unsuccessfully ran for U.S. Senate.

Baugh has blasted Min for his record on public safety issues. He ridiculed Min on X for "[supporting] reducing penalties for theft, leaving to rampant smash and grabs in our malls."

In recent months conservative political action committees have spent \$7.5 million opposing Min. Roughly \$4.4 million has been spent in opposition to Baugh.

Despite this, Min has campaigned as a moderate Democrat on public safety issues, branching off from his Democratic colleagues in Sacramento by supporting Proposition 36.

In other key districts: ■ Derek Tran, who is running against Republican Rep. Michelle Steel in California's 45th Congressional District in northern Orange County, said as the co-owner of a small business that has been broken into "several times" in the last year, he stands for "common-sense reform like Prop. 36."

■ Democrat Rudy Salas in the 22nd Congressional District, who is running against Republican incumbent Rep. David Valadao, and George Whitesides, who is running against incumbent Mike Garcia in the 27th Congressional District, also support the measure.

■ Joe Kerr, a Democrat and retired fire captain, who taking his chances running against Young Kim in Orange County in California's 40th Congressional District, where there still remains a Republican voter registration advantage of 3.7 percentage points, has also chosen to support the measure.

"This may be a case where if candidates have the same position [on some issues] it can allow voters to focus on other issues where there are stark differences on policy," Wagaman said. "There's only so much time in a campaign and to capture voters' attention."

Times staff writer Hannah Fry contributed to this report.

# SPORTS

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2024 :: LATIMES.COM/SPORTS

## USC takes Lemon, makes lemonade

Trojans turn around a spiraling season behind big plays, particularly from their breakout star

BY RYAN KARTJE

The eyes of Los Angeles were elsewhere, the city's focus trained five miles up the 110 Freeway. The rest of the country, meanwhile, presumably had drifted off to sleep, unenthused by late-night football between two bottom-half Big Ten teams.

But after three weeks spent unraveling for all the world to see, USC returned to a sparsely-filled Coliseum Friday night with its confidence shaken and egos bruised amid a three-game slump, only to do some of its best work of the season during a 42-20 win over Rutgers.

"We got over the hump," running back Woody Marks said. "We needed that really bad, just to go out and play dominant all four quarters."

Whether anyone actually was watching as USC stopped the bleeding from its brutal month spent crisscrossing the country was of little concern. Nor did it matter, for one night at least, that its dominant performance came against an inferior opponent, in the midst of its own implosion.

Because for the first time since USC's season came apart at the seams with losses to Minnesota and Maryland, the Trojans looked like the team they once claimed to be, actually capable of finishing games and competing in their new conference. And in the locker room they celebrated accordingly, singing the fight song so loud that it could be heard through the walls.

"Fun to see the guys with big smiles on their faces," coach Lincoln Riley said.

Nothing changed about the prognosis of USC's season following a nightmare October. The Trojans still had few postseason options available beyond a second-rate bowl game. They still were a flawed team with a litany of volatile variables. But the version of USC that showed up well after midnight Eastern time on Friday at least offered something to build on, with the second half of the schedule still ahead.

For Riley especially, it only reinforced the notion that the right decision, amid a frustrating stretch, was to "stay the course."

"When you have adversity, it tests your resolve and it tests how committed you are to the process and the things you do," Riley said, "and going through these last few weeks have made me even more sure of where we're at and what we're doing."

That plan certainly came together on the offensive end. Marks had three touchdowns on the ground, the most of his college career. USC (4-4, 2-4 Big Ten) averaged more than 8.7 yards per play, by far its highest total of the season. Quarterback Miller Moss hit sev-

[See USC, D4]



KYUSUNG GONG Associated Press

**MAKAI LEMON** enjoyed a career-best performance in Friday night's 42-20 win over Rutgers, with the sophomore wide receiver finishing with 134 yards and a touchdown. He also had an 80-yard kick return to help USC end a three-game skid.



WALLY SKALLJ Los Angeles Times

**YOSHINOBU YAMAMOTO** pitches in the first inning of Game 2 of the World Series against the Yankees.

### DODGERS WORLD SERIES EXTRA

Game 2 of the World Series between the Dodgers and the New York Yankees concluded after this edition of The Times was printed. For complete postgame coverage, visit [latimes.com/e-newspaper](https://latimes.com/e-newspaper) and [latimes.com/dodgers](https://latimes.com/dodgers). Look back at Dodgers' historic Game 1 win on pages D6-8.



## Davis' dominant start lifting Lakers among West's best

He follows big opener with 35 points against Suns to aid comeback from 22-point deficit.

BY DAN WOIKE

Fans stood and roared with excitement during the third quarter Friday like they just saw LeBron James jam the ball through the basket with rim-shaking force, or Anthony Davis reject a Phoenix Suns dunk attempt.

Neither actually happened.

The multitaskers in the building just watched Freddie Freeman's perfect left-handed swing send a baseball over the Dodger Stadium wall, the World Series

Game 1 walk-off getting Crypto.com Arena as loud as it had been all night.

Then, it was the Lakers' turn to ignite that excitement.

Like he did in the season opener, Davis played like the best player on the court, the fans chanting "M-V-P" for him in the fourth quarter like he just took the New York Yankees' Nestor Cortes deep. Davis dominated the Suns, outpacing Kevin Durant and Devin Booker, helping his Lakers come back from 22 points down in a 123-116 win.

It's first time the Lakers have opened the season with consecutive wins since the 2010-11 season.

"I'm just going out there playing basketball," Davis said. "Obviously, the team is [See Lakers, D4]

### APPRECIATION

#### Valenzuela's leadership apparent

Former Dodgers catcher Mike Scioscia recalls the greatness of late pitcher and Fernandomania. D2

### NFL

#### Chargers tune into Harbaugh's words

Unexpected, unorthodox and unquestionably unique phrases used by coach set a firm foundation. D3

### NBA

#### Clippers hold off Nuggets on road

Powell made seven three-pointers in a 37-point afternoon to help edge Denver 109-104. D4



The latest on the field and off.

Download the app for instant highlights, recaps and more.



PRO CALENDAR

	SUN 27	MON 28	TUE 29	WED 30	THU 31
DODGERS		at N.Y. Yankees* 5 Ch. 11	at N.Y. Yankees* 5 Ch. 11	at N.Y. Yankees*^ 5 Ch. 11	
RAMS	NEXT: NOV. 3 AT SEATTLE, 1:15, CHANNEL 11				
CHARGERS	N. ORLEANS 1 Ch. 11				
LAKERS		at Phoenix 7 SpecSN		at Cleveland 4 SpecSN	
CLIPPERS	at Golden State 5:30 FDSC			PORTLAND 7:30 Ch. 5	PHOENIX 7:30 FDSC
KINGS			at San José 7 ESPN	VEGAS 7 TNT, truTV	
DUCKS	at New Jersey 4 Ch. 13, Victory+		at N.Y. Islanders 4 Ch. 13, Victory+		at Pittsburgh 4 Ch. 13, Victory+
GALAXY	NEXT: FRIDAY AT COLORADO#, 6:40 PDT, APPLE TV+				
LAFC	VAN.# 6:55 FS1, Apple TV+				
ANGEL CITY	NEXT: FRIDAY AT PORTLAND, 7, AMAZON PRIME				

Shade denotes home game \*World Series ^if necessary #MLS playoffs, best of three

TODAY ON THE AIR

TIME	EVENT	ON THE AIR
<b>AUTO RACING</b>		
11:30 a.m.	NASCAR Cup, Straight Talk Wireless 400	TV: 4
1 p.m.	Formula One, Mexico City Grand Prix	TV: 7, ESPND
<b>BASKETBALL</b>		
5:30 p.m.	Clippers at Golden State	TV: FDSC R: 570, 1330
<b>BEACH VOLLEYBALL</b>		
1 p.m.	AVP, League Week 7, Anaheim	TV: CBSSN
<b>COLLEGE BASKETBALL</b>		
9 a.m.	Men's exhibition, Illinois at Mississippi	TV: SEC
4 p.m.	Men's exhibition, Arizona State at Duke	TV: ACC
<b>COLLEGE FIELD HOCKEY</b>		
9 a.m.	Women, Boston College at North Carolina	TV: ACC
<b>COLLEGE SOCCER</b>		
11 a.m.	Women, Tennessee at Kentucky	TV: SEC
Noon	Women, UCLA at USC	TV: Big Ten
<b>COLLEGE VOLLEYBALL</b>		
10 a.m.	Women, Louisville at Southern Methodist	TV: ESPN
10 a.m.	Women, Kansas State at Iowa State	TV: ESPN2
10:30 a.m.	Women, North Carolina State at Clemson	TV: ACC
4:30 p.m.	Women, Northwestern at Indiana	TV: Big Ten
<b>FIGURE SKATING</b>		
9 a.m.	Skate Canada, men's singles, free program	TV: 4, Peacock
<b>GOLF</b>		
6:30 a.m.	World Tour, Genesis Championship, final round (delay)	TV: Golf
Noon	PGA Tour Champions, Simmons Bank Championship, final round	TV: Golf
Noon	World Long Drive, team cup	TV: ESPN2
3:30 p.m.	LPGA, Maybank Championship, final round	TV: Golf
<b>HOCKEY</b>		
3 p.m.	Edmonton at Detroit	TV: NHL
4 p.m.	Ducks at New Jersey	TV: 13, Victory+ R: Ducks stream
<b>HORSE RACING</b>		
9:30 a.m.	America's Day at the Races	TV: FS1
<b>PICKLEBALL</b>		
1 p.m.	MLP Miami	TV: Tennis
<b>PRO FOOTBALL</b>		
10 a.m.	Philadelphia at Cincinnati	TV: 2, Paramount+
1 p.m.	New Orleans at Chargers	TV: 11 R: 98.7, 105.5
1:25 p.m.	Kansas City at Las Vegas	TV: 2, Paramount+
5:20 p.m.	Dallas at San Francisco	TV: 4, Peacock, Telemundo
<b>SOCCER</b>		
7:15 a.m.	Spain, Getafe vs. Valencia	TV: ESPN+, ESPND
8 a.m.	France, Nice vs. Monaco	TV: beIN
8:30 a.m.	England, Arsenal vs. Liverpool	TV: Peacock
8:30 a.m.	Germany, Berlin vs. Frankfurt	TV: ESPN+
9 a.m.	Italy, Inter Milan vs. Juventus	TV: Paramount+
9:30 a.m.	Spain, Betis vs. Atlético Madrid	TV: ESPN+, ESPND
10 a.m.	Canada, quarterfinal, York at Ottawa	TV: FS2
10:30 a.m.	Germany, Heidenheim vs. Hoffenheim	TV: ESPN+
11:45 a.m.	France, Marseille vs. Paris Saint-Germain	TV: beIN
11:45 a.m.	Italy, Fiorentina vs. Rome	TV: Paramount+
Noon	Spain, Real Sociedad vs. Osasuna	TV: ESPN+
12:30 p.m.	FIFA U17 Women's World Cup, quarterfinal, Spain vs. Ecuador	TV: FS2
2:30 p.m.	Women's international friendly, U.S. vs. Iceland	TV: TNT, TruTV, Universo
4:30 p.m.	MLS playoffs, first round, Orlando vs. Charlotte	TV: FS1, Apple TV, FOXD
5 p.m.	Mexico, Juárez vs. San Luis	TV: FS2, FOXD
5 p.m.	Mexico, Necaxa vs. Toluca	TV: TUDN
6:45 p.m.	MLS playoffs, first round, LAFC vs. Vancouver	TV: FS1, Apple TV, FOXD
<b>TENNIS</b>		
6 a.m.	Vienna, Basel (ATP), finals	TV: Tennis
9 p.m.	Hong Kong, Jiujiang, Merida (WTA); Paris (ATP), early rounds	TV: Tennis
<b>VOLLEYBALL</b>		
1 p.m.	Athletes Unlimited, Team Meneh vs. Team De La Cruz-Mejia	TV: FDW
3:30 p.m.	Athletes Unlimited, Team Hentz vs. Team Abercrombie	TV: FDW

SPORTS EXTRA

For late coverage of Dodgers, Lakers, 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](http://latimes.com/enewspaper).



APPRECIATION

# Scioscia on the receiving end of Valenzuela's pitching guile

BY BILL DWYER

Fernando Valenzuela had a screwball, but he certainly wasn't one.

Take it from Mike Scioscia, the Dodger who caught most of his pitching starts for more than a decade, starting with the amazing run of 1981 that created a term that will live forever in the world of sports: Fernandomania.

Back then, and even now, the assumption is that any 20-year-old rookie entering the major leagues, especially one who didn't speak English, would be quiet, a bit intimidated, often a nervous wreck. Scioscia debunks all that. He says that, in most situations on the mound, Fernando knew exactly how to handle things, what to throw and how to throw it. As soon as he got to the big leagues, he was a monster, Scioscia says.

"You could see his leadership in the clubhouse," the veteran catcher and former Angels manager recalls. "He seemed to keep everybody calm. He just knew he was good. He knew what he could do and he let his pitches do the talking."

Scioscia is like so many who are still reeling from Valenzuela's recent death: So young at 63, so intertwined with Dodger lore, so distinct in personality. Scioscia couldn't call it a loss, because the word didn't quite cover it.

"When I heard he had left the broadcast booth [Sept. 24,] Scioscia says, "I knew it was serious. I called and asked to see him, but he wasn't seeing anybody."

Visits would have been nice, but there was little need for further legacy-building. Fernando Valenzuela was a force to be loved, admired and remembered fondly. He was the 20-year-old kid from the dusty fields of Etchohuaquila, Mexico, who was summoned to be the starting pitcher in the '81 season opener when two other starters with experience and seniority came down with injuries.

"He had thrown an entire bullpen [simulated game] the day before," Scioscia says, "and Tommy Lasorda asked him if he thought he could go. He said, 'Hell, yes.'"

Fernandomania was born.

He beat the Houston Astros, the team that had knocked the Dodgers out of the playoffs the year before,



IN 1981, Fernando Valenzuela, right, races Mike Scioscia in the Dodgers' first full workout since the players' strike. "He let his pitches do the talking," Scioscia says.

and never stopped until he had won eight in a row, five of them shutouts. Baseball didn't know what to think. Los Angeles went gaga. Soon, The Times was going up two pages in its sports section every time he pitched. With the Dodgers down to the hated Yankees, 2-0, in the World Series, Fernando took the mound for Game 3 in Dodger Stadium and stayed there for 147 pitches. He won, 5-4 — the winning run scoring when Scioscia, pinch hitting, grounded into a double play with a man on third and nobody out.

After that game, several newspaper stories speculated that Scioscia's entrance as catcher into the game had been much more important than his eventual game-winning ground ball. Scioscia replaced Steve Yeager, with whom he shared much of the catching duties in the 1980s, and Fernando seemed to settle down. Speculation was that Scioscia, who knew a little Spanish and seemed to communicate well with Fernando, brought calm to the situation.

"I'm not sure who was catching him made much of a difference," Scioscia says. "He could throw to a brick wall. I'm not sure, either, if my little bit of Spanish made any difference. I got it playing winter ball in the Dominican, and worked

hard to keep it."

Scioscia says he could communicate with Fernando well enough to go out to the mound once in a while and discuss pitches.

"I went out one time and told him, in Spanish, to throw his next pitch, his famous screwball, into the dirt," Scioscia says. "The batter had two strikes on him, there was a runner on second and two out, and I figured the batter would swing no matter what. Fernando said, 'OK, but you block it.'

"I said I would, Fernando threw the perfect dirt screwball, the guy swung and missed and the ball skipped past me. Now, we have men on first and third and I feel terrible. Next batter gets two strikes on him, I ask for the same screwball in the dirt. Fernando looks at me, then throws it. The guy swings and misses. This time I block it.

"We go to the dugout and I feel rotten. Fernando is over on the bench, toweling off. I don't want to look at him, but I do. He smiles and says, in perfect English. 'It's OK, Mikey. I still love you.'

"I had one game," Scioscia continues, "where I got sawed off twice (hit the ball on the thin part of the bat). I had wood splintering all over the infield. The next day, Fernando is out before the game, playing fungo and trying to hit everything

close to his hands, teasing me. 'Look, Mikey. Look where I hit the ball.' " This was the same Fernando Valenzuela who occasionally brought out a cowboy lasso and snared teammates as they walked through the clubhouse.

That sense of fun carried over to the night of June 29, 1990, when the Cardinals were in town to face the Dodgers and Fernando. As the oft-told story goes, former Dodger Dave Stewart had thrown a no-hitter earlier in the day for the Oakland A's, and as Fernando walked past a gathering of Dodger teammates who had just witnessed Stewart's gem on TV, he said, "You just saw a no-hitter on TV, and now you will see one in person."

Scioscia heard the quip and then went out and caught Fernando's no-hitter, one of two he caught in his career (the other was by Kevin Gross two seasons later). "It was an incredible moment," Scioscia says.

"He was not the Fernando of 1981. He had lost speed on his pitches, maybe some of his sharpness. But he was Fernando, still terrific."

To commemorate Valenzuela's career and death, the Dodgers are wearing uniform patches with the blue No. 34 during this World Series. Just in case somebody forgets.

Nobody will.

LETTERS

## Forever gazing upward at Fernando

Fernando Valenzuela has been traded to the Angels. I'm sure he will be a star there. Rest in peace.

PAUL KESSLER  
Los Angeles

::

Fernando Valenzuela was Mexico's Shohei Ohtani. Viva Fernandomania!

BARRY SMITH  
Thousand Oaks

::

When I was hosting Dodger talk in the 1980s on KABC, I tried to be objective on the club's play and believe me, not all the players appreciated my honesty. Fernando Valenzuela understood the situation, even listening to my chopped-up Spanish. His kindness will never be forgotten.

FRED WALLIN  
Westlake Village

::

I was there on opening day in 1981 and witnessed the beginning of Fernandomania along with my buddy Curtis Mingo. It's hard to say what athletes have had a long-lasting influence and following in Los Angeles because there's been so many greats.

But for me, it's Magic Johnson and Fernando Valenzuela who have had the biggest and longest-lasting impact on Los Angeles pro sports.

Not only did they dominate on the court and field,

but their charismatic personalities drew fans to them and both the Lakers and Dodgers are still reaping the benefits all these many years later.

Thanks for the thrills, Fernando. May God's grace and love be on your eternal soul and with your family during this difficult time.

CHARLES L. FREEMAN, JR.  
Baldwin Hills

::

Fernando would look to the heavens as part of his delivery, and I'm sure Fernando, Tommy and Vin will be watching this World Series from the heavens as well.

VAUGHN HARDENBERG  
Westwood

Fantastic finish

Having just witnessed Freddie Freeman doing his best Kirk Gibson impression with a walk-off grand slam in Game 1 of the World Series, I'm convinced we're in for one of the best World Series of all time! And Freddie deserves it so much, considering what he's gone through this year with his injuries and his son's illness. Good things happen to good people, and Freddie is certainly one of the best!

MARTY ZWEBEN  
Palos Verdes Estates

::

Not only did Joe Davis pay homage to Vin Scully with "she is gone" when Freddie Freeman hit his grand slam, but also chan-

neled his inner Vin by not uttering a word for 75 seconds, letting the crowd noise tell the story.

Well done, Joe!  
LOU ROUBITCHEK  
Carlsbad

Close calls at USC

I know that I'm probably the only one in the city of Los Angeles who thinks coach Lincoln Riley is doing a good job. Every game that USC has lost has been incredibly close. I urge USC to have patience with Riley and give him at least another year to recruit the best offensive and defensive linemen in the country. The athletes who are in the transfer portal know that Riley has been just points away from being undefeated.

My feeling is that Riley is one year away from making the playoffs.

So, give him a year.  
MARK WALKER  
Yorba Linda

Harbaugh should have phrase for that

Through what lens is Sam Farmer viewing Jim Harbaugh as "sinewy"?

Farmer must be looking through the wrong end of the telescope because if Harbaugh is lean and muscular and "as fit as any coach in the game," then at 5-foot-8 and 132 pounds I'm built like "The Rock."

DAVID GRIFFIN  
Westwood

Numbers game

The Lakers are appropri-

ately wearing a No. 44 patch on their uniforms this season to honor Jerry West. Coincidentally, many experts predict the Lakers will win 44 games in 2024-25. As for the Clippers, it does not appear they have similar plans to wear a No. 32 patch to honor Bill Walton. However, with the loss of Paul George and the uncertain status of Kawhi Leonard, 32 seems to be a reasonable guess as to how many games they will win.

KEN FELDMAN  
Tarzana

High-tech troubles

I attended the Clippers vs. Suns home opener as a first-time season-ticket holder. The ability to transfer my ticket to a friend? Did not work. The license plate recognition parking? Did not work. The face recognition used to pay for items in the arena? Did not work. The Clippers' final possessions down the stretch? Did not work.

DAVE RING  
Manhattan Beach

::

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Pseudonyms will not be used.

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NFL WEEK 8

CHARGERS VS. NEW ORLEANS

TODAY, 1 P.M. | TV: CHANNEL 11



# They're dialed in to Harbaugh's idioms

By THUC NHI NGUYEN

Eyebrows raise. Eyes dart back and forth. Heads cock to the side.

When Jim Harbaugh starts talking, Chargers players never quite know how to react.

"It's like a really fun, wild roller coaster," quarterback Taylor Heinicke said, "that comes with a cool ending."

Unexpected, unorthodox and unquestionably unique, Harbaugh's growing phrasebook has set a quirky yet firm foundation for the new Chargers era.

Eight months since Harbaugh's arrival, players haven't learned to predict where his latest speech will turn. He quotes Nelson Mandela. He reads lyrics to an entire Black Eyed Peas song. He revives centuries-old idioms.

Other coaches could lose their players through meandering mottos. Harbaugh's magic is his ability to keep every player buckled in for the ride.

"When you're around someone who is of that energy, that stature, it's hard to get lost," linebacker Daiyan Henley said. "And the best thing about him is that everything is proven. This is what he does."

A glimpse into Harbaugh's Chargers dictionary:

**'The worm has turned'**

In the euphoric celebration of the Chargers' season-opening win against the Las Vegas Raiders, Harbaugh used an expression credited to English writer John Heywood and referenced by William Shakespeare.

At first, wide receiver Simi Fehoko glanced around the locker room for reassurance about what it meant. The receiver was met by a room full of coaches and teammates who also had no idea.

"I thought it was hilarious," Fehoko said. The expression refers to how a situation can change. Even a meek worm suddenly can turn around and resist.

The Chargers, who were embarrassed by their AFC West rivals the previous year, became the suddenly emboldened worm, making an early declaration that they were turning the franchise's reputation of mediocrity around.

"We sensed the momentum shifting, and we know who we have in this room," Fehoko said. "And as long as 10 [quarterback Justin Herbert] is back there, we know that at any point in the game, we'll always be in the game."

The team that had long struggled to finish games scored 13 points in the fourth quarter to hold off the Raiders, sealed by an eight-play, 92-yard drive that ended with a touchdown pass from Herbert to rookie Ladd McConkey.

Harbaugh, who had secured his first win as the Chargers coach, thanked players in the locker room on behalf of all the franchise's new additions. Then a booming voice interrupted the coach midsentence.

"The worm has turned!" linebacker Joey Bosa shouted.

The locker room erupted in cheers.



ALLEN J. SCHABEN Los Angeles Times

**THE UNIQUE** language that Chargers coach Jim Harbaugh uses in talks with his team features references from the Black Eyes Peas to William Shakespeare.

**'Steel in the spine'**

The type of game that has fans covering their faces in despair had Harbaugh digging into his bag of expressions.

"Experience in these kinds of games," the coach said during his news conference after the Chargers failed to score a touchdown against the Arizona Cardinals and gave up the game-winning field goal as time expired, "put the steel in the spine."

If Harbaugh's latest line sounds painful, that's because it's meant to be.

"It's the stuff that builds a callus," Harbaugh said. "There's a taste in the mouth, you gotta suck it up."

All three of the Chargers' losses have been decided in the fourth quarter. After going 0-7 in games decided by three points or fewer last season, the Chargers still are trying to steel themselves to make a jump toward winning tight games.

"You never want to sulk, like head down," offensive lineman Trey Pipkins III said. "So stay up, stay positive and use this to just harden yourself, strengthen yourself."

**'Don't worry'**

Probably the tamest of Harbaugh's regular phrases, the coach's final words in each pregame speech stick with Pipkins the most.

"Play as hard as you can, as fast as you can for as long as you can," Harbaugh tells players, "and don't worry."

Pipkins is in his first season at right guard after shifting inside from tackle to accommodate first-round draft pick Joe Alt. The reshuffled offensive line was without Alt and left tackle Rashawn Slater for one game.

Although the Chargers have tried to establish a running game under first-year offensive coordinator Greg Roman, the results have been inconsistent at best. Pressure is mounting as the Chargers approach the midpoint of the season.

But grounded by his favorite Harbaugh phrase, Pipkins has stayed calm through the twists.

"You can get caught up in this world where you're worried about everything that could possibly happen, and then you forget to take the right steps to start the play," Pipkins said. "You do the basic stuff right, you win 80% of the time. ... It's just a good reminder that all the stuff you can't control doesn't really matter."

"Focus on you, put yourself in the right spot and then just trust your instincts."

**'Who's got it better than us?'**

The definitive "Harbaughism" shared by Jim and older brother John Harbaugh of the Baltimore Ravens, the Chargers break huddles after games with their coach at the center shouting, "Who's got it better than us?"

"No-body!" the team responds, elongating the first syllable.

The phrase the Harbaugh brothers credit to their father, Jack, sometimes flashes on the massive screen in the lobby of the Chargers' practice facility. More than just a family motto team chant, the expression has ascended to iconic status for many players who work in the \$250-million facility, soak in the sun's rays during a fall practice and cool off with the gentle South Bay breeze.

"I take a step back and think about my life over the last 10 years, I'm living the dream, you know?" said Heinicke, the backup quarterback who joined the Chargers in a trade in August. "As a kid, I always wanted to be an NFL quarterback. The fact I get to do this every day for the last 10 years ... I believe no one has it better than me."

Running back Hassan Haskins already had heard the phrase for years before the Chargers claimed him off waivers after training camp this summer. After playing for Harbaugh at Michigan, reuniting with his college coach in L.A. and getting to join their chorus

**Chargers prediction**

While the Chargers (3-3) are trying to recover from another deflating defeat on a short week, the New Orleans Saints will be well rested and trying to snap a five-game losing streak.

The Saints (2-5) have had more than a week to regroup after scoring a season-low 10 points in 23-point loss to the Denver Broncos on Oct. 17.

Not only does rookie quarterback Spencer Rattler have extra time to prepare for his third start in place of injured veteran Derek Carr (oblique), but also the break afforded receiver Chris Olave (concussion) and do-it-all tight end Taysom Hill (rib) opportunities to return to practice.

Getting extra weapons back for Rattler, who completed 62.7% of his passes for 415 yards, one touchdown and two interceptions in his two starts, could help spark an offense that has averaged 17.2 points in the last five games. It's a sharp fall for the Saints, who scored a combined 91 points in wins over the Carolina Panthers and Dallas Cowboys to begin the season.

The Chargers still are searching for their offensive identity, a process made more difficult by mounting injuries. Although Justin Herbert's ankle injury has progressed to the point where he threw for a season-best 349 yards last week, he now is sifting through a receiver rotation that could be without Quentin Johnston (ankle), Ladd McConkey (hip) and Darius Davis (hamstring).

**The line:** Chargers by 6½. **Over/Under:** 41.

**Key Injuries:** CHARGERS — WR Darius Davis (hamstring, doubtful); WR Quentin Johnston (ankle, doubtful); OLB Joey Bosa (hip, questionable); TE Will Dissly (shoulder, questionable); WR Ladd McConkey (hip, questionable); WR D.J. Chark Jr. (groin, questionable); TE Hayden Hurst (groin, questionable); LB Denzel Perryman (toe, questionable). SAINTS — G Nick Saldiveri (shoulder, out); WR Cedrick Wilson Jr. (hip, out); QB Derek Carr (oblique, doubtful)

**Thuc Nhi Nguyen's pick:** Both teams are dealing with injuries, but the Saints have the bigger one. With Carr still on the sideline against a stingy defense, even a middling Chargers offense should be able to generate enough points to get back in the win column. **Chargers 20, Saints 13**

of "no-body" in the huddle felt like returning to a familiar football family.

"It's just a mindset really," said Haskins, who was a third-team Associated Press All-American at Michigan in 2021. "Nobody can stop us. Nobody can bring us down."

Harbaugh's attitude of enthusiasm and gratitude helped carry the Wolverines to the national championship. He turned Stanford into a national powerhouse. He took the San Francisco 49ers to the NFC championship game three straight seasons.

At each stop, he carried his book of eccentric catchphrases with the plot always focused on winning.

**NFL STANDINGS**

NATIONAL CONFERENCE										
West	W	L	T	Pct.	PF	PA	AFC	NFC	Div.	
Seattle	4	3	0	.571	180	164	3-0-0	1-3-0	0-1-0	
Arizona	3	4	0	.429	150	178	1-1-0	2-3-0	2-0-0	
<b>RAMS</b>	3	4	0	.429	144	174	1-0-0	2-4-0	1-1-0	
San Francisco	3	4	0	.429	180	158	2-1-0	1-3-0	1-2-0	
North	W	L	T	Pct.	PF	PA	AFC	NFC	Div.	
Detroit	5	1	0	.833	182	120	0-0-0	5-1-0	1-0-0	
Green Bay	5	2	0	.714	186	143	3-0-0	2-2-0	0-1-0	
Minnesota	5	2	0	.714	188	137	2-0-0	3-2-0	1-1-0	
Chicago	4	2	0	.667	148	101	2-2-0	2-0-0	0-0-0	
South	W	L	T	Pct.	PF	PA	AFC	NFC	Div.	
Atlanta	4	3	0	.571	163	169	0-2-0	4-1-0	3-0-0	
Tampa Bay	4	3	0	.571	209	182	0-2-0	4-1-0	1-1-0	
New Orleans	2	5	0	.286	177	180	0-2-0	2-3-0	1-2-0	
Carolina	1	6	0	.143	110	243	1-0-0	0-4-0	0-2-0	
East	W	L	T	Pct.	PF	PA	AFC	NFC	Div.	
Washington	5	2	0	.714	218	152	2-1-0	3-1-0	1-0-0	
Philadelphia	4	2	0	.667	134	115	1-0-0	3-2-0	1-0-0	
Dallas	3	3	0	.500	126	168	2-1-0	1-2-0	1-0-0	
N.Y. Giants	2	5	0	.286	99	149	1-1-0	1-4-0	0-3-0	
AMERICAN CONFERENCE										
West	W	L	T	Pct.	PF	PA	AFC	NFC	Div.	
Kansas City	6	0	0	1.000	146	103	3-0-0	3-0-0	1-0-0	
Denver	4	3	0	.571	145	106	2-2-0	2-1-0	1-1-0	
<b>CHARGERS</b>	3	3	0	.500	106	83	2-2-0	1-1-0	2-1-0	
Las Vegas	2	5	0	.286	124	183	2-3-0	0-2-0	0-2-0	
North	W	L	T	Pct.	PF	PA	AFC	NFC	Div.	
Baltimore	5	2	0	.714	161	101	4-1-0	1-1-0	0-0-0	
Pittsburgh	5	2	0	.714	161	101	4-1-0	1-1-0	0-0-0	
Cincinnati	3	4	0	.429	178	166	1-3-0	2-1-0	1-1-0	
Cleveland	1	6	0	.143	109	162	1-2-0	0-4-0	0-1-0	
South	W	L	T	Pct.	PF	PA	AFC	NFC	Div.	
Houston	5	2	0	.714	165	159	4-0-0	1-2-0	2-0-0	
Indianapolis	4	3	0	.571	155	149	3-2-0	1-1-0	1-2-0	
Jacksonville	2	5	0	.286	145	194	2-4-0	0-1-0	1-1-0	
Tennessee	1	5	0	.167	106	144	1-3-0	0-2-0	0-1-0	
East	W	L	T	Pct.	PF	PA	AFC	NFC	Div.	
Buffalo	5	2	0	.714	199	136	4-2-0	1-0-0	2-0-0	
Miami	2	4	0	.333	70	129	2-3-0	0-1-0	1-1-0	
N.Y. Jets	2	5	0	.286	128	145	2-3-0	0-2-0	1-1-0	
New England	1	6	0	.143	99	175	1-4-0	0-2-0	0-2-0	

**THURSDAY'S RESULT**

RAMS 30, Minnesota 20

**SUNDAY'S GAMES**

New Orleans at CHARGERS	1:05 p.m.
Arizona at Miami	10 a.m.
Atlanta at Tampa Bay	10 a.m.
Baltimore at Cleveland	10 a.m.
Green Bay at Jacksonville	10 a.m.
Indianapolis at Houston	10 a.m.
N.Y. Jets at New England	10 a.m.
Philadelphia at Cincinnati	10 a.m.
Tennessee at Detroit	10 a.m.
Buffalo at Seattle	1:05 p.m.
Carolina at Denver	1:25 p.m.
Chicago at Washington	1:25 p.m.
Kansas City at Las Vegas	1:25 p.m.
Dallas at San Francisco	5:20 p.m.

**MONDAY'S GAMES**

N.Y. Giants at Pittsburgh 5:15 p.m.

**THE DAY IN SPORTS**

# Kings win second straight on home ice

**WIRE REPORTS**

**Joel Edmundson** scored twice and **Brandt Clarke** had a goal and an assist, helping the Kings beat Utah 3-2 on Saturday at Crypto.com Arena.

Signed to provide more physicality on the blue line, Edmundson showed good offensive skill in his first multi-goal game. He got to the front of the crease to put **Anze Kopitar's** pass into an open goal to make it 2-0 in the second period. He sent a shot from the blue line through traffic for a 3-1 lead early in the third.

The Kings have 24 points from defensemen through nine games, despite missing top blue liner **Drew Doughty** because of a broken ankle. Clarke has a goal and six assists.

Kopitar's helper marked his 1,220th point. He moved ahead of **Jean Beliveau** (1,219) into 45th on the NHL career scoring list.

**Darcy Kuemper** stopped 23 shots for the win. It was his first start in nearly two weeks after missing time because of a lower-body injury.

Kings winger **Kevin Fiala** was benched for the final 4:05 of the second period and the entire third after taking his second penalty of the game, which led to **Clayton Keller's** fifth goal for Utah. Kings coach **Jim Hiller** had warned playing time would be impacted for any player who continued to make unnecessary visits to the box.

The Kings (5-2-2) won their second straight at home after an opening seven-game trip.

**Logan Cooley** also scored for Utah in its third straight loss. **Nick Bjugstad** made his Utah debut after missing the first eight games because of a back injury. Bjugstad had 22 goals and 23 assists last season for Arizona, so the middle-six center should be a key contributor.

**Sean Couturier** had a hat trick, assisted on the game-winner by **Rasmus Ristolainen** and Philadelphia stopped a six-game losing streak with a 7-5 win



KYUSUNG GONG Associated Press

**JOEL EDMUNDSON** is greeted by teammates after scoring one of his two goals against Utah in the Kings' 3-2 home win.

over Minnesota. ... The New York Rangers signed winger **Alexis Lafreniere** to a seven-year extension. ... Former Chicago forward and Hall of Fame executive **Bill Hay** died. He was 88.

**ETC.**  
**WNBA's Aces let GM Williams go**

The Las Vegas Aces, whose two-time championship run ended in a semifinals loss to the New York Liberty, are parting ways with general manager **Natalie Williams**.

Williams, 53, was hired in 2022 as part of a new regime that included **Becky Hammon** as coach. The Aces won titles in 2022 and 2023 to become the first WNBA team to claim back-to-back championships since the Sparks in 2001-02. However, the team president announced her contract will not be renewed as part of a "restructuring" of the front office.

Williams tenure wasn't without controversy. The Aces are being sued by former player **Deatrice Hamby** and are under a league-directed investigation

regarding potential salary-cap circumvention.

Williams was a four-time All-Star during a seven-year WNBA career. Two-sport athlete in basketball and volleyball at UCLA, Williams won gold with the U.S. team at the 2000 Olympics. The Aces hoped to become the first team since the Houston Comets (1997-2000) to win three titles in a row, but lost in four games to the eventual champion Liberty.

The Dallas Cowboys elevated four-time Pro Bowl running back **Dalvin Cook** from the practice squad for Sunday's game against San Francisco. ... **Jim Donovan**, the beloved radio play-by-play announcer for the Cleveland Browns and a TV sports fixture for more than four decades, died. He was 68.

**Ilia Topuria** defended his UFC featherweight title and undefeated record and became the first fighter to knock out **Max Holloway**, scoring a third-round stoppage, after a UFC 308.

**Ben Shelton** beat doubles partner **Arthur Fils** 6-3, 7-6 (9) at the Swiss Indoors and will face **Giovanni Mpetshi Perricard** in

the final. ... **Karen Khachanov** upset second-seeded **Alex de Minaur** 6-2, 6-4 and will play for consecutive ATP titles when he faces **Jack Draper** in the Erste Bank Open final. ... **Sofia Kenin** advanced to the final of the Pan Pacific Open with a 6-4, 6-4 win over **Katie Boulter**.

**Nico Echavarria** shot five-under 65 and finished with a tap-in eagle on the 18th for a two-shot lead over **Justin Thomas** after the third round of the Zozo Championship in Japan. ... **Jeno Thitikul** shot an eight-under 64 to join a three-way tie for the lead after three rounds at the LPGA Tour's Maybank Championship in Malaysia.

Ferrari's **Carlos Sainz Jr.** won his first pole of the season, and **Sergio Perez's** miserable Formula One season continued when he failed to advance out of the first round of qualifying at the Mexico City Grand Prix. ... Regular-season champion **Tyler Reddick** won the pole for the second race of the third round of NASCAR's Cup Series playoffs. ... **Austin Hill** took the second spot in the Xfinity Series championship finale, racing to his fourth victory of the season at Homestead-Miami Speedway.

In Friday's late MLS games, **Jordi Alba** turned a pass from **Lionel Messi** into the go-ahead goal in the 60th minute, **Luis Suarez** also scored and Miami beat Atlanta 2-1 in the opener of their first-round playoff series.

KINGS 3, UTAH 2				
Utah	0	1	1	- 2
KINGS	0	2	1	- 3

**FIRST PERIOD**—None. Penalties—Cole, UTA (Interference), 2:09; Lamoureux, UTA (Slashing), 11:55; Fiala, LA (Interference), 12:03; Jeanrot, LA (Hooking), 16:24.  
**SECOND PERIOD**—1. Kings, Clarke (Kemppe, Fiala), 7:51 (pp). 2. Kings, Edmundson (Kopitar, Byfield), 13:10. 3. Utah, Keller (Schaltz, Sergachev), 15:55. Penalties—Kesselring, UTA (Holding), 6:38; Fiala, LA (Cross Checking), 13:54.  
**THIRD PERIOD**—4. Kings, Edmundson (Kemppe, Clarke), 1:09. 5. Utah, Cooley (Guenther, Kesselring), 9:47. Penalties—None.  
**SHOTS ON GOAL**—Utah 9-10-6-25. Kings 6-11-6-23.  
**POWER-PLAY OPPORTUNITIES**—Utah 0 of 3; Kings 1 of 3.  
**GOALS**—Utah, Ingram 4-2-1 (23 shots-20 saves). Kings, Kuemper 2-0-2 (25-23).  
**A**—15-116 (18,230). **T**—2-30.  
**REFEREES**—Mitch Dunning, Kelly Sutherland. Linesmen—Tyson Baker, Trent Knorr.



Photographs by KYUSUNG GONG Associated Press

**DEFENSIVE END SAM GREENE** picks up one of four USC sacks of Rutgers quarterback Athan Kaliakmanis, which was more than the defense had managed in the previous four games combined.

# USC puts end to losing streak

[USC, from D1] eral explosive plays in the passing game, throwing for 308 yards that included six completions of 18 yards or more. And amid the onslaught, a No. 1 receiver also appeared to emerge as Makai Lemon continued his recent surge by putting together a career night with 134 yards and a touchdown, as well as an 80-yard kick return.



**MILLER MOSS**, fired up for a first-half touchdown, redeemed himself after calls for him to be benched.

It was Lemon who delivered in the most critical of moments, midway through the third quarter. Rutgers had just cut the Trojans' lead to eight, leaving bleary-eyed fans worried that another late collapse was coming.

But those nerves were calmed by the next play. That's when Moss found Lemon sprinting free downfield. Lemon, who had 14 combined receptions over his previous two games, caught the pass and burst in the other direction, sprinting across the field for 70 yards before he was stopped.

The quarterback ran it in for a touchdown two plays later.

"You've seen him slowly build towards a game like this," Moss said of Lemon. "Having him healthy really helps us offensively. I don't think anyone is surprised by that."

What was surprising was how quickly USC ran away with the game after that. Where it had watched second-half leads evaporate in previous weeks, this time the Trojans finally pushed the

pedal to the floor. Once again, Lemon provided the gas, breaking free for a 40-yard touchdown reception that put the game away. USC's defense even clamped down at a critical time, slamming the door on Rutgers in the second half, despite being down four of five starters in the secondary. The Trojans even tallied four sacks, more than they'd managed in the previous four games combined.

USC still gave up more than 400 yards for the third week in a row, much of which came through the air against that shorthanded secondary.

With USC leading throughout and Rutgers' dynamic running back, Kyle Monangai, banged up, the Scarlet Knights had no choice but to rely on quarter-

back Athan Kaliakmanis, who threw the most passes of his career (47) and fell just six yards short of his high in yardage (313).

But when USC's defense most needed stops, it managed to find them.

The most critical came just before the half, at the tail end of a 16-play Rutgers drive. Two USC pass-interference penalties thrust Rutgers to the doorstep of the goal line with a chance to cut the Trojans' lead to just 12.

But reserve cornerback Prophet Brown dove to break up the first-down pass. Then pressure from linebacker Easton Mascarnas-Arnold forced an incompletion on second down. And on third down, DeCarlos Nicholson, another of USC's backup corners,

broke up a jump-ball pass, forcing Rutgers to settle for a field goal.

On a night when everything finally was working, that proved enough for USC. The question now, after a desperately needed bounce-back win, is whether it will be enough to keep the momentum going.

"Whatever is stacked against us, we really don't give a damn," Riley said. "We're just going to keep going."

## FRIDAY'S LATE SUMMARY

### USC 42, RUTGERS 20

RUTGERS	3	9	8	0-20
USC	14	14	14	0-42

#### First Quarter

USC—Marks 1 run (Lantz kick), 9:58.  
RUTG—Raymond 3 run (kick failed), 4:37.  
USC—Marks 1 run (Lantz kick), 2:19.

#### Second Quarter

USC—Ford 11 pass from Moss (Lantz kick), 10:26.  
RUTG—Raymond 3 run (kick failed), 4:37.  
USC—Marks 2 run (Lantz kick), 1:53.  
RUTG—FG Patel 20, :00.

#### Third Quarter

RUTG—Dremel 25 pass from A.Kaliakmanis (A.Kaliakmanis pass from Long), 8:11.  
USC—Moss 7 run (Lantz kick), 6:32.  
USC—Lemon 40 pass from Moss (Lantz kick), :22.  
Attendance—63,404.

#### STATISTICS

TEAM	RUTG	USC
First downs	27	23
Total Net Yards	434	443
Rushes-yards	42-121	23-135
Passing	313	308
Punt Returns	0-0	0-0
Kickoff Returns	0-0	3-122
Interceptions Ret.	0-0	0-0
Comp-Att-Int	27-47-0	20-28-0
Sacked-Yards Lost	4-23	0-0
Punts	3-37-667	3-45-333
Fumbles-Lost	0-0	1-0
Penalties-Yards	4-9	5-43
Time of Possession	36:28	23:32

#### Individual Leaders

RUSHING: Rutgers, Monangai 18-86, Raymond 15-36, A.Kaliakmanis 9-(minus 1), USC, Marks 15-94, Johnson 3-14, Maiva 1-13, Moss 1-7, Peterson 1-4, Jayson 2-3.

PASSING: Rutgers, A.Kaliakmanis 27-47-0-313, USC, Moss 20-28-0-308.

RECEIVING: Rutgers, Miller 11-131, Duff 3-51, Higgins 3-24, Monangai 3-14, Dremel 2-39, Raymond 2-28, Black 2-13, Long 1-13, USC, Marks 5-48, Lemon 4-134, Ford 4-45, Za Branch 2-26, Lane 2-18, McRee 1-14, Fair 1-13, Boyer 1-10.

MISSED FIELD GOALS—None.

## COLLEGE FOOTBALL

# Buckeyes prevail despite sloppiness

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Will Howard tossed three touchdown passes, but No. 4 Ohio State needed an interception by cornerback Jordan Hancock with 1:16 left to seal its 21-17 win over Nebraska on Saturday.

The Buckeyes (6-1, 3-1 Big Ten) bounced back from their loss to Oregon two weeks ago but sure didn't look like the well-oiled machine they are supposed to be in scuffling with a nearly four-touchdown underdog.

"It wasn't perfect, but a win's a win," Howard said. "And we were able to show that when the going gets tough, and when maybe things aren't going our way, we're able to win in the fourth quarter. I think our defense did an unbelievable job of getting some stops, making some really big plays in that fourth quarter and getting us a chance to go down there and put that last one in and give us the lead."

The Cornhuskers (5-3, 2-3 Big Ten) kept it close all day before losing their 27th straight game against top-25 opponents. John Hohl kicked three field goals before Dante Dowdell's touchdown early in the fourth quarter gave them a brief lead.

Ohio State converted just one of 10 third downs, punted five times, gave up



JAY LAPRETE Associated Press

**OHIO STATE'S CARNELL TATE**, right, hauls in a touchdown pass over Nebraska's Malcolm Hartzog.

the ball on downs, missed a field goal and survived a Howard interception.

at No. 1 Oregon 38, No. 20 Illinois 9: Dillon Gabriel threw for three touchdowns and ran for another, and top-ranked Ducks (8-0, 5-0 Big Ten) remained undefeated.

The Fighting Illini (6-2, 3-2) hadn't faced the top-ranked team in the nation since 2007, when they beat Ohio State 28-21 on the road.

No. 5 Texas 27, at No. 25 Vanderbilt 24: Quinn Ewers threw for 288 yards and three touchdowns to lead the Longhorns (7-1, 3-1 Southeastern Conference) in their conference road debut.

Texas bounced back from the loss to Georgia last

week that ended its stay at No. 1. The Longhorns also beat Vanderbilt in Nashville for the first time since 1925 as these new league teammates renewed a rivalry last played in 1928 in Dallas.

at No. 15 Alabama 34, No. 21 Missouri 0: Jamarion Miller rushed for two touchdowns and the Crimson Tide defense had three interceptions against the Tigers (6-2, 2-2 SEC), who played much of the game without injured starting quarterback Brady Cook.

No. 11 Brigham Young 37, at Central Florida 24: Jake Retzlaff threw for 228 yards and two touchdowns and added another on the ground to lead the Cougars (8-0, 5-0 Big 12) over the

Knights (3-5, 1-4).

No. 12 Notre Dame 51, No. 24 Navy 14: Jeremiyah Love ran for 102 yards and two touchdowns and extended his streak of rushing for a touchdown to eight games as the Fighting Irish (7-1) knocked the uncharacteristically mistake-prone Midshipmen (6-1) from the unbeaten ranks at MetLife Stadium in New Jersey.

at No. 13 Indiana 31, Washington 17: Quarterback Tayven Jackson threw for one touchdown and ran for another in his first start of the season, and D'Angelo Ponds' two interceptions both led to scores as the Hoosiers (8-0, 5-0 Big Ten) tied the 1967 Rose Bowl team for the best start in school history while staying atop the league standings.

at No. 18 Mississippi 26, Oklahoma 14: Jaxson Dart threw for 306 yards and the Rebels (6-2, 2-2 SEC) used a big third quarter to beat the Sooners (4-4, 1-4 SEC).

No. 17 Boise State 29, at Nevada Las Vegas 24: Ashton Jeanty, the nation's leading rusher, ran for 128 yards and the winning touchdown to help the Broncos (6-1, 3-0 Mountain West) beat the Rebels (6-2, 2-1) on Friday night and keep alive their College Football Playoff aspirations.

# Powell, Harden spark Clippers to their first win

CLIPPERS 109  
DENVER 104

BY BRODERICK TURNER

DENVER — The Clippers' hold on the game began to slip away in the second quarter, eventually forcing them to play catch-up against the Denver Nuggets.

The Clippers did behind a career day from Norman Powell and some clutch free throws from James Harden to pull out a 109-104 win over Nikola Jokic and the Nuggets on Saturday afternoon at Ball Arena.

Powell was outstanding with 37 points on 14-for-21 shooting and seven for 11 from three-point range.

Harden had 23 points and 16 assists.

His two free throws with 30.5 seconds left gave the Clippers a 105-103 lead.

Then after Jokic, who had 41 points, made just one of two free throws with 19.7 seconds left, Harden came through for the Clippers.

His two free throws with 14.3 seconds left gave the Clippers a 107-104 lead.

Then after Jokic missed a three, it seemed only fitting that Powell secured the game for the Clippers.

He got the defensive rebound, was fouled and made two free throws to give the Clippers their first win of the young season.



JACK DEMPSEY Associated Press

**THE CLIPPERS'** Ivica Zubac takes an elbow to the face from the Nuggets' Nikola Jokic.

For a while, it was as if Powell was having his own one-on-one duel with Jokic, the Clippers' guard matching the Nuggets' All-Star center basket for basket at times.

Powell had 20 points in the fourth quarter, which was a regular-season career high.

Their defense was stifling for long stretches in the first half, allowing the Clippers to build a 42-24 lead.

But then the Nuggets got hot and the Clippers' defense cooled off to help Denver get back in the game.

By the end of the first half, the Clippers held a six-point lead.

The Clippers were locked in on defense, holding the Nuggets to 29.8% shooting in the first half.

# Dominant Davis is lifting Lakers

[Lakers, from D1]

doing a good job giving me the ball in my spots. It's easier when guys are making shots and making plays. Just kind of ... opens up the floor for me. We put in a lot of good schemes where we open the floor for myself, [James], [Austin Reaves], [D'Angelo Russell]. And we just operate, make the right play."

Davis scored 35 points after scoring 36 in the opener against the Minnesota Timberwolves, back-to-back dominant games against two of the Western Conference favorites.

"He's been doing this," Reaves said. "It's not [abnormal] for him to do what he's been doing. I feel like he's the best player on our team. And we played through him. And he's such a high-level talent that I expect him to go out every single night and be dominant. So what he's been doing is kind of, it's unreal obviously, but I expect him to go dominate the game in many facets."

Unlike the opener, the Lakers gave Davis air support from the outside, making 14 of 27 shots from three-point range, including 13 for 22 after the first quarter. They withstood the Suns' hot shooting early to begin their climb back into the game starting late in the second.

Reaves made five of seven threes and finished with 26 points.

"Same thing I've seen from AR since he got here," James said. "Just an ultra-competitor, makes big-time shots and doesn't shy away from the moment."

Coach JJ Redick went further.

"I knew he was good," Redick said of Reaves. "I didn't realize he was this good. He's a fantastic basketball player."

Davis' blocked shot just before halftime gave the Lakers momentum into the

third quarter when James and Reaves got hot from deep and opened the inside for Davis.

James helped seal the game late with two assists — one to Gabe Vincent for a layup and one to Rui Hachimura for a three — to get the crowd to pop again. James finished with 21 points and eight assists.

But none of it was quite like the roar after Freeman went deep.

"I thought they were cheering for me," Reaves said. "I didn't know what was going on, to be honest. And then I looked up on the screen and seeing him hit that nuke."

The Lakers hosted the Sacramento Kings on Saturday night with the 39-year-old James planning to play for the second straight night.

## FRIDAY'S LATE BOX

### LAKERS 123, PHOENIX 116

	PHOENIX				
	Min	FG-A	FTA	OR-T	A P T
Beal	35	6-14	0-0	0-1	9 4 15
Durant	38	11-17	6-7	0-4	6 3 30
Nurkic	18	1-5	2-2	1-7	4 4 4
Booker	35	9-21	1-2	2-3	4 3 23
Jones	32	5-8	2-2	0-2	4 0 14
O'Neale	27	2-5	2-2	0-4	4 3 7
Plumlee	18	3-4	0-0	1-7	0 4 6
Dunn	13	3-5	0-0	0-3	1 2 9
Morris	13	2-3	2-2	1-2	3 0 8
Ighodaro	6	0-0	0-0	0-1	0 0 3
<b>Totals</b>	<b>42-82</b>	<b>15-17</b>	<b>5-34</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>25 116</b>

Shooting: Field goals, 51.2%; free throws, 88.2%. Three-point goals: 17-37 (Booker 4-10, Dunn 3-5, Beal 3-6, Durant 2-3, Morris 2-3, Jones 2-4, O'Neale 1-3, Nurkic 0-3). Team Rebounds: 6. Team Turnovers: 1. Blocked Shots: 4 (Beal, Booker, Durant, Nurkic). Turnovers: 16 (Nurkic 4, Durant 3, Jones 3, Beal 2, O'Neale 2, Booker, Ighodaro). Steals: 8 (Beal 2, Morris 2, Booker, Jones, O'Neale, Plumlee). Technical Fouls: None.

### LAKERS

	LAKERS				
	Min	FG-A	FTA	OR-T	A P T
Hachimura	39	5-12	2-4	2-7	2 1 14
L.James	34	7-13	5-8	0-4	8 1 21
Davis	37	11-18	11-17	1-8	4 2 35
Reaves	36	8-12	5-6	0-4	8 4 26
Russell	29	1-6	2-2	1-2	5 3 5
Vincent	20	2-5	0-0	1-2	0 4 5
Hayes	17	3-3	0-0	1-6	4 3 6
Knecht	13	2-5	2-2	0-1	2 0 8
Christie	11	1-1	0-0	0-3	0 0 3
<b>Totals</b>	<b>40-75</b>	<b>29-39</b>	<b>6-37</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>18 123</b>

Shooting: Field goals, 53.3%; free throws, 74.4%. Three-point goals: 14-27 (Reaves 5-7, Hachimura 2-4, Knecht 2-4, L.James 2-5, Christie 1-1, Russell 1-3, Vincent 1-3). Team Rebounds: 10. Team Turnovers: 1. Blocked Shots: 5 (Davis 2, Hayes, Reaves, Russell). Turnovers: 12 (Reaves 4, L.James 2, Russell 2, Christie, Davis, Hachimura, Hayes). Steals: 10 (Reaves 3, Vincent 3, Davis, Hayes, Knecht, Russell). Technical Fouls: None.

PHOENIX..... 38 23 24 31-116  
LAKERS..... 23 29 35 36-123

A-18,997, T-2,17.



ERIC THAYER Associated Press

**ANTHONY DAVIS** scored 35 points against Royce O'Neale and the Suns after scoring 36 in the opener.

# Takeaways propel top-ranked Mater Dei

Monarchs use early interceptions, fumble recovery to score defensive touchdowns and rout St. John Bosco

**ERIC SONDEHEIMER**  
ON HIGH SCHOOLS

It was football's version of a first-round knockout.

Taking advantage of two interceptions, a fumble recovery, precision passing from Dash Beierly and power running from Jordon Davison, No. 1 Mater Dei was so dominant in the first half on Friday night against No. 2 St. John Bosco that any boxing referee would have ended the bout.

"We were just overwhelmed," St. John Bosco coach Jason Negro said.

The Monarchs opened a 45-point halftime lead en route to 59-14 victory. It was the worst defeat inflicted on Negro since he took over the Braves' program in 2010 and the first time his team was on the losing side with a running clock in the fourth quarter.

"The pressure was too much," Negro said. "It was like an avalanche. They're the best team we've faced. They're so physical up front."

The loudest cheers from St. John Bosco fans at Santa Ana Stadium happened in the middle of half-time reacting to Freddie Freeman's walk-off grand slam in the Dodgers' 6-3 win over the New York Yankees in Game 1 of the World Series.

It wasn't that the Braves (8-1) were bad — it's that Mater Dei (8-0) is so good. Braves freshman quarterback Koa Malau'ulu couldn't settle down and felt the need to hurry his passes knowing the Monarchs' pass rush can be devastating. Aryn Washington returned an interception 45 yards for a touchdown and Cory Lavender had another interception along with a forced fumble. Malau'ulu was three for 14 for 31 yards in the first half and finished eight for 22 for 112 yards.

Meanwhile, Beierly completed 14 of 18 passes for 209 yards and three touchdowns in the first half. His first play on offense was a 35-yard touchdown pass to Kayden Dixon-Wyatt after getting a lateral from Davison. Beierly also ran 40 yards for a touchdown and went his eighth consecutive game without throwing an interception. He finished 20 for 28 for 309 yards and four touchdowns.

"I've read about this rivalry for years," said Beierly, who played at Chaparral last season. "To be on the winning side is amazing."

St. John Bosco finally got on the scoreboard early in the third quarter on a 71-yard run from Maliq Blackwell-Allen.

This rivalry mostly has produced competitive games, but last season St. John Bosco won the Trinity League matchup 28-0 and lost the rematch in the Southern Section Division 1 final 35-7.

"I knew we were going to win but not by that much," Mater Dei linebacker Shaun Scott said.

Mater Dei's defense came up with two interceptions and two fumble recoveries, including a six-yard



CRAIG WESTON For The Times

**MATER DEI'S NASIR WYATT** breaks up a pass attempt by St. John Bosco quarterback Koa Malau'ulu in Friday's Trinity League game. The Monarchs play Orange Lutheran next week to close the regular season.

## HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL: WEEK 9 SCORES

### THURSDAY'S RESULTS

#### CITY SECTION

**Eastern League**  
Huntington Park 34, South Gate 20  
South East 26, Legacy 9  
**Metro League**  
View Park 20, Hawkins 13  
Jordan 40, Rancho Dominguez 18  
**Valley Mission League**  
Canoga Park 44, Reseda 14  
Kennedy 47, Panorama 14  
Sylmar 13, Van Nuys 0

#### 8 MAN

**Valley League**  
East Valley 62, Discovery 0

#### SOUTHERN SECTION

##### 605 League

Artesia 35, Pioneer 27  
Cerritos 35, Glenn 0  
**Alpha League**  
Los Alamitos 28, San Clemente 27  
**Baseline League**  
Damien 38, Ayala 7  
Chino Hills 31, Rancho Cucamonga 21  
Upland 28, Elwood 14

##### Big West League — Upper

Chaparral 49, Roosevelt 0  
**Bravo League**  
San Juan Hills 42, Villa Park 10

##### Citrus Belt League

Beaumont 56, Redlands East Valley 8  
Yucaipa 38, Redlands 20  
Cajon 44, Citrus Valley 13

##### Cottonwood League

Santa Rosa Academy 54, Temecula Prep 0  
**Desert Sky League**  
Barstow 35, Silverado 28  
Victor Valley 26, Adelanto 0

##### Desert North League

Indio 14, Twentynine Palms 0  
**Golden League**  
Palmdale 64, Eastside 6

##### Hacienda League

Diamond Bar 55, Chino 28  
**Iota League**  
Troy 49, Irvine 13

##### Ivy League

Orange Vista 41, Riverside North 0  
**Lambda League**  
La Palma Kennedy 28, Marina 14

##### Manzanita League

Desert Christian 40, Hamilton 31  
**Miramonte League**  
Duarte 42, Bassett 0

##### Mission Valley League

South El Monte 49, Gabrielino 13  
**Mojave River League**  
Apple Valley 42, Ridgecrest Burroughs 0  
Oak Hills 38, Sultana 0

##### Mountain Pass League

Elsinore 37, Tahquitz 33  
West Valley at San Jacinto, postponed

##### Rio Hondo League

Monrovia 28, La Canada 21  
**San Andreas League**  
Grand Terrace 29, San Geronimo 21  
Rim of the World 41, Rialto 8

##### Sigma League

Santa Ana Calvary Chapel 42, Rancho Alamitos 29

##### Sunbelt League

Valley View 35, Riverside Poly 28  
**Trinity League**  
JSerra 35, Santa Margarita 33

##### Valle Vista League

Northview 34, West Covina 17  
**Zeta League**  
Godinez 26, Savanna 18

#### 8 MAN

##### Coast Valley League

Cuyama Valley 48, Coastal Christian 46  
Coast Union 57, San Luis Obispo Academy 12

### FRIDAY'S RESULTS

#### CITY SECTION

**Central League**  
Hollywood at Bernstein, canceled  
Conteras 42, Belmont 0  
Royal 49, Mendez 6

##### Coliseum League

Crenshaw 31, Fremont 0  
Dorsey 20, King/Drew 14  
Dynamily 8, Washington 2

##### East Valley League

North 22, Arleta 15  
North Hollywood 55, Monrovia 0  
Poly 10, Fulton 7  
Verdugo Hills 23, Chavez 6

##### Eastern League

Garfield 38, Roosevelt 28  
**Exposition League**  
Angelo 39, Manual Arts 22  
Santee 55, Jefferson 14

##### Marine League

Carson 45, Banning 21  
Narbonne 2, Gardena 0, forfeit

##### Northern League

Eagle Rock 42, Franklin 35  
Lincoln 34, Wilson 31

##### Southern League

Palisades 56, University 14  
Venice 21, Fairfax 20  
Westchester 41, Hamilton 0

##### 8 MAN

#### City League

New Designs Watts 34, USC Hybrid 30  
**Southern League**  
Sherman Oaks CES 30, Valley Oaks CES 0

#### SOUTHERN SECTION

**Almont League**  
Bell Gardens 42, Keppel 0  
San Gabriel 32, Alhambra 11  
Schurr 42, Montebello 0

##### Alpha League

Mission Viejo 49, Edison 24  
**Angelus League**

Cathedral 21, St. Francis 14  
St. Paul 31, Paraclete 28  
St. Pius X-St. Matthias 34, Alemay 14

##### Bay League

Culver City 41, Lawndale 13  
Inglewood 37, Palos Verdes 3  
Leuzinger 21, Mira Costa 13

##### Big West League — Lower

Great Oak 28, Temecula Valley 22  
Murieta Mesa 28, Riverside King 13  
Corona Santiago 56, Corona 15

##### Big West League — Upper

Corona Centennial 60, Norco 21  
Murieta Valley 57, Vista Murrieta 55

##### Bravo League

Corona del Mar 44, Tesoro 14  
Yorba Linda 42, Newport Harbor 17

##### Camino Real League

Mary Star of the Sea 53, St. Bernard 13  
St. Genevieve 35, St. Monica 28

##### Channel League

Moorpark 41, Royal 0  
Onard 35, Buena 33  
Ventura 17, Oak Park 7

##### Citrus Coast League

Grace 59, Channel Islands 7  
Northridge 14, Carpinteria 7

##### Conejo Coast League

Calabasas 43, Rio Mesa 34  
Newbury Park 38, Thousand Oaks 0  
Santa Barbara 31, Westlake 0

##### Cottonwood League

Trinity Classical Academy 43, Silver Valley 8  
**Del Rey League**  
Crespi 52, Cantwell-Sacred Heart 13

##### Salesian 35, La Salle 0

St. Anthony 42, Harvard-Westlake 7

##### Del Rio League

California 33, Whittier 22  
Santa Fe 21, El Rancho 14

##### Delta League

Capistrano Valley 28, El Modena 21  
Trabuco Hills 42, Cypress 28  
Justin 34, Western 21

##### Desert Empire League

Calabasas 43, Rio Mesa 34  
Newbury Park 38, Thousand Oaks 0  
Santa Barbara 31, Westlake 0

##### Desert Valley League

Coachella Valley 47, Yucca Valley 24  
**Epsilon League**  
Crean Lutheran 38, Huntington Beach 14

##### Foothill League

Golden Valley 44, Saugus 35  
Valencia 52, Castaic 33  
West Ranch 27, Canyon Country Canyon 21

##### Foxrott League

Aliso Niguel 30, Orange 14  
Laguna Beach 35, Dana Hills 32  
Northwood 21, Fountain Valley 14

##### Gano League

Chaffey 50, Montclair 7  
Don Lugo 22, Rowland 15

##### Gateway League

Downey 27, Warren 7  
La Mirada 20, Bellflower 6  
Mayfair 38, Dominguez 21

##### Gold Coast League

Rio Hondo Prep 42, Brentwood 22  
**Golden League**

Knight 33, Litterlock 8  
Lancaster 17, Highland 14  
Quartz Hill 41, Antelope Valley 7

##### Hacienda League

Upland 28, Elwood 14  
Los Altos 38, Walnut 0

##### Inland Valley League

Canyon Springs 53, Perris 34  
Heritage 12, Citrus Hill 6  
Moreno Valley 49, Lakeside

WORLD SERIES: GAME 1 FLASHBACK

# Freeman's blast was a Gibson 2.0 moment

[Plaschke, from D8] wand before dropping it and hobbling around the bases while his teammates danced at home plate as if they had just won a championship.

It sure seemed like it, Gibson 2.0 appearing when Freeman's grand slam gave the Dodgers a 6-3 victory that was crazily uncanny in its similarities to the franchise's great World Series moment in 1988.

"Everything was the same outside of the fist pumps," Dodgers manager Dave Roberts said.

Even the delivered dagger appeared to carry the same deadly weight.

In 1988, the mighty Oakland Athletics were so shook by Gibson's Game 1 blast that they managed to squeeze out only one win in a series that marked the Dodgers' last full-season championship.

In 1988, the Dodgers were so energized by their hobbled hero that they played the rest of the series in his honor, forever inspired by Gibson's unreal act of toughness.

On Friday, the Yankees had to be feeling the same devastation.

They wasted six one-run innings from starter Gerrit Cole. They wasted a mammoth home run from Giancarlo Stanton.

They wasted a 10th-inning run that resulted from two stolen bases and a fielder's choice.

Like the A's, they had this game. Like the A's, they blew it.

"Might be the greatest baseball moment I've ever witnessed, and I've witnessed some great ones," Roberts said.

It was arguably one of the greatest baseball moments in October, this being the first walk-off grand slam in World Series history.

"It's kind of amazing," Freeman said.

When asked to compare the effect of this hit with Gibson's impact, Roberts said, "I think we win three more games, that's going to be right up there with it."

History is going to repeat itself? History already repeated itself.

Like Gibson, Freeman is suffering from a painful leg injury, in his case a badly sprained ankle that had limited him to no home runs and one RBI in the playoffs.

Like Gibson, Freeman has spent virtually every day undergoing hours of treatment, and actually missed three playoff games because it was felt he wouldn't help the team.

Like Gibson, nobody on the other team believed in him, the Yankees intentionally walking Mookie Betts after Gavin Lux



GINA FERAZZI Los Angeles Times

FREDDIE FREEMAN is swarmed at the plate by teammates after his walk-off grand slam in the 10th stunned the Yankees.

walked and Tommy Edman singled and both runners moved up on Shohei Ohtani's foul fly.

Up stepped Freeman. First pitch.

Crack. Woosh.

Ball disappears into the sky. Freeman disappears into a mob.

"It felt like nothing, just kind of floating," Freeman said. "Those are the kind of things, when you're 5 years old with your two older brothers and you're playing Wiffle ball in the backyard, those are the scenarios you dream about ... that's as good as it gets right there."

It capped a Dodgers escape that included Blake Treinen retiring Aaron Judge on a popout with two runners on base to end the ninth.

"Pure elation," Roberts said. "You don't see teams celebrate

after a game, a walk-off like that, but I just think it was certainly warranted."

The Dodgers struck first with one out in the fifth, when Señor October, Kiké Hernández, lined a ball just out of the reach of right fielder Juan Soto, the ball bouncing into the corner for a triple. Moments later, Will Smith lined a ball to Soto to score Hernández.

It took the Yankees only three batters to get even, Soto leading off the sixth with a sharp single to left and, one of three Judge strikeouts later, Stanton crushing a hanging knuckle-curve 412 feet into the left-field corner for a two-run homer.

The Dodgers then came back to tie it in the eighth when Ohtani lined a ball off the center-field fence for a double and then raced to third when Gleyber Torres mishandled the relay.

Four pitches later, Betts scored Ohtani on a line drive to tie the game and set up the heroics for Freeman.

Afterward, Freeman was filled with such adrenaline, it appeared he wanted to jump out of his skin.

"I want to run through this table and tackle all of you guys," he said during his postgame news conference. "This is pretty cool. It's going to be hard to sleep tonight."

It was a fitting ending to an evening that began with a tribute to the late Fernando Valenzuela. Three days after his death, in the Dodgers' first game in his absence, Valenzuela filled Chavez Ravine with a strength that spilled into Freeman's blast.

During a pregame ceremony, there were tears, there was a stunningly long moment of silence, there was his family lined up on the third-base line during

pregame introductions, and there was a first pitch placed on the back of the mound next to where the number 34 had been painted into the dirt.

Nearly every time the video board showed a fan, that fan would turn their back to the camera to show they were wearing a Valenzuela jersey.

Jack Flaherty, the Dodgers starter who gave up two runs in 5 1/3 innings, even wore a Valenzuela jersey to the game.

When the memorial ended, there was a chant that swept through the stadium like a warm breeze up from the border.

"Fer-nan-do! Fer-nan-do! Fer-nan-do!"

Ten innings later that chant was replaced by another cheer.

"Fred-die! Fred-die! Fred-die!" Somewhere, Kirk Gibson was smiling.

# Freeman's big swing honed with help from father

[Dodgers, from D8] lifted the Dodgers to a 6-3 win. And after being mobbed by his teammates and serenaded by more than 50,000 fans, Freeman immediately went to find his dad in the crowd.

"My swing is because of him. My approach is because of him. I am who I am because of him," Freeman said of Fred, whom he greeted with a two-handed high-five behind home plate.

"You couldn't script it any better," Fred added, still standing in his field-level seats as pandemonium ensued around him. "For his year, the way it happened, it's unbelievable ... It's just amazing."

Indeed, this was not poised to be Freeman's October. Not after a season of off-field adversity, including 3-year-old son Max's battle with a frightening case of Guillain-Barré syndrome in August, briefly leaving the boy paralyzed. And not long after, Freeman sprained his ankle during the last week of the regular season.

While the veteran first baseman has been able to play through the injury for most of the playoffs, it has required hours of pregame treatment — and, as a result, precious little time in the batting cage to refine his hampered swing.

"He's doing something that is basically heroic, to put himself in a position to even be available, much less in the starting lineup," teammate Kiké Hernández said. "Fred-die is a grinder. Not too many superstars grind the way Freddie does."

In recent days, however, Freeman finally experienced some smoother sailing. The week of leading up to the World Series allowed his ankle to significantly improve, with Freeman recording his lowest level of swelling since getting hurt. Meanwhile, the slugger found a new mental cue that synced up his swing mechanics, telling himself to "step out" with his injured lead foot on each hack in order to keep pressure off the most sensitive part of his injury.

"He told me yesterday, 'Dad, I think I'm gonna hit well,'" Fred recalled.

"And," Fred added with a laugh of disbelief, "he did."

Freeman was one of the few to



ROBERT GAUTHIER Los Angeles Times

FREDDIE FREEMAN enjoys a moment of triumph after his walk-off grand slam helped the Dodgers beat the Yankees in Game 1, the first game-ending slam in World Series history.

hit Yankees starter Gerrit Cole, with his first-inning triple serving as the Dodgers' only hit until the fifth inning. That's when Hernández found the right-field corner with a line drive that got past an overly aggressive route from outfielder Juan Soto. Hernández scored soon after, sliding home head-first on a Will Smith sacrifice fly.

While that run opened the scoring, the lead quickly changed hands. In the sixth, Giancarlo Stanton hammered a low slider from Dodgers starter Jack Flaherty, blasting a two-run home run around the left-field foul pole.

The Dodgers leveled the score in the eighth inning, with the help of more sloppy Yankees defense. With one out, Shohei Ohtani roped a double off the wall in right, then

took third when the cut-off throw got away from second baseman Gleyber Torres. Ohtani then scored on a Mookie Betts sacrifice fly.

The score remained 2-2 until the 10th inning, when Jazz Chisholm Jr. lined a one-out single off Dodgers reliever Blake Treinen, stole second and third base off Treinen's slow stretch delivery, then scored on a ground ball from Anthony Volpe.

That left it up to the Dodgers to answer. With two on and two outs in the 10th, the Yankees decided to intentionally walk Betts with first base open, preferring to have Nestor Cortes — a left-hander making his first appearance of the postseason after missing the first two rounds because of an injury — face Freeman in a left-on-left

matchup.

"I was almost hoping Mookie would get the hit," Fred joked, having been wracked with nerves as Freeman came to the plate.

Instead, Freeman anticipated a first-pitch fastball. He got the barrel out in front of an inner-half offering. Then, he raised his bat in the air as the ball disappeared into the right-field pavilion; not far from where Kirk Gibson, playing through his own leg injuries 36 years earlier, landed his iconic Game 1 walk-off blast in the 1988 World Series.

"Everything was the same," manager Dave Roberts remarked. "Outside of the fist pumps."

Freeman's celebration wasn't much more understated. He met first base coach Clayton Kellough with a low-five. He flexed his arms as he rounded second. And by the time he reached the home stretch — feeling as though he was "just kind of floating" around the bases — his teammates were waiting with open arms and crazed excitement, swallowing him in a dog pile at the plate.

"Knowing what Freddie has gone through, it's super special," Betts said. "I'm glad it was Freddie who did it."

When Freeman broke away from his teammates, he immediately ran over to his father behind the plate. Through the netting, they high-fived and clasped hands. Then they wildly screamed while nearly touching faces. No words were necessary.

"I just wanted to share that with him, because he's been there," said Freeman, whose batting practice routine with his father only took shape after his mom, Rosemary, died of cancer when he was 10.

"He's been through a lot in his life too," Freeman added. "And just to have a moment like that, I just wanted to be a part of that with him."

While Freeman said he would picture hitting World Series home runs in games of backyard Wiffle Ball with his two older brothers, such imagination rarely accompanied his daily BP with Fred. Those sessions were for serious work, for focused repetitions, for the kind of consistency upon which Freeman

has built his 15-year career.

"We never did that," Fred said. "It was always hit the next line drive. Hit the next line drive. We never visualized something like that. It was always going through what we're supposed to do."

That's why, when Freeman stepped into the box in the 10th inning, he wasn't thinking about hitting a grand slam. He wasn't trying to end the game with a historic, legacy-cementing blast. Instead, he crouched into his batting position, cocked his bat behind his head and took the same swing he and his dad honed in his youth, and continue to refine to this day.

"All the batting practice, all the relentless hours we spent together on a baseball field, we still do it in the off-seasons together," Freeman said. "If he didn't throw me batting practice, if he didn't love the game of baseball, I wouldn't be here playing this game. So that's Fred Freeman's moment right there."

One destined to live forever — after decades in the making.

WORLD SERIES GAME 1 DODGERS 6, N.Y. YANKEES 3												
New York	AB	R	H	BI	Avg.	Los Angeles	AB	R	H	BI	Avg.	
Torres 2b	5	0	2	0	.400	Ohtani dh	5	1	1	0	.200	
1-Domingz	0	0	0	0	---	Betts rf	3	1	0	1	.000	
Cabrera 2b	0	0	0	0	---	Freeman 1b	5	1	2	4	1.000	
Soto rf	3	1	1	0	.333	Hernandez lf	4	0	1	0	.250	
Judge cf	5	0	1	0	.200	Munoy 3b	3	0	0	0	.000	
Stanton dh	5	1	2	2	.200	K.Hernandez cf	3	1	1	0	.333	
Chisholm 3b	5	1	2	0	.400	Smith c	3	0	0	1	.000	
Rizzo 1b	4	0	1	0	.250	Lux 2b	3	0	0	0	.000	
Volpe ss	4	0	1	0	.250	2-Taylor	1	0	0	0	---	
Wells c	5	0	1	0	.200	Edman ss	4	1	2	0	.500	
Verdugo lf	4	0	1	0	.250	Totals	33	6	7	6		
Totals	40	3	10	3								

New York: 000 002 000 1 - 3 10 1  
Dodgers: 000 010 010 4 - 6 7 1

Two outs when winning run scored: 1-run for Torres in the 9th, 2-run for Lux in the 10th.

Wells—New York 1 for 8; Los Angeles 1 for 8. Runners moved up—Wells, Ohtani 2, GDP—Soto. DP—Los Angeles 1 (Edman, Freeman).  
New York: IP H R ER BB SO NP ERA  
Cole.....6 4 1 1 0 4 88 1.50  
Kahle, H, 1.....: 2 0 0 0 0 5 0.00  
Kahle, H, 1.....: 1 1 0 0 0 7 8.00  
Weaver, BS, 0-1.....: 1 0 0 0 0 19 0.00  
Cousins, L, 0-1, H, 1.....: 1 2 2 1 0 14 5.00  
Cortez, BS, 0-1.....: 1 2 2 1 0 2 54.00  
Dodgers: IP H R ER BB SO NP ERA  
Flaherty.....5 2 2 1 6 90 3.38  
Barbato.....: 2 0 0 1 2 15 0.00  
Graterol.....: 1 1 0 0 0 1 18 0.00  
Vesia.....: 1 0 0 0 2 16 0.00  
Kopech.....: 1 0 0 1 0 10 0.00  
Treinen, W, 1-0.....: 1 1 1 1 2 22 6.75

Inherited runners—Holtz 1-0, Kahle 2-0, Weaver 1-1, Cortez 2-2, Treinen 2-0, IBB, off Banda (Volpe), off Kopech (Soto), off Treinen (Rizzo), off Cortez (Betts), HBP\_Holmes (Munoy). U—Carlos Torres, Mark Carlson, Doug Eddings, Mark Kipperleg 1-3, 27. Tickets sold—52,394 (56,000).

## WORLD SERIES: GAME 1 FLASHBACK



ROBERT GAUTHIER Los Angeles Times

**BLAKE TREINEN** entered a tied Game 1 in the ninth inning to make Yankees star Aaron Judge hit a popup and get out of a jam.

# Treinen gets win, Freeman a save

## Reliever goes from hero in ninth to potential goat to deep relief after walk-off win

**BILL SHAIKIN**  
ON BASEBALL

Even the casual baseball fan knows all about Kirk Gibson and his legendary walk-off home run. The serious baseball fan knows Dennis Eckersley gave up the home run. The dedicated Dodgers fan knows Mike Davis drew the walk ahead of Gibson.

But even the most diehard among Dodgers fans would struggle to identify the winning pitcher that night.

Blake Treinen, meet Alejandro Peña.

Freddie Freeman made a winner out of Treinen and all the Dodgers on Friday, blasting the first walk-off grand slam in the 121-year history of the World Series, sending a city into delirium and prompting instant mashups of the Gibson and Freeman home runs.

Treinen rescued the Dodgers in the ninth inning of Game 1 against the mighty New York Yankees. The Dodgers rescued him in the 10th inning, when Freeman hit a home run so dramatic it was branded as legendary as soon as it landed.

"That," Treinen said, "was pretty sick."

Treinen has emerged as the most dependable arm in a deep bullpen. He gave up one run in August, no runs in September. He had given up one run in October.

In the ninth inning of a tie game, the Dodgers asked Treinen to replace Michael Kopec with the potential winning run on second base. The Dodgers walked Juan Soto intentionally, so Treinen would face presumptive American League most valuable player Aaron Judge.

"There is peace about it," Treinen said. "There is a peace when you go out and just let it be what it is. You can let the situation get big, or you can just try to live in it and enjoy it."

Treinen called it a "pick your poison" situation. Neither Soto nor Judge is a welcome sight at the plate, but with Judge the Dodgers had the right-handed Treinen facing a right-handed batter.

Jack Flaherty, the Dodgers' starter, struck out Judge three times.

"He's not a guy that you necessarily go in looking to strike out," Treinen said, "because he is a

great hitter. But every hitter gives you a window every now and again. Right there, we were just trying to get some weak contact, or at least change the eye level, and fortunately we got a popup."

Said Kopec: "Blake has cleaned up after me already some in this postseason, so for him to come and do what he needed to do right there was huge."

As Treinen returned to the dugout, Kiké Hernández asked him a question.

"Do you want me to end this?" Hernández asked.

That would not be the scripted ending on this evening. The Dodgers were retired in order in the ninth, with Hernández flying out to end the inning.

In the 10th, Treinen gave up a run when Jazz Chisholm Jr. singled, stole second base, stole third base and scored on a force play. During the regular season, eight of nine runners stole successfully against Treinen.

The Yankees led, 3-2.

"Initially," Treinen said, "pretty bummed that I would be the one with an L next to my name."

Hernández again told Treinen the Dodgers would pick him up.

After the game, Hernández said he had anticipated Shohei Ohtani would hit the walk-off home run.

"Fairy-tale ending," Hernández said.

Instead, Freeman hit the walk-off home run — and how about the guy who barely could walk delivering his own fairy-tale ending?

"It was barely off the bat before I started blacking out and trying to get to the field. I almost fell over the rail," Kopec said. "Freddie is a bad man."

Treinen rushed the plate to join the teammates enveloping Freeman in a huge hug reminiscent of 1988.

"I don't think I've ever seen a team stay on the field for 20 minutes after the final play just to watch in awe and soak in the fans," Treinen said.

"That was the most incredible moment in baseball I've been blessed to see."

Legendary hero: Freeman.

Winning pitcher, with the first World Series victory of his career: Treinen.

"I never thought of that," Treinen said.

"Add it to the list of gratitude for the big guy upstairs."

# Edman and Dodgers do the little things

BY MIKE DIGIOVANNA

Fresh off his MVP-winning performance against the New York Mets in the National League Championship Series, Dodgers shortstop Tommy Edman opened the World Series against the New York Yankees on Friday night with a ... *clank!*

The first ball hit to him in Game 1 in Dodger Stadium, a 93.5-mph grounder off the bat of slugger Giancarlo Stanton, went off Edman's glove for an error, allowing the Yankees to put two on with two outs in the first inning.

The rare miscue from the sure-handed utility man did not cost the Dodgers, as the next batter, Jazz Chisholm Jr., grounded out to end the inning, and Edman's evening got progressively better from there.

Edman turned a double play on Juan Soto's grounder up the middle in the third inning and saved a run in the sixth with a diving stop that prevented Austin Wells' ground-ball single with two on from reaching the outfield.

Then, in the bottom of the 10th, Edman followed Gavin Lux's one-out walk with a single off the glove of diving second baseman Oswaldo Cabrera, and Edman was on second when Freddie Freeman sent a crowd of 52,394 into a frenzy with a walk-off grand slam that gave the Dodgers a come-from-behind, 6-3 win.

"I don't know, I kind of blacked out," Edman said when asked to describe his reaction to the first walk-off grand slam in World Series history. "I'm sure I screamed pretty loud and jumped up and down."

"I was trying to get a huge secondary lead to score on a single. I knew their outfielders were playing in, because they didn't want anyone to score. I was trying to get way off the base, and fortunately I didn't have to run very hard."

Edman hit .407 (11 for 27) with a 1.023 on-base-plus-slugging percentage, one homer, three doubles



ROBERT GAUTHIER Los Angeles Times

**TOMMY EDMAN** avoids a sliding Gleyber Torres and throws to first to complete a big double play in the third inning of Game 1.

and 11 RBIs in the NLCS, including a two-run double and a two-run homer in a series-clinching 10-5 win over the Mets last Sunday night.

But those good vibes didn't seem to carry over to the World Series when Edman misplayed Stanton's first-inning grounder.

"It was Stanton," Edman said of baseball's exit-velocity king, whose towering, two-run homer to left field in the sixth gave the Yankees a 2-1 lead. "Not many people hit the ball as hard as he does, and he just topspinned one like crazy. But it was good to get that one out of the way and make a couple of good plays after that."

After Gleyber Torres led off the third with an infield single, Edman fielded Soto's grounder behind second base, scooted to the bag and touched the base as he threw firmly to first for a double play.

Chisholm followed Stanton's homer in the sixth with a single to

right off reliever Anthony Banda. Anthony Rizzo struck out for the second out. Chisholm stole second, and Anthony Volpe was intentionally walked.

Wells hit a grounder that appeared headed for center field, but Edman smothered it with a diving stop on the second-base side of the bag, holding Wells to a single that loaded the bases. Banda struck out Alex Verdugo with a 98-mph fastball to end the inning.

"That's one of those plays that are underrated, that people aren't going to talk about," second baseman Lux said. "But I'm glad someone else saw that and recognized it as a huge play, because it saved a run."

Had Wells' grounder reached the outfield, the speedy Chisholm would have scored from second for a 3-1 lead. Instead, the score remained 2-1. The Dodgers tied it on Mookie Betts' sacrifice fly in the

eighth, but without Edman's play in the sixth, the Yankees might have won in regulation.

"In a game like this, with all the big moments, those things are definitely going to go unnoticed, except to the guys on the field," Dodgers third baseman Max Muncy said. "Tommy making that stop was gigantic."

Edman's play was one of several little things that went right for the Dodgers but were overshadowed by Freeman's big thing.

Reliever Brusdar Graterol, pitching for the first time in a month and the eighth time this season, gave up one hit and struck out one in a scoreless seventh, his sinking fastball averaging 98.9 mph and topping out at 99.6.

With two on and no outs in the bottom of the seventh and Rizzo crashing in from first base, Kiké Hernández dropped a perfect bunt toward third, a sacrifice the Dodgers were unable to cash in on.

Left-hander Alex Vesia, who missed the NLCS because of a ribcage injury, struck out two in a 1-2-3 eighth, an indication he could play a significant role in the best-of-seven series.

Shohei Ohtani alertly took an extra base in the bottom of the eighth when, after he doubled off the right-field wall, Torres, the Yankees second baseman, couldn't handle the short-hop on Soto's throw from right field and the ball trickled toward the mound. Ohtani took third and scored on Betts' sacrifice fly for a 2-2 tie.

Graterol missed most of the season because of shoulder and hamstring injuries, but if the right-hander can regain something close to his 2023 form (4-2, 1.20 earned-run average in 68 games), he would ease the loss of injured setup man Evan Phillips.

"We're betting on Brusdar's heartbeats, the stuff," Dodgers manager Dave Roberts said. "He hasn't pitched in forever, but we put him in a big spot, he threw up a zero and kept us in the ballgame. He was lights out tonight."

## DODGERS REPORT

# Phillips laments missing World Series

BY MIKE DIGIOVANNA

**Evan Phillips** feels like a mountaineer who reaches the final base camp on the way up Mount Everest but is unable to join the expedition for the assault on the summit.

The right-hander was one of the Dodgers' top relievers this season, and he did not give up a run in 6⅓ innings over five National League Division Series and Championship Series games, but a shoulder injury rendered him unfit for the World Series against the New York Yankees, and he was left off the roster.

"It's really tough," Phillips said. "I mean, this is a historic week in Dodgers history, and I want nothing more than to compete and be a part of this. ... I'm very disheartened by how things have gone for me personally."

Phillips threw 18 pitches in a scoreless sixth inning of a 10-5 NLCS-clinching Game 6 win over the New York Mets. Manager **Dave Roberts** planned to have Phillips pitch the seventh inning of the bullpen game, but when Phillips complained of arm fatigue, Roberts pivoted and sent Daniel Hudson out for the seventh.

An MRI test showed "nothing majorly concerning," Phillips said, but it did reveal some nerve irritation in his shoulder. Phillips hoped to recover in time to pitch in the World Series, but because his injury dated to a previous round, the Dodgers would not be able to replace him on the World Series roster if he got hurt again.

"It's just not bouncing back the way we need it to for me to be a usable pitcher for multiple games, and we don't want to put other guys in the bullpen at risk if I were unable to go and unable to be replaced on the roster," Phillips said. "That would really set us back as a group, and ultimately, that's what the decision came down to."

Phillips, one of the team's top three leverage relievers along with **Blake Treinen** and **Michael Kopec**, said he is "progressing each day, hoping to make big strides in a short amount of time," but to be added to the World Series roster, another pitcher has to get hurt.

"I have a lot of personal hurdles to climb before I get to that point," Phillips said.

"We're still going day by day and trying to get to a point where I'm healthy enough to be an option. If that's in the World Series, I'd be more than thrilled. But we have the big picture in mind, as well. It's a very complex situation."

## Flipping out on walk-off grand slam

**Freddie Freeman's** grand slam in the 10th inning of Friday night's 6-3 Game 1 victory over the Yankees was punctuated by a bat flip, but not by the man who hit the dramatic walk-off shot.

While Freeman celebrated the first walk-off slam in World Series history by pointing his bat toward the sky and releasing it like a mic drop before starting his trot, it was third baseman **Max Muncy's** bat that went flying through the air.

"I was actually standing on the top step of the dugout, holding my bat, talking to [Roberts] about how there's actually no way I can get up this inning, so I don't know why I have my bat," said Muncy, whose walk-off homer ended an 18-inning marathon in the 2018 World Series Game 3 win over the Boston Red Sox.

"I was gonna go on-deck in case there was a wild pitch and I needed to help the guy coming home ... so I'm sitting there saying, 'I don't know why I'm holding my bat,' and as soon as Freddie hit it, I just launched my bat. It was a fun moment for me."

## Short hops

Roberts said right-hander **Walker Buehler**, who started Game 3 of the NLDS against the San Diego Padres and Game 3 of the NLCS in New York's Citi Field, will start Game 3 at Yankee Stadium on Monday night. "We love Walker in big games, and the road isn't going to faze him," Roberts said before Game 2. "It also allows him to be available for a potential Game 7, too."

Roberts said **Jack Flaherty's** right hamstring "tightened up a little bit" on the pitch before he gave up a home run to **Giancarlo Stanton** in the sixth inning of Game 1, which is why the right-hander was shaking his leg. "But I don't think it's going to be a big deal," Roberts said.

# World Series

LA 6  3 GAME 1 (10 INN.) FOR LATEST COVERAGE VISIT LATIMES.COM



GINA FERAZZI Los Angeles Times

**FREDDIE FREEMAN** raises his bat after hitting a walk-off grand slam in the 10th inning to beat the Yankees. Moments later, he celebrated with his father, Fred.

## BLAST FROM THE PAST

Freeman copies Gibson's iconic moment to win

**BILL PLASCHKE**

A one-legged hitter. A walk-off World Series home run.

A Game 1 Dodgers victory swiped from a stunned opponent just one out from defeat.

Improbably, impossibly, did this really happen again?

Did Freddie Freeman just become Kirk Gibson, replaying the franchise's greatest moment 36 years and endless heartbreaks later?

It sure sounded like it Friday night, the ball blasting off Freeman's bat in the 10th inning against New York Yankees pitcher Nestor Cortes as if it were a pack of firecrackers.

It sure felt like it, the ball soaring into the right-field pavilion while Dodger Stadium rolled and shook with a roar that could be heard all the way to Times Square.

It sure looked like it, Freeman waving his bat in the air like a [See Plaschke, D6]



WALLY SKALLIV Los Angeles Times

**THE YANKEES'** Aaron Judge is tagged out by Dodgers catcher Will Smith after a dropped third strike in the third inning of Game 1. Judge had one single in five-at-bats with three strikeouts.

**Phillips laments missing Series**

Dodgers' ailing reliever 'disheartened' by not being available to pitch against the Yankees. **D7**

**Range of emotions for Treinen**

The reliever was the potential goat in Game 1 until Freeman's walk-off slam saved him. **D7**

Walk-off slam was product of work with dad

**BY JACK HARRIS**

The swing was honed on the sandlots of suburban Orange County, the product of years of daily batting practice between a son and his dad.

On almost every afternoon of his Southern California childhood, Freddie Freeman would get picked up from school by his father, Fred, bring a bucket of exactly 48 baseballs to a field near their house, then take an hour of hacks off balls Fred flipped to him.

It's the way Freeman's swing was first crafted as a young player — a routine that, decades later on Friday night, served as the genesis of unforgettable October history.

With the bases loaded in the bottom of the 10th inning, and the Dodgers one out away from defeat to the New York Yankees in Game 1 of the World Series, Freeman etched his name into postseason lore, giving an instant autumn classic a raucous, storybook ending.

On the first walk-off grand slam in a World Series game, Freeman [See Dodgers, D6]

Los Angeles Times  
SPORTS EXTRA

A TIMES E-NEWSPAPER EXCLUSIVE :: SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2024



WILLIAM LIANG Associated Press

LeBRON JAMES, left, drives past the Kings' DeMar DeRozan during the first half Saturday. The Lakers rallied past Sacramento to improve their record to 3-0.

# James, Davis close out Kings with late run

BY DAN WOIKE

After the Lakers began their season with two straight wins for the first time since 2010, LeBron James stood in front of his locker and said the key to the Lakers' season would be looking, more often than not, for Anthony Davis to lead the way.

"It's very important that he's the main focal point for us every single night," James said defiantly Friday. "We know what he's going to do defensively, but offensively we have to find him in multiple places on the floor throughout the whole

game. And we've done that through two games."

So about Game 3 ...

With the Lakers having fully coughed up a 15-point lead and the Sacramento Kings doing what they always seem to do to them, James reminded everyone that he too can be a focal point.

In four minutes of almost perfect basketball from the Lakers' 39-year-old star, he scored 14 points and assisted on another two. The stretch, which came during a 21-0 run to start the fourth quarter, pushed the Lakers to yet another win, 131-127 over the Kings.

James finished with 32 points,

14 rebounds and 10 assists, his play early in the fourth quarter putting the Lakers in position to beat the Kings for the first time since Jan. 7, 2023.

And the other focal point, Davis, he closed them out.

With Sacramento pushing back against the James-led run, Davis reentered the game and continued his early-season dominance. He attacked Domantas Sabonis at the rim and iced the game with a three-pointer and a split trip to the free-throw line, his only miss in the fourth quarter of a 31-point night.

Davis and James combined to make all 11 of their fourth-quarter

shots, combining to score 30 points in the quarter.

All five starters finished in double figures with Rui Hachimura scoring 18 to go with nine rebounds, Austin Reaves adding 16 points, seven rebounds and six assists, and D'Angelo Russell contributing 16 points and five assists.

Before the game, Lakers coach JJ Redick acknowledged that early-season sample sizes haven't come close to reaching meaningful levels. Still, he'd been encouraged by the Lakers' low turnover rates.

Then Saturday, the Lakers coughed it up 19 times leading to 25 Sacramento points.

But like they did in wins against Western Conference contenders Minnesota and Phoenix, the Lakers found other ways to tip things to their advantages.

Saturday, they grabbed 13 more rebounds than the Kings and ended up with four more shots despite turning the ball over five more times than Sacramento.

And while Sabonis had a triple-double with 29 points, 12 rebounds and 10 assists, and De'Aaron Fox had 28 points and 10 assists, the Lakers' stars were just better.

The Lakers now head on a five-game trip beginning Monday in Phoenix.

# Joveljic, Puig both score twice as Galaxy open playoffs in style

BY KEVIN BAXTER

The Galaxy hadn't played a game this late in the calendar in nearly a decade but they had little trouble making the adjustment Saturday, blowing out the Colorado Rapids 5-0 in a first-round MLS Western Conference playoff game played before an announced crowd of 24,537 at Dignity Health Sports Park.

The game was far more one-sided than the score, with the Galaxy getting two goals from Dejan Joveljic, two from Riqui Puig and another from John Nelson. Four of those scores against U.S. national team goalkeeper Zack Steffen came in the second half.

Galaxy keeper John McCarthy, meanwhile, had a quiet night not having to make a save.

The win was the most one-sided result in an MLS playoff game since November 2014 when the Galaxy beat Real Salt Lake 5-0 in a first-round match en route to winning the MLS Cup.

With the win, the Galaxy go to suburban Denver on Friday for the second game of the best-of-three series, needing another win to advance to the conference semifinals. A loss would force a third game at Dignity Health Sports Park on Nov. 9.

Neither outcome is ideal for the Galaxy, given the bizarre MLS playoff schedule.

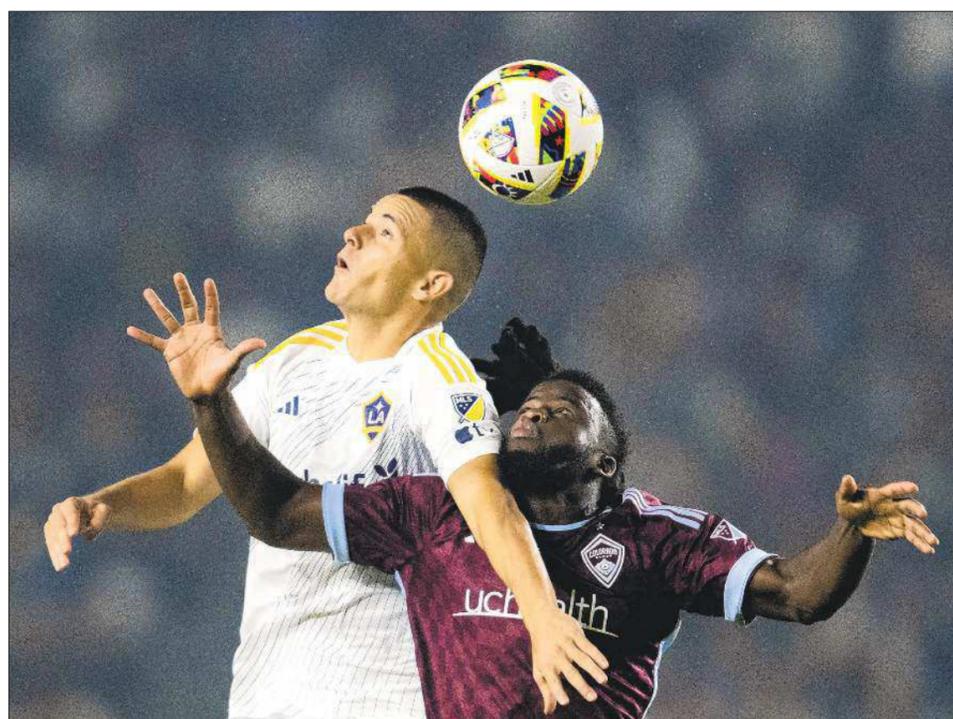
Sweeping the first two games of the series would send the Galaxy on to the conference semifinals, but with the playoffs pausing for the November international break, the team's next game wouldn't be until Nov. 23 at the earliest, a 22-day pause that threatens to rob the team of its rhythm.

A loss, meanwhile, would force a winner-take-all game at home with the Galaxy's season on the line.

Either way, the Galaxy will be in deep water since they haven't played a game in November since 2016, when they lost the second game of a two-leg conference semifinal to the Rapids on penalty kicks in Bruce Arena's final game as coach.

The Galaxy were on the front foot from the start Saturday — they had the ball for nearly an hour of the 90 minutes — though they weren't crisp and had trouble stringing passes together in the early going. They finally were rewarded for their aggression in the 32nd minute when Joveljic got his forehead on Puig's outswinging corner kick and looped a soft header by Steffen at the right post.

The goal was the 70th of the season for the Galaxy but just the third off a corner while for Joveljic it was his 16th of the season, match-



KYUSUNG GONG Associated Press

THE GALAXY'S Dejan Joveljic (9) battles the Rapids' Lallas Abubakar for the ball during the first half of their MLS Cup playoffs opener. Joveljic scored two goals in the Galaxy's 5-0 rout of Colorado.

ing him with Gabriel Pec for the team high. Puig had taken just nine corners during the regular season and none of them led to scores; the assist Saturday was his team-high 16th. And the score was a good omen since the Galaxy are nearly unbeatable when they score first, losing just once in 18 games. They are unbeaten at Dignity Health Sports Park, with Saturday's win improving their record in Carson to 14-1-3.

Outside backs Miki Yamane

and Nelson teamed to double the lead seven minutes into the second half, with Yamane threading a ball through the box to a wide-open Nelson, who settled it with one foot then sent a right-footed shot into the top right corner for the first goal of his six-year MLS career.

Two minutes later Puig, who was all over the field, made it 3-0 after Joveljic deflected a Nelson pass in front of him at the top of the box, setting up an easy right-footed finish.

## NHL Ducks open trip with loss to Rangers

Ryan Lindgren and Will Cuyille scored in the third period and the New York Rangers beat the Ducks 2-1 at Madison Square Garden.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

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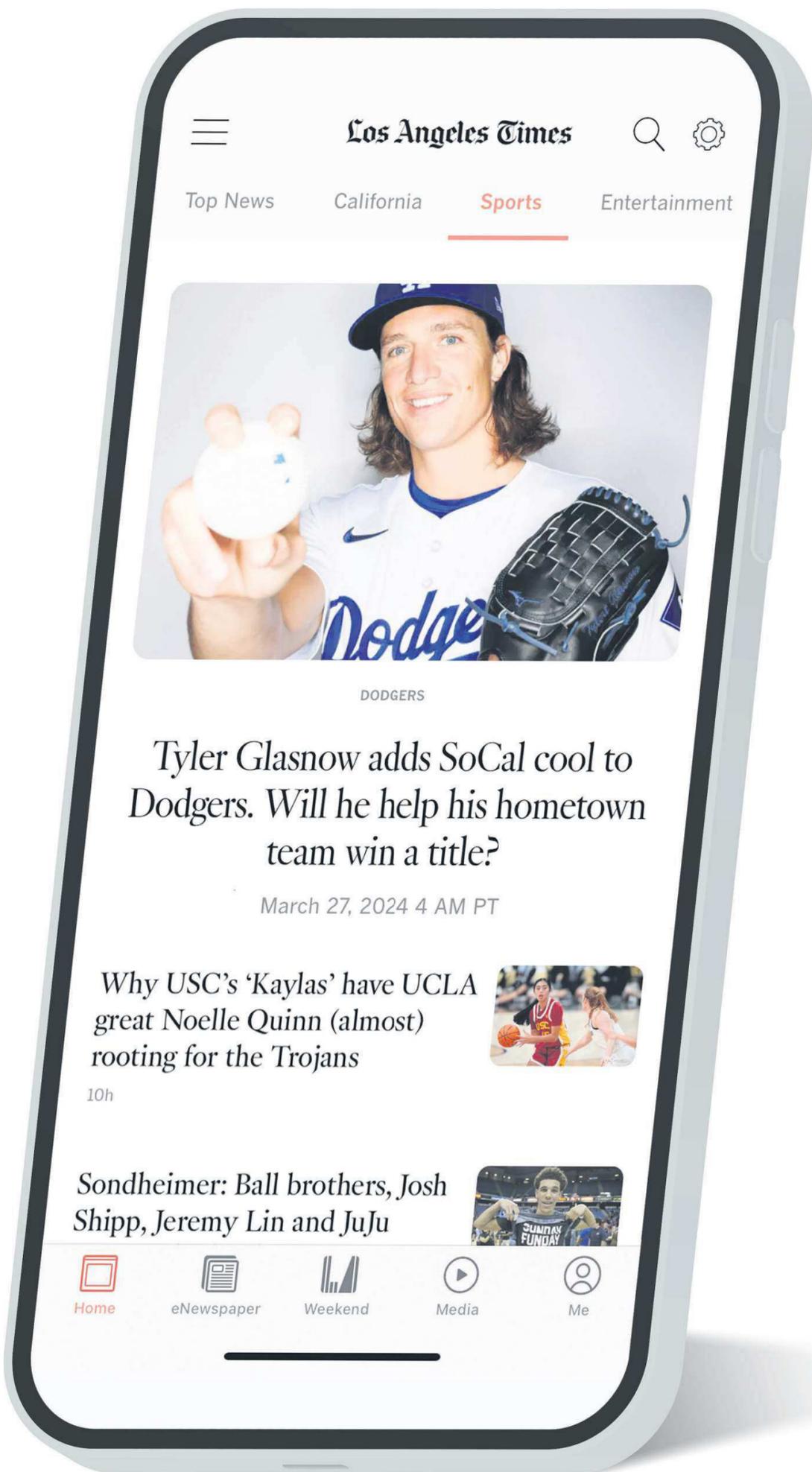


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# ENTERTAINMENT

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2024



*Steve McQueen  
on making  
WWII personal  
with 'Blitz'*

E4

**JEFF HILLER GIVES  
'SOMEBODY' A  
WARM SALUTE E2**

**THE SHINE IS OFF  
REALITY TV  
FRANCHISES E6**

# HOW 'SOMEBODY SOMEWHERE' CHANGED JEFF HILLER'S LIFE

AS THE ACCLAIMED HBO DRAMEDY BEGINS ITS THIRD AND FINAL SEASON, THE ACTOR IS 'JUST LIVING IN GRATITUDE THAT IT AIRED AT ALL'

**W** BY ESTHER ZUCKERMAN  
NEW YORK

WHEN BRIDGET EVERETT emailed Jeff Hiller asking if he'd be willing to audition for her TV show "Somebody Somewhere," he was at his desk at a temp job, trying to figure out how to work Excel. Hiller had some successes in the entertainment world at that point: He was in the Broadway musical "Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson" and had acted in TV shows like "30 Rock," but he still needed to make ends meet. He remembers Everett suggesting that he might not want to take the role because the production couldn't pay him very much money. "I was like, I don't think that's true," he says, launching into an unmistakable giggle I'll hear many times over the course of our conversation. "I'm currently making \$16 an hour. Can you top that?"

Then he read the script and he was shocked. The part of Joel, who becomes best friends with Everett's protagonist Sam when she moves back home to Kansas following her sister's death, was eerily similar to him.

"I was like, 'I think maybe they wrote this for me,'" he says. "I was like, 'How did she know that I was a theology major? How did she know that I was in church choir?' But then other men have since told me they also auditioned." He laughs again, an effervescent sound bubbling from deep inside him.

Everett, as well as creators Hannah Bos and Paul Thureen, recognized that there was something cosmically linked between Hiller and this person they had invented. He got the part and now Season 3, premiering Sunday, marks the beginning of the end of the critically acclaimed series.

In Season 3, Joel moves in with his boyfriend Brad (Tim Bagley), another devout Christian. Their new circumstances mean figuring out the small details of cohabitation like whether to have magnets on the fridge and how to load the dishwasher, and also coincides with Joel furthering his own spiritual journey independent of his partner.

"Somebody Somewhere" changed Hiller's life, so obviously he's wistful to see it come to a conclusion. But he's also grateful that it got to exist as it did. "I'm really truly just living in gratitude that it aired at all," he says.

Everett attributes the success of the show to Hiller. "The show wouldn't work if Jeff wasn't playing Joel because he really is so funny and sly and so tenderhearted and heartbreaking and just everything you want to be," she says in a Zoom interview. "And undeniable is kind of the most important thing. Jeff as Joel is undeniable."

Hiller's charm is also undeniable when we have rosé and share a plate of beet hummus at a restaurant near his Lower East Side apartment. Our conversation goes on many tangents — the sitcom "Designing Women," the Oscar race, the musical "Wicked." Hiller has enormous enthusi-



SANDY MORRIS/HBO

**JEFF HILLER,** top, and with co-star Tim Bagley, above, has seen the types of roles available to him expand since "Somebody Somewhere."

|||||||

asm for pop culture, but when he moved to New York, it was ostensibly to pursue a social work master's degree at NYU.

In many ways, Hiller's early life was defined by his relationship to Christianity. He grew up in San Antonio and found solace in the Lutheran church he attended. It was "the only place where people were nice to me because I was real gay," he says. "I know it's shocking, I'm so butch now. But it was beyond cute bullying, it was straight up trauma."

While he was not yet out, he associated the place with social justice.

"I think I would have probably been a pastor if I was born straight," he says. "Or maybe, I don't know, you can never know that."

He had always wanted to be an actor, but after college at Texas Lutheran University, he headed to Denver to do what he called a "churchy version of AmeriCorps." He first tried improv in Colorado with a fellow volunteer. Although he had been accepted to NYU, he never ended up going. He moved to New York on June 1, 2001. That same day he signed up for classes at Upright Citizens Brigade.

Hiller survived years of the rejection that comes with being an actor

in New York, auditioning for web series in a guy's bedroom and being turned down. "People were so mean to me when I was a kid, this is nothing," he says, with that laugh again. "You're not calling me the F-word? Let's do this."

When the opportunity to audition for "Somebody Somewhere" came along, Hiller and Everett knew each other a little. "We had each other's emails, but not cellphone numbers," he says, not-

ing that he had performed in a show she organized called "Our Hit Parade" at Joe's Pub, the music venue that's part of the Public Theater downtown.

While the character has a lot in common with Hiller — down to the stress rashes they both get or his obsession with a Vitamix — Thureen notes that who Joel became in the series was also shaped by the person they cast. "There's something about Joel's spiritual journey and Jeff's understanding of that and Jeff's way to articulate his beliefs and talk about it; that's something that's so special that we didn't know going in," Thureen says in an interview.

Hiller found that aspect of playing Joel "very healing." He doesn't deny that there are "some church people" in the world, but he likes that the show highlights the good in the institutions. "I find it beautiful and I love that I get to present that story," he says.

For as serious as those moments of the series can be, Everett also adds that "Somebody Somewhere" found ways to cater to Hiller's gifts for physical comedy as well his ability to find naturalistic moments of humor.

"Jeff has a really soft hand and knows how to weave things out of a scene that are funny and fun and

playful but not necessarily like a slam dunk, but collectively it makes his performance so rich and specific to him," Everett says.

Recently, Hiller has been working on telling his personal story for a memoir due out next summer. It's a collection of essays he describes in the vein of Mindy Kaling or Tina Fey's literary projects. "I've read a ton of celebrity memoirs so I'm leaving out the boring s—," he says. "I'm not telling you about how my great grandparents met or whatever."

To help develop his material for the book, he performed a one-man show over the summer called "Middle Aged Ingenue." One of Hiller's ultimate goals, beyond going back to performing on Broadway, is to create a television show for himself. He's currently working on that, while also fielding new opportunities that have come his way since "Somebody Somewhere." Ryan Murphy wanted a meeting, for instance, and cast him in "American Horror Stories."

"It's like a completely different life," he says. "I think 99.9% of the world has no idea who I am, so I wouldn't call myself famous, but I am known in a way that I was never known before by gatekeepers and by casting directors and producers."

Everett says she wants to see Hiller in a "major motion picture, maybe a Marvel movie or something." "I want to see if it snaps the sweet out of him, but I think it won't," she adds. "I think he's going to always be a sweetie."

Hiller has seen the types of roles he can be considered for expand since "Somebody Somewhere," as well. "It allows me to audition for the gay boss now whereas before I would have to be the waiter, who was gay," he says.

Those prior roles largely served as plot points for the main characters. Hiller often loved playing them, but has relished the chance to go deeper with Joel.

"I'll gladly go back and play waiters or judges or gay bosses," he says. "I just really loved having someone with an internal life and whose story we're focusing on."

DAVID URBANKE For The Times

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PETER FISHER For The Times

# Strokes frontman to Voidz visionary

ROCK VETERAN JULIAN CASABLANCAS TALKS ABOUT THE INTERSECTION OF MUSIC AND POLITICS, AND CONNECTING WITH HIS AUDIENCE. **MIKAEL WOOD** POP MUSIC CRITIC

**J**ULIAN CASABLANCAS sneered his way into instant rock stardom nearly a quarter of a century ago as the glamorously disheveled frontman of the Strokes. Since then, many have repeatedly anticipated the Strokes' demise only to see them continue to thrive, as with 2020's "The New Abnormal," which won the band its first Grammy Award, and that album's subsequent tour, on which it played arenas filled with people who hadn't been born when the band released its perfect 2001 debut, "Is This It." Even so, Casablancas in recent years has often seemed more interested in his other band, the Voidz, which just dropped its third LP, "Like All Before You." It's an alternately tender and forbidding set of electronic rock jams slathered with digital effects and suffused with thoughts of collapse, both personal and political. Ahead of a Voidz show this month at the Orpheum Theatre, Casablancas — who's 46 and shares two children with his ex-wife — discussed the album and some of its preoccupations over dinner on the rooftop of East Hollywood's Hotel Covell.

**You want a drink? Do you drink?**  
No.

**Conscious choice?**  
Just by accident, somehow. No, it's funny — I don't drink anymore, but I finally like the taste. I used to just guzzle thoughtlessly, and now I'm like: Oh, I like this tequila a lot more than this one.

**Just in time to not have any interest in drinking it.**

Same with cigarettes. I'll light someone's cigarette and I won't inhale it, but I feel like I can taste it and enjoy it way more than when I smoked.

**Does vaping appeal to you?**

I think the weed vaping back in the day was cool. I don't smoke weed anymore either. But the current vaping — no. It looks like a pacifier to me.

**You miss drinking?**

I miss the feeling of euphoria at the beginning. But she is an empty seductress.

**As someone who's lived in both New York and L.A., do you think the two places embody wealth and power differently?**

I guess I experience rich people in the entertainment industry here, and in New York I more see, like, corporate-y types. I'm not hanging out with them, I'm just saying I notice square, wealthy people out and about doing fancy things. I think I'm maybe more off-put by the artsy people [in L.A.].

**Art mean because you're an artist.**

Maybe, yeah.

**When you were a kid, did being a rich guy seem cool or lame?**

"Die yuppie scum" was one of the main slogans of my teen years, so in that context, it was not cool. But if you were to be

successful in music, like a Jim Morrison or something, that would be considered cool.

**"Die yuppie scum" resonated with you.**

Sure. I was living in Yorkville, which is the Upper East Side, basically. We were stupid teen rebels. But I was more focused on trying to be a good musician. Built to Spill or Guided by Voices, they seemed like they could make a living touring as an indie band, which is not really a thing anymore. But back then it was kind of the goal. With the bands I liked — the Velvet Underground, Bob Marley — wealth wasn't really glorified, though I guess success maybe implied it.

**This new Voidz album has a lot of songs that seem to consider divorce and the trauma of dismantling one's family. Accurate or inaccurate?**

Probably accurate. I didn't really think about it at the time, but I was listening to it the other day, and I was like, *Ooohhh*. The lyrics were speaking to me on a deep level. The weird thing about lyrics is I don't even — and it's always been like this for me — I'll say things I don't even understand until years later, when I'll realize how much sense they make. It's like a message in a bottle to yourself.

**Do you care about being understood by the audience?**

I mean, the goal of lyrics is to try to be universal. Many different types of people are consuming it, and you want to be emotionally relevant, ideally, to

most of them. You want to inspire.

**Really?**

I think the purpose of art is to inspire people. Is that controversial?

**Inspire them to do what?**

To imagine things the best possible way they can be. To give you the strength to work toward dreams. To give validation to your feelings that push you to improve your life.

**I think that's the opposite of how I listen to music.**

Maybe you're a sociopath. No, I mean, everyone's different. But when music moves you, it's powerful. It can give you a sad feeling but then you're like: I'm gonna do that thing. [laughs]

**This record has what I think is fair to call a reggae song.**

"7 Horses"? I wouldn't go there.

**But you knew which one I meant.**

Maybe the drums are comparable. But that's because there's a guitar in the drum track that we couldn't take out. I would have if I could have.

**The Voidz are often described as an experimental band. Not your word, necessarily, but if that's the case, what is the experiment trying to find out?**

It's not really my word, but again: If you're trying to imagine things that don't exist yet, I guess it's as good a word as any.

**You've been a vocal Bernie**

**JULIAN**  
Casablancas now leads the Voidz, with their new album blending electronic rock with personal and political themes.

|||||

**Sanders supporter. Bernie rode pretty far into this election with President Biden, and I wondered what you made of that.**

I question his strategic thinking. That would be his flaw. I understand the desire to not want [Donald] Trump, so it's not shocking. But I do find it confusing that Democrats who seem to know the corporate way things work still support the Democratic Party, which seems like such an evil-billionaire entity. That baffles me. At the end of the day, there's something the Democratic Party does for Bernie, which I don't understand.

**When Biden dropped out and Kamala Harris stepped in, did you watch the upsurge of optimism among liberals with sympathy, amusement or dismay?**

I would say complete indifference. I think the fact that they've got someone at the top of the ticket that no one voted for is in total alignment with how the DNC wants to operate.

**Will you vote?**

There's an argument to be made on the eve of the day that it's probably wise, even though I think the difference between the parties is minute in terms of policy. They both suck. But because of the chance that Trump could try to stay [in office] forever, it's worth voting against him.

**When would you pinpoint the moment when money poisoned politics?**

This isn't a new thing. Since the dawn of civilization it's been the human race versus a few power-lord douches. We haven't had democracy since tribal times.

**Given that view, you must find it pretty rich when Democrats bang the drum about preserving democracy.**

Sure. Again, the technicality is that Trump might not leave. So that's a bummer. But there's another part of me that feels like then people will really have to f— wake up.

**Does the project of trying to illuminate people feel exhausting or exciting?**

There's moments of excitement because it's so simple. It's right there — you just have to look further than like three clicks. But then nobody cares. They're like, "All I got is one click in me."

**What about illuminating your children?**

That feels easy because they haven't been brainwashed, as much as their school is trying to brainwash them. And they don't really read news yet. It's very hard to not be bombarded with corporate news on your phone. Impossible.

**What kind of music do your kids listen to?**

Phonk.

**Funk?**

No, Russian phonk. P-H-O-N-K. It's like weird social media music.

**Do you try to turn them on to stuff you like?**

I play songs for them. They have pretty cool taste, I think.

**When you're working with the Voidz, is there anything you miss about working with the Strokes? And vice versa?**

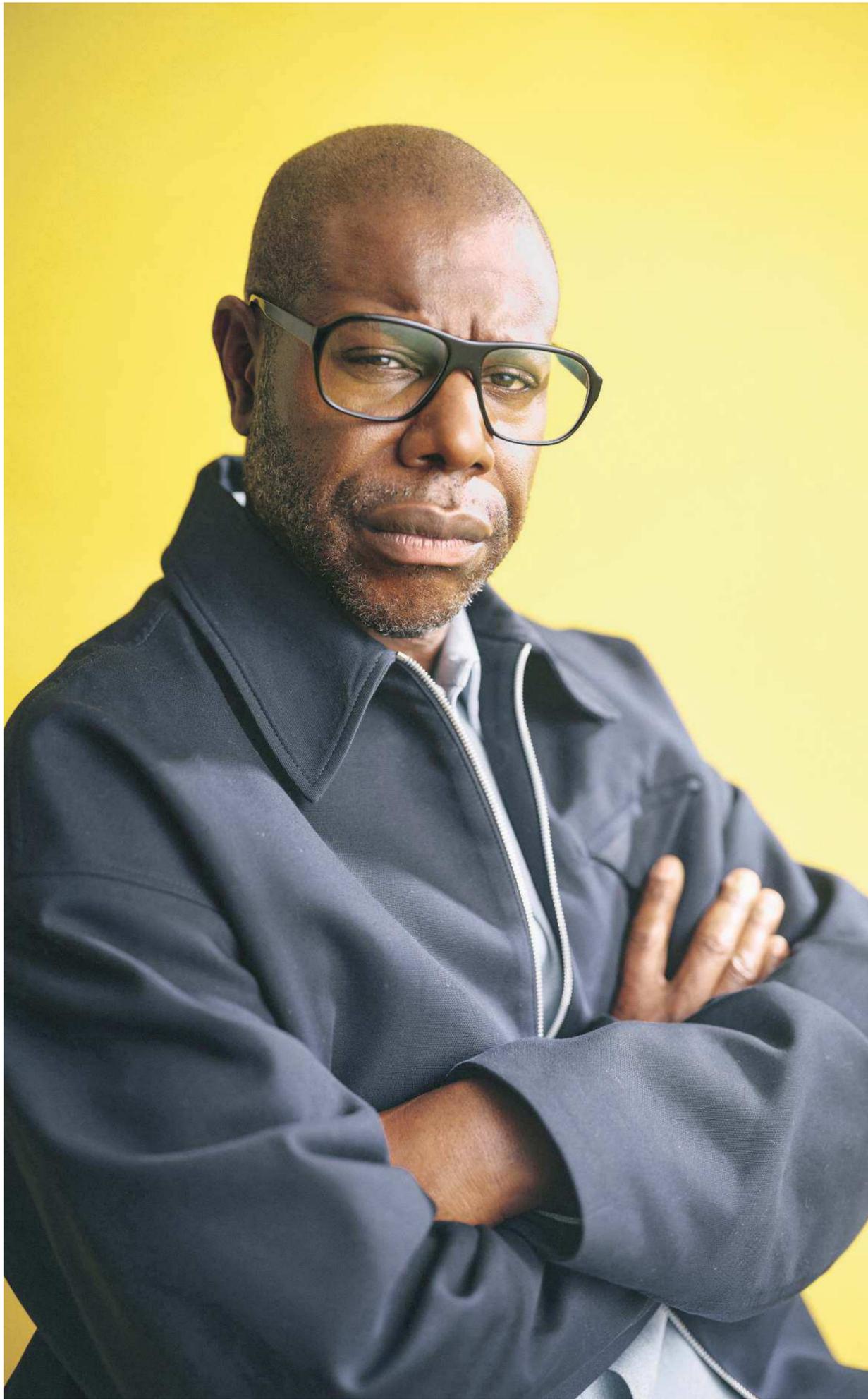
Probably one direction more than the other. I don't know if I can answer that without being offensive to someone.

**I assume that means you miss the Voidz.**

Sometimes, yeah.

**By playing Strokes shows, do you ever feel like you're contributing to an opiate-of-the-masses vibe?**

No, because I think I put political thoughts now in Strokes songs too. I always have to some degree. I definitely get a lot of Strokes fans don't think that about it so much, which is maybe why I've kind of stepped away a little bit. But it's a very cool day job that I'm honored to have, so I don't feel negatively about it. If it was wasting so much of my time that I couldn't do anything positive, then I would. But I don't let it get to that point. At least I don't think so. I could be lying to myself.



MARCUS UBUNGEN Los Angeles Times

# 'Blitz' brings the war, and Steve McQueen, home

THE DIRECTOR'S COMPLICATED RELATIONSHIP WITH BRITAIN INFORMS HIS FILM, WHICH FOLLOWS A MIXED-RACE BOY DURING THE BOMBING OF LONDON

**S** BY EMILY ZEMLER  
LONDON

STEVE McQUEEN is hopeful. It's a viewpoint that's admittedly discordant with what's happening in the world, but the British director embraces a flame of optimism. The sensibility is apparent in his most recent film, "Blitz," even though it centers on the destruction of London during the German air raids of World War II, while also conveying an undercurrent of the racial strife that lingers in the U.K. today. ¶ McQueen, 55, is quick to rattle off a list of modern-day conflicts that have parallels to the film — in the Ukraine, the Middle East, Libya. But still he's convinced sunnier days are ahead. ¶ "We could have that," the filmmaker says, sitting in a quiet room in London's Soho Hotel during a long day of press ahead of BFI London Film Festival. He's dressed up for the occasion in a black suit, although he slouches casually on the sofa. He speaks with a quick-fire cadence, spilling out thoughts as if his words can't keep up with his brain. "Is it likely? I don't know, but things could be better. One has to end on some sort of high, you know? Some kind of hope in a landscape of devastation."

**STEVE McQUEEN,** below with Elliott Heffernan, wanted "Blitz" to be "a roller-coaster ride."

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It's why McQueen has bookended "Blitz" (in theaters Friday) with a black-and-white shot of daisies, flowers that seem to represent a nostalgic ache for a better time, even if the story itself centers on England's darkest days. The film follows a young mixed-race boy named George (Elliott Heffernan) who is shipped out of London by his mother, Rita (Saoirse Ronan), and his grandfather Gerald (Paul Weller) as part of the British government's evacuation of children in the cities. Although Rita is desperate to keep him close, the bombardment is a constant and unnerving threat to everyone. But soon George leaps from a moving train and journeys back to London's East End via a series of tumultuous adventures and chance meetings that forever change his understanding of both the world around him and himself.

"Often people think war is what happens in far distant places," McQueen says. "I wanted to bring it home. This is what happened here. This movie has a real sense of urgency, unfortunately. I wanted it to be a roller-coaster ride through London during the war."

McQueen himself was born in London, the child of West Indian immigrants, although he has also lived in Amsterdam since the late '90s. From a young age, the story of the Blitz was ingrained in his experience of the city and in his understanding of what it means to embody the British spirit of "keep calm and carry on." Growing up, he remembers echoes of the bombings — missing buildings, rebuilt neighborhoods, playgrounds he frequented that had sprung up in the hollows of the explosions. Even the Royal Festival Hall, where "Blitz" had its world premiere this month during BFI London Film Festival, was constructed on the site of a massive bomb blast.

"The seeds were planted in my imagination from day one," McQueen says. "The Blitz is all around you. It's one of the foundations of our identity."

It's not an accident that all of McQueen's films — from his Oscar-winning "12 Years a Slave" to 2008's "Hunger" and 2011's unnerving psychological piece "Shame" — are dramas, often featuring distressing scenes that reveal the worst in humanity. He stares directly into the void, yet somehow emerges without cynicism. He explains that growing up as a Black child he couldn't avoid being confronted by his reality. His very existence was political and it forced him to ask questions about everything early on. In his art, he does so to appease that lingering sense of curiosity.

"I've made things because it was challenging and because it was rewarding and difficult and actually confrontational at the same time," McQueen says. "I'm not going to go down the easy path. That's just who I am and what it's about. I'm trying to find some kind of truth, or whatever it is — I don't know what we're looking for or what we're trying to do. But I know it's interesting when you're working in a way which is confrontational."

It was while writing 2020's "Small Axe," his anthology of films about the lives of West Indian immigrants in London, that McQueen came across a photograph that brought "Blitz" to the forefront of his mind: an image of a young Black boy in an oversized coat with a large suitcase, standing on a railway platform during World War II. The unidentified boy, one of more than 800,000 children evacuated from cities in the U.K. during the war, was a striking discovery.

"Who is he? Where is he from?" McQueen asks, still gripped by the power of the stark photograph, acknowledging that Black children have rarely been part of the war narrative in England.

For McQueen, the existential story of WWII wouldn't be about the soldiers or the front lines, nor about Winston Churchill or George Patton.



PARISA TAGHIZDEH Apple TV+



PARISA TAGHIZDEH Apple TV+

**SAOIRSE RONAN,** Elliott Heffernan and Paul Weller star as a mother, son and grandfather.

|||||

It was about the women working in the munitions factories and the families surviving the bombardment every night from behind black-out curtains or in the Underground stations. It was about children faced with racism in a country purporting to fight against injustice abroad.

"I was interested in the ordinary people who had to deal with the consequences of decisions being made by the people in charge," he says. "I was interested in George and Rita and the people around them."

That's also what attracted Ronan, 30, who, speaking from her home in London in September, says she didn't "want to get involved in a World War II epic in the traditional sense."

"The one thing that Steve said to me that really stuck in my head is, 'These people felt like they could die tomorrow, so they were going to do what they wanted.'" Ronan says. "There was just this buzz that was

***'I just feel that love is the only thing worth living for and the only thing worth dying for. That's it. There's nothing else.'***

— STEVE MCQUEEN, director of "Blitz"

fueled by fear, but also feeling probably invincible as well, because it was like, 'F— it. What else are we going to do?'"

"Blitz" feels different from most WWII movies. It's less reverential and more instinctual, despite its reliance on historical fact. McQueen enlisted author Joshua Levine as a historical advisor and did extensive research with the help of the Imperial War Museum and the British Library to produce an original screenplay. As young George traverses the city, the viewer glimpses many things that actually happened, including the catastrophic flooding of a Tube station being used as a shelter and the destruction of nightclub Café de Paris, later looted by a crew of thugs led by Stephen Graham's Albert. Several characters, such as Benjamin Clemantine's air-raid warden Ife, are based on real figures.

"When George jumped off that train, he changed the narrative that was set for him, which was very courageous," McQueen says. "I want to amplify that for the audience — that we actually generate our own narrative."

Experiencing the story from the perspective of a 9-year-old also served a greater purpose for the director. It underscored the human obsession with war, ultimately questioning why we destroy one another for borders or beliefs.

"First and foremost, this film is about love," McQueen says, offering as an aside that he is sometimes embarrassed to say that. "As a child, there's right and wrong, there's good and bad. So at what point do we as adults compromise? At what point do we turn the blind eye? At what point did we pretend not to hear? War is bad enough, but through a child's eyes you see the

insanity of it in a greater way."

It's not surprising that McQueen describes his motivation as that of "observational curiosity." As a filmmaker and a visual art, he looks intently, hoping to glean answers to questions that feel unanswerable. His prior work reverberates in "Blitz." As the camera pulls back to reveal a smoldering, battered London, it's hard not to notice a parallel to his 2023 short film "Grenfell," which depicted the tragic aftermath of the 2017 deadly Grenfell Tower blaze, which resulted in 72 deaths.

"I'm interested in who are we — and what are we — within a landscape," McQueen says of his instinct to occasionally step back. It's a distance, he says, that "puts things in perspective."

There's also perspective to be found in the close-up. Actors obsessively want to collaborate with him and some, like Michael Fassbender, have returned again and again to his projects. His scripts are airtight, but McQueen always leaves space during filming for what he refers to as "magic." It might be an unscripted moment between two actors that he captures or it might be an unexpected take where the emotion veers away from the original intent. The film, McQueen says, has to be better than the script, which means being open when "things actually happen."

"You buy into his vision," actor Graham says, speaking during a separate press day for "Blitz." "He's able to create an atmosphere for you to be able to play. And you have no fear because you can't get it wrong, because there is no wrong, there is no right. You're just finding what's truthful. He's like a great football manager. He gives you that great pep talk and then you tie your boots on and you run out there and run up and down the pitch."

McQueen's recent work, including "Small Axe" and "Blitz," reflects back in order to understand where we're headed. In doing so, the filmmaker has realized that "we're all bloody mad," something he says with matter-of-fact certainty. Yet somehow the process has focused him even more on love.

"This movie is not just about us fighting the Nazis," he says. "It's about us fighting ourselves. And I just feel that love is the only thing worth living for and the only thing worth dying for. That's it. There's nothing else. Through all the madness, through the nonsense, through all the things that we go through in our daily lives, all the troubles, if we just focus on that, it would give us some kind of solace."

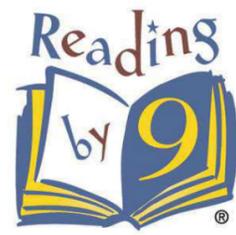
Now, though, the filmmaker has turned a page. In middle age, he says, you tend to look back to know who you are, but his next film might do something else. It won't be a comedy or an animated film, he's pretty sure, because McQueen isn't interested in "altering the reality of how we live." Instead, he shows us things as they are.

"What this is doing is correcting [history] or reexamining it," he says of his recent work. "It's not about depicting life as some kind of dream. It's about looking at how it actually is." With "Blitz," this means showcasing the extreme highs and lows of life in London during the war with judgment, including the undeniable racism.

"What's really great about Steve as a British filmmaker is that he doesn't have this romantic view of the U.K.," Ronan says. "He wants to show it warts and all. He loves it, but he also knows it's false. A lot of people, when it comes to Britain — and they do it in America as well sometimes — will shy away from that when it comes to a big commercial movie. I think it's very clever of him to give us a well-rounded picture of this place."

At the premiere of "Blitz" in London, which happened to take place on McQueen's birthday, the director invoked John Lennon's 1971 song "Imagine." The lyrics, he tells me, emphasize the hopefulness he feels. They also underscore the only answer he's ever uncovered in his years of asking questions.

"The more you know, the less you know," he says. "But the only thing that's absolutely true is love."



Los Angeles Times

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# Franchises, the boon and bane of reality TV

LIKE THE MARVEL CINEMATIC UNIVERSE OR SCRIPTED SERIES WITH COUNTLESS SPINOFFS, THE GENRE HAS BECOME MORE RELIANT ON PROVEN FORMULAS AS EXECUTIVES BECOME MORE RISK-AVERSE



Photo illustration by ROSS MAY Los Angeles Times; photos by Getty Images; TLC; Gilles Mingasson; John Fleenor / Disney; Craig Sjojin / ABC; Euan Cherry / Peacock; Virginia Sherwood / Bravo

BY MEREDITH BLAKE  
AND YVONNE VILLARREAL

ON FEBRUARY 2020 — a day before Valentine's Day, and mere weeks before the world shut down because of the COVID-19 pandemic — a new reality dating show with a kooky hook called "Love Is Blind" premiered on Netflix. The series, hosted by husband-wife duo Nick and Vanessa Lachey, followed a group of singles as they went on "dates" with prospective partners sight unseen in a windowless room, separated by a shimmering blue wall, in the hopes of getting engaged in just 10 days. † It pierced the zeitgeist quicker than one of Cupid's arrows. † Four years later, "Love Is Blind" has become one of Netflix's hit series, now in its seventh season, that has resulted in nine marriages, two divorces, several babies and countless viral moments. It has also spawned international versions set in Mexico, Brazil, the United Kingdom, Sweden and Japan. "Love is Blind: Habibi," featuring Arab singles, recently premiered. By year's end, there will be close to a dozen versions of the show. If that's not enough, there's also the competition series "Perfect Match," featuring cast members from "Love Is Blind" and other Netflix dating shows.

"It's hard to find formats that you know will travel well and that can be adapted internationally," said Brandon Riegg, who oversees nonfiction series and sports at Netflix. "When those formats come along, you go, let's basically squeeze as much juice from it as we can."

The aggressive expansion of the hit dating show offers a prime example of how franchises, not unlike the Marvel Cinematic Universe and "Law & Order," have conquered reality television. Producers are increasingly leaning on established reality formats rather than gambling on new concepts because they're proven successes. It's also a signal of how reality TV, long treated like the redheaded stepchild of showbiz, increasingly rivals its scripted counterparts in terms of financial value and commercial appeal.

But as a risk-averse industry relies more and more on safe, conventional choices in a genre built on provocation and experimentation, reality's franchise explosion raises questions about the long-term viability of the business. What will serve as the proving ground for new unscripted concepts if only known entities get a real shot at success?

A simple justification for this strategy is fan service. The voyeuristic nature of reality TV allows viewers to form deep and intimate relationships with the people they're watching on screen, who become heroes and villains every bit as compelling as Voldemort or Iron Man.

SCANDAL rocked and boosted Season 10's "Vanderpump Rules," involving Raquel Leviss, left, Tom Sandoval and Ariana Madix.



NICOLE WEINGART Bravo

According to Julie Pizzi, the president of Bunim/Murray Productions and its sister company 51 Minds, which produce franchises like MTV's "The Challenge" and Bravo's "Below Deck," that familiarity drives viewership and, in turn, ideas for spinoffs, even if the lion's share of the development roster at both companies favors brand-new concepts.

"It's easier for audiences to invest in something they already know they like than a brand-new show," she said. "Every single network executive's job is to get hits on the air and to get good ratings. There's always a desire to bring familiar titles that people will see and be

like, 'Oh, I want to watch that. I know that show.'"

## HOW MUCH CAN IT EXPAND?

TLC's "90 Day Fiancé," which premiered in 2014, is one of the most striking examples of the potential breadth and scale of a single reality TV concept. The show follows couples — often mismatched pairings that seem doomed from the outset — as they navigate the K1 visa process, which allows foreigners who are engaged to American citizens to travel to the United States and spend 90 days in the country before marrying or, sometimes, splitting up.

"I was a huge believer in the concept," said executive producer Matt Sharp, founder of Sharp Entertainment, the production company that makes the show for TLC. "Love is something very primal to all of us, and it's extremely relatable." The first season was just six episodes long, but Sharp believed the phenomenon could be explored from different perspectives.

stream on Max and Discovery+, making it the TV equivalent of snacks bought by the truckload from Costco. According to TLC, the franchise has been viewed for 7.2 billion hours across all platforms since it debuted — nearly an hour for every person on the planet.

The highly addictive "90 Day Fiancé" was hardly the first reality show to explode into a full-blown pop culture ecosystem.

MTV wasted little time building "Real World," a series that documented a group of young people living together, and "Road Rules," a competition series, into franchises in the '90s — even launching a crossover competition series, "The Real World/Road Rules Challenge," which has since been rebranded "The Challenge" and is currently airing its 40th season.

"The Bachelor," which debuted in 2002 on ABC, begat "The Bachelorette" the following year. The universe now includes "Bachelor in Paradise," "The Golden Bachelor" and, most recently, "The Golden Bachelorette."

"What 'The Bachelor' did first and extremely well was turn the show into an ongoing soap opera," said Andy Dehnart, founder and editor of the website Reality Blurred. "People having successful relationships is not the point of that show; it's to generate drama and tabloid headlines and keep the franchise going, so that universe keeps feeding itself."

During the aughts, VH1's lineup was dominated by interconnected "celebrity" shows about C-list stars, like "The Surreal Life," "Flavor of Love" and "My Fair Brady." "The idea was less about franchising and more about understanding that there was this new genre of person, the reality star, which hadn't really existed before," said Michael Hirschorn, former head of programming at VH1. "How can we come up with new formats and vehicles to keep those people on TV and satisfy the public, which just wanted to see more of them?"

## MAINTAINING A FRANCHISE

In the contemporary television landscape, no entity has mastered the art of the franchise quite like Bravo.

Over nearly two decades, the cable network has built an empire by identifying formats and personalities that make for irresistible viewing. In the process, it has bred an army of superfans who have invested untold hours in the drama they stir up. As a reward, the network feeds them more of the TV they love. This fall, Bravo's programming roster includes "Below Deck Medi-

"There were so many other fresh hooks that were underserved in the show," he said. "That's how we started franchising out."

Now, after 10 years, 86 marriages and 61 children, the "90 Day" universe has expanded to roughly two dozen spinoffs featuring couples at every stage of the immigration process, including "90 Day Fiancé: The Other Way," "90 Day Fiancé: Happily Ever After?" and "Before the 90 Days."

In an era of declining cable ratings, "90 Day" programming remains a huge draw, particularly for female viewers in the 25-54 age demographic. More than 1,500 hours of "90 Day" content is available to



Netflix

terranean,” “Below Deck Sailing Yacht” and “Real Housewives” series set in Dubai; Salt Lake City; Orange County; Potomac, Md.; and New York.

“The Real Housewives of Orange County,” which premiered in 2006 and centered on a group of women living in an affluent gated community, was the genesis. The first season consisted of only seven episodes, but Lauren Zalaznick, who oversaw Bravo as executive vice president at NBCUniversal, sensed the idea had growth potential. She asked her team to cast in two more cities with the idea of creating a “traveling road show.” As the franchise expanded to New York, Atlanta and beyond, it became clear that each city could sustain its own serialized docu-soap. Zalaznick was inspired by scripted soap operas with distinct settings, like “All My Children” and “Dynasty,” which were often denigrated but appealed to women. “We explicitly thought about how undervalued those shows actually were in the television landscape,” said Zalaznick, also founder and editor of the LZ Sunday Paper newsletter.



FRANCISCO MORALES Netflix

“The Real Housewives” franchise remains the cable network’s crown jewel. It currently has versions in 10 cities around the globe and has produced another universe within its galaxy, the spinoff series “Vanderpump Rules,” which then led to its own spinoff, “The Valley.” It also brought about an “Avengers”-like crossover series, “Ultimate Girls Trip,” which is among the flagship series of Peacock, NBCUniversal’s streaming service.

According to Alex Baskin, an executive producer of “The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills” and “The Real Housewives of Orange County,” it’s imperative that expansion doesn’t “end up hurting the motherhip.”

“There can be an overzealousness now just to try to do the same thing over and over again,” he said. One potential outcome is the creation and eventual cancellation of such spinoffs as “The Real Housewives of D.C.,” “Below Deck Adventure” and “Southern Charm New Orleans.”

It can also mean recognizing when a long-running series has become too predictable and stagnant. “The Real Housewives of New York City” was revamped in 2022 with a completely new cast, following negative responses to the show’s handling of race, and increasingly toxic dynamics between the women.

Following a sluggish stretch, “Vanderpump Rules” — a spinoff of “The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills” that initially followed the waitstaff of a restaurant owned by cast member Lisa Vanderpump — experienced a renaissance after its 10th season when a cheating scandal rocked the group and made national headlines. Suddenly, the series was riding high again and became fertile ground for a spinoff.

“The Valley” features former “Vanderpump Rules” cast members Jax Taylor, Brittany Cartwright and Kristen Doute, as well as cast members unaffiliated with that show, as they navigate a different stage of their lives in the suburbs. Much like “Vanderpump Rules” was introduced to viewers in a special episode of “The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills,” “The Valley” was introduced in a special episode of “Vanderpump Rules.” Baskin, who is an executive producer on both series, said that without the “Vanderpump” ties, he isn’t sure it would have found an audience.

“You have to be clever in packaging. Part of pitching a show these days is creating undeniable,” he said. “And it isn’t enough to have a great idea. Not only did ‘The Valley’ have the ‘Vanderpump Rules’ connection, you had ‘Vanderpump Rules’ exploding. There was this moment where this all came together, and it made perfect sense.”

When Sharp and his team are developing “90 Day” spinoffs, they follow what he calls “a rule of 10%.” “If the original show is true north, you need to be 10% to the left or the right — no more than that — for a spinoff, or it becomes unrecognizable to the audience,” he said. “It needs to feel and taste and smell like the original, but at the same time it needs to open up these areas that were potentially underserved in the first show.”

**TAKING IT ABROAD**

In the streaming era, as entertainment companies look for subscribers across the globe, franchising has taken on increasingly international dimensions.

When Riegg arrived at Netflix, he told Chief Executive Ted Sarandos and Chief Content Officer Bela

Bajaria that his idea of hitting a home run would be “find[ing] formats that we can have in all the countries that Netflix is in.” His goal was for the streamer to have its own version of “America’s Got Talent” or “Dancing With the Stars,” he said, citing two popular reality formats that have been reproduced in regions around the world.

“Love Is Blind” has become the test case for this idea. Viewers outside the U.S. can watch the American original or, increasingly, a version starring people from their own country, produced with local customs in mind. Re-creating a hit format in different countries is nothing new; “Survivor” was adapted from a Swedish TV program, after all. But now numerous international versions of a show are available on a single global platform, accessible to millions of subscribers.

“You’re going to reach more of the people in Brazil or Italy or Germany when you have Brazilians, Italians and Germans on screen for that audience,” Riegg said. “So you’re capitalizing on a great idea, but you’re also making it more accessible to a much bigger audience when you franchise it.” But it’s also true that there is significant international cross-viewership: both the British and Mexican versions of “Love Is Blind” landed in the Netflix top 10 globally for TV series in August. For viewers who feel the original “Love Is Blind” has lost some of its magic, international versions offer a fresh alternative.

**DOWNSIDES TO FRANCHISING**

“Love Is Blind” is one of the more recent reality formats to become a true pop culture phenomenon. After the boom of the aughts, the industry struggled to launch successful new shows. Most of the reality franchises currently on the air, from “Below Deck” to “The Bachelor,” are more than a decade old. Few new shows have broken through the clutter. MTV, once a pioneer of reality TV, is seemingly stuck in 2009 with spinoffs of “Jersey Shore” and “Teen Mom.”

Peacock’s Emmy-winning reality competition series “The Traitors” is another rare sensation that works because it takes a new idea but is cast with recognizable reality stars. Set in a castle in the Scottish Highlands and based on a Dutch format, the murder mystery game features contestants working together through a series of challenges while trying to identify the hidden traitors throughout the show.

In its first season in the U.S., half of the show’s 20 contestants were newcomers and the other half were reality stars from shows like “The Bachelor,” “Big Brother” and “The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills.” By the second season, the whole cast was reality stars. Now, the U.K. version of “The Traitors” is planning an all-celebrity edition for its forthcoming fourth season.

That NBCUniversal is now considering a “civilian”-centered spinoff of “The Traitors” as if it were a novelty — starring the regular Joes and Joans who made pioneering shows like “Survivor” and “Big Brother” turn-of-the-millennium hits — demonstrates how far the genre has come from broadcast curiosity to Hollywood mainstay.

“For us, having established the celebrity version, most of the rest of the world is doing civilians,” said Corie Henson, who oversees unscripted content, competition and game shows at NBCUniversal. “So we’re like, ‘What does a civilian

version look like for us? Does the celebrity version stay vibrant on Peacock, but maybe we do a civilian version on one of the other platforms, and then they coexist and they feed off each other?”

Zalaznick said she’s a “little shocked at the lack of new IP” in reality TV over the last decade. Though she thinks some of the current contraction in the industry is necessary after the streaming wars prompted over-expansion, what’s not healthy is that far fewer moderately budgeted, short-run new series are being commissioned — or being given time to hook viewers. (Depending on the show and its production, the cost of a reality TV series can range from about \$100,000 to more than \$3 million per episode, which is still less than many scripted shows.)

“The Real Housewives of Orange County,” which was not an instant success but played in countless reruns until it found an audience, is one example. That’s how “we developed megahits and franchises and created billions of dollars of value for the shareholders,” she said.

Reality TV originally took off because producers were willing to take risks — and even occasionally offend public sensibility — but the present-day focus on franchises

leaves less room for innovation that brought us daring shows like “Survivor.”

Even though it “makes sense to double down on what you know,” according to Dehmart, particularly in a period of industry-wide contraction, it can be self-defeating. “For someone like me, who’s watched every ‘Below Deck,’ you start to notice that they can’t cast anyone who knows how to do their jobs anymore,” he said. “It’s getting predictable. When you don’t take chances on something new, you really send your audience elsewhere to find something new, and maybe that’s TikTok.”

Hirschorn, founder of an unscripted production company called Ish Entertainment, said that in the long term, relying on franchises may be bad for business. “Ultimately your viewers age out of the demo and newer viewers aren’t coming in,” he said. At VH1, Hirschorn used to look for shows with what was referred to as a “WTF factor.”

“Will it trigger that response in a viewer? There’s very little that does that now,” he said. “The innovation, the willingness to take chances and offend has moved away from reality television. You start to lose the point of why it existed in the first place.”

**CAST** members of “Love Is Blind,” above, listen to Nick and Vanessa Lachey on an episode of the Netflix dating show, which has spawned international versions in five countries. At left, Omar and Lucy Chaparro in the first season of the show’s Mexico version.



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Los Angeles Times

# A JESTER'S HOMECOMING

HASAN MINHAJ ADDRESSES A 'DORKY CONTROVERSY' OVER A NEW YORKER STORY, PLUS POLITICS AND RACE, IN HIS NEW NETFLIX SPECIAL, 'OFF WITH HIS HEAD.' **LORRAINE ALI** NEWS AND CULTURE CRITIC

**O**FF WITH His Head" is the new, aptly titled comedy special from stand-up comedian Hasan Minhaj. The former "Daily Show" senior correspondent and host of "Patriot Act" survived the comedy equivalent of a public execution last year and now, the dark experience is grist for his smart, funny and topical one-hour Netflix special that's now streaming.

Minhaj, 39, became the center of a quasi-controversy over truth in comedy when the New Yorker published an article last year accusing him of fabricating personal events in his two Netflix stand-up specials, 2017's "Homecoming King" and 2022's "The King's Jester."

The investigation wasn't part of a fact-check blitz targeting successful stand-up comedians with TV specials. It was specific to Minhaj and went to great lengths to show that he embellished aspects of his personal life in some of his jokes. The focus was on his claims of being discriminated against because of his skin color and being profiled because he's Muslim. The fact that the story gained any traction, let alone became a thing for about 10 minutes, is still a mystery. Or maybe it's not. There are perils to joking while Muslim.

Minhaj released a video response explaining and defending the creative decisions he'd made in his specials, and he provided audio recordings, emails and context to allege that the New Yorker ignored context that he had given the magazine for the story.

As social media argued the merits of emotional truth versus historical accuracy, Minhaj says he lost the most coveted gig of any comedian's career: host of "The Daily Show."

"We've all failed in our lives," Minhaj said earlier this year while performing at the Netflix Is a Joke festival. "But have you ever failed so bad, you bring back Jon Stewart? I saved a dying institution. You're welcome."

Now he's back with his head and sense of humor firmly intact with a special that explores gerontology and the U.S. Congress ("a mass nursing home.gov"), the cultural differences between Caucasia and Beige-istan — as he collectively describes such immigrant groups as Latinos, Indians and Arabs — and the joys of simultaneously teaching his small children and aging parents how to use an iPad.

Minhaj, who also hosts the podcast "Hasan Minhaj Doesn't Know," spoke with The Times about approaching comedy without fear. This conversation has been edited for clarity and length.

**The best stand-up comedy requires taking chances and making yourself vulnerable. Was it hard to get back to that place after your comedy was in essence fact-checked?**

The beautiful thing about comedy is that it's one of the only art forms where you do have to [talk about] the elephant in the room, even if you're the butt of the joke. Keeping that in perspective is really, really important. Comedy is such a unique art form in the sense that you're building pressure and then releasing it. It allows you to constantly have that release. You can take things like joy as a form of release — just being silly, hilarious, naughty, irreverent — and emotions like pain, humiliation, then trauma and tragedy — and you can also have a release. That was my approach with it.

**Did the fallout from the New Yorker article cause you to change the way you approach writing and performing with this special?**

No. I [already] put out a 21-minute video about what had happened. I showed the receipts and the material of the things that I provided that didn't get included [in the article]. So it was kind of entered into the public record, and that allowed me to [say,] "Hey, if you want to go discuss, talk about or litigate, there's a whole deep dive on it — tape, emails, receipts, all there, beat by beat by beat." Now we can focus on just this piece of work. I get to approach this hour as its own unique, individual piece of work. Maybe other [comedians] would have tried to integrate it into the show. Do I talk about this? Do I not talk about this? I don't have to make that calculation.

**You tackle the political divide, folks still mispronouncing your name ["Hey, Hamas"], Asian-on-Asian racism, immigrants — so the quasi-scandal, it's hardly the dominant theme of your special. But when you do talk about it, it's hilarious. You say, "It's a dorky controversy. It's not, it's a good one. I didn't f— a porn star. I didn't diddle a boy. I got caught embellishing for dramatic effect. Same crime your aunt is guilty of over Thanksgiving." I also love the laborious detail you provide about the car you drive in case your set is fact-checked.**

That's right. The Kia Carnival.



AMIR HAMJA



AMIR HAMJA Netflix

**COMEDY** is "one of the only art forms where you do have to [talk about] the elephant in the room, even if you're the butt of the joke," says Hasan Minhaj, who has a new Netflix special, "Off With His Head."

|||||||

**You give lease agreement details.**

I'm an internet bad boy. What can I say?

**The special goes into a world that I'll describe as a third-rail of race and cultural humor.**

For the longest time, culture and the framing of the American cultural narrative existed in a black-white dichotomy. But there's this third thing in America called Beige-istan, which is like Indians, Latinos, Filipinos, Arabs, wherever Bruno Mars is from. It's this group of people that are immigrants by choice, that basically came to America and signed the iTunes user agreement of the empire. Beige culture has a unique set of like values, complexities that Black America and white America do not fully understand, that is such a rich vein for comedy. I loved swimming those waters. That was so fun and cool. I can't wait for people to see how they feel about that.

**"Off With His Head" takes things back to a stripped-down, live-show vibe. Just you, a microphone, a stage and the audience surrounding you.**

I wanted to strip away some of the visual elements, so it's just the raw articulation of the ideas, and have the vulnerability and the comedy come through that way, without lighting changes [or] cue changes. Comedy, poetry and jazz are kind of cousins of one another. They are performed live in relatively intimate

rooms. In the medium of television, broadcast, cable and now streaming specials, it essentially took an art form which was originally designed to entertain anywhere between 200 people to a couple thousand people, and now [is] broadcast in 190 countries. That took it from [a] performance and flattened it into a presentation. My whole goal was that I *don't* want it to feel like a presentation. I want it to feel immersed. I remember [our] stage designer saw it and said, "Oh, it's almost like a public execution." I go, "Yeah, kinda."

**After the article came out, were you concerned that other comics might pull back on artistic license in their work to avoid the same kind of scrutiny?**

I'm gonna be honest. The fact-checking thing happened to me. I don't think it's going to happen to other comedians at large. I think it was a conversation point for that period of time. My macro philosophical take on it [comes down to] my spiritual upbringing as a Muslim. In life, sometimes you catch good ones, sometimes you catch bad ones. Sometimes you'll get a good review, sometimes you'll get a bad review. Sometimes a gig breaks your way, sometimes it doesn't. That's just kind of how it shakes out. You can't always put a neat button on it at the end, where there's a message [and it] all resolves itself. Is that trite? I don't know. It's just like, "Hey, you caught a bad one," and that's part of this business.

**People might be surprised you're so close with your faith given the irreverence of your comedy. There's a misguided idea that edgy comedy and the Muslim faith don't mix.**

I sincerely do believe Allah knows best. I just believe it. I can't articulate why, but I just have faith. Everything's OK, and it's going to be OK.

**Let's talk about the new podcast, which introduces you as "a two-time Peabody Award-winning comedian and noted IBS sufferer." It's political humor like the "Patriot Act" but focuses on the interview. Your guests have included Sens. Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren and Lakers coach JJ Redick.**

Bernie Sanders is obviously a massively influential, American political representative of the progressive left movement. But his personality? He is a walking human

tweed jacket. The sincerity that he brings, and my ... let's call it boisterous, manic, boy-like, energy ... was just a whole lot of fun.

My whole ethos behind the show came out of [a thing that happened] over a year ago when President Obama's team reached out and they said, "The president, he wants to do more interviews. He hasn't been that active on social; he was a fan of your show. He'd love to do something." And we did. I remember it being really fun.

The format is really unique and interesting and something I wasn't able to explore on "Patriot Act." The traditional late-night structure that has an Act 3 guest doesn't really allow for this type of conversation. When you have an hour or [more], you can take the time to get past the talking points and get to, "What are your motivations behind the decisions that you make?"

**Jon Stewart hired you at "The Daily Show," where you were a senior correspondent from 2014 to 2018. Now he's back at the helm. But that's partly because you're not in that seat. Has he been supportive?**

He's a huge supporter. He was like, "Hey, you have a unique opportunity to make this hilarious, to make anything hilarious." He's always been a person I can call and say, "Hey, how should I think about this? Or what should I do?" He's the man. I love him. He co-signed me and made my career in this business. He really knighted me into show business. I really owe him everything. He gave me health insurance and a career. He [sponsored] my green card into show business.

**"Off With His Head" also has fun juxtaposing the individualism of American culture with the way your Indian parents raised you.**

I talk about American society as a hyper individualist society. It's always something I felt at odds with because in [Indian] households, we come from a hyper collectivist society. So it's collectivism versus individualism, and playing those off each other was so fun to do in front of an audience deep in the heart of Texas. I got to say, "Let me get this straight, your dog has better healthcare than your mom? Sorry, you've lost the f— plot." It's such an awesome, unique way to talk about the heirlooms that are beautiful from our culture and the baggage that I think we [need to] get rid of. It's the beauty and the messiness that I love.



ROBERT MILLARD LA Opera

**L.A. OPERA**

performs "Romeo and Juliet," pictured in 2011, through Nov. 23.



ture zine, founded by Bruin alum Eric Nakamura with a UCLA Film & Television Archive series that includes screenings of "Chungking Express," the cult-classic 1970 telefilm "Voyage Into Space" and more.

● *Through Nov. 17, Billy Wilder Theater (inside the Hammer Museum), 10899 Wilshire Blvd., Westwood. cinema.ucla.edu*

**The Monophobic Response** Inspired by Octavia Butler's dystopian 1993 novel "Parable of the Sower," American Artist's two-channel film and sculptural installation reimagines a 1936 rocket engine test that launched the U.S. toward space travel.

● *Through Monday, Los Angeles County Museum of Arts, 5905 Wilshire Blvd. lacma.org*

**Bernadette Peters** The Tony-winner performer belts out Broadway show tunes and American classics.

● *8 p.m. Friday and Saturday, Segerstrom Center for the Performing Arts, 600 Town Center*

# THE WEEK AHEAD

A CURATED PREVIEW OF WHAT'S HAPPENING IN MUSIC, MOVIES, THEATER AND THE ARTS

**SUNDAY**

**Joan** The triumphs and tragedies that defined the life of comedian Joan Rivers are fodder for Daniel Goldstein's dramatization.

● *Through Nov. 24, South Coast Repertory, 655 Town Center Drive, Costa Mesa. scr.org*

**Maxwell and Jazmine Sullivan** A pair of skilled R&B singers join forces for a night of songs about the grown-up pleasures — and the occasional indignities — of love.

● *7:30 p.m. Kia Forum, 3900 W. Manchester Blvd., Inglewood. thekiaforum.com*

**Alonso Ruizpalacios** The American Cinematheque presents an in-person retrospective celebrating the work of the Mexican filmmaker.

● *"Güeros," 4 p.m. Sunday; "A Cop Movie," 9:30 p.m. Monday, Los Feliz Theatre, 1822 N. Vermont Ave. "La Cocina" and "Museo," 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Aero Theatre, 1328 Montana Ave. Santa Monica. americancinematheque.com*

**Salt of the Earth** A 70th-anniversary screening of the neorealist drama made during Hollywood's Red Scare by blacklisted filmmakers includes a panel discussion and reenactment of House Un-American Activities testimony, followed by a Q&A with family members of the filmmakers.

● *5:30 p.m. Theatricum Botanicum, 1419 Topanga Canyon Blvd., Topanga theatricum.com*

**Science Fiction Against the Margins** This UCLA Film & Television Archive series, part of PST Art, includes Nuotama Bodomo's 2014 "Afronauts," 1986's "Man Facing Southeast" by Eliseo Subiela and 2021's "Neptune Frost" by Saul Williams and Anisia Uzeyman.

● *Through Dec. 14, Billy Wilder Theater (inside the Hammer Museum), 10899 Wilshire Blvd., Westwood. cinema.ucla.edu*

**MONDAY**

**The Streetcar Project** Critically acclaimed in New York, this minimalist interpretation of Tennessee Williams' classic drama, "A Streetcar Named Desire," makes its West Coast debut.

● *7 p.m. Monday through Wednesday, 2415 Eads St., Frogtown; 7 p.m. Friday through Nov. 3, 2100*

*Zeno Place, Venice Beach. thestreetcarproject.com*

**Rod Wave** Rap's reigning trap-soul balladeer, who made Times pop music critic Mikael Wood's 20 best albums of 2023 list, performs live.

● *7:30 p.m. Intuit Dome, 3930 W. Century Blvd., Inglewood. intuitdome.com*

**TUESDAY**

**David Gilmour** The English guitarist, singer and songwriter delivers music from his latest album, "Luck and Strange," alongside classics from Pink Floyd.

● *7:30 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday, Hollywood Bowl, 2301 N Highland Ave. hollywoodbowl.com*

**WEDNESDAY**

**Kehlani** The Grammy-nominated singer-songwriter from Oakland performs in support of their newest album, "Crash."

● *8 p.m. Kia Forum, 3900 W. Manchester Blvd., Inglewood. thekiaforum.com*

**Lucha Va Voom de La Liz** Masked Mexican wrestling, burlesque, aerialists, comedy, music and more collide in "A Nightmare on Hill Street."

● *7 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday, The Mayan, 1038 S. Hill St., downtown L.A. themayan.com*

**Rufus Wainwright** Inspired by his "Quarantunes" videos, the Canadian American singer-songwriter performs music from his entire catalog in three thematically-organized performances.

● *"Songs of Youth and Addiction," 7:30 p.m.; "Songs of Love and Desire," 7:30 p.m. Friday; "Songs of Contempt and Resistance," 7:30 p.m. Saturday, The Wallis, 9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills. thewallis.org*

**THURSDAY**

**Halloween** What better way to mark the holiday than with John Carpenter's 1978 slasher classic and its spine-tingling score?

● *4:45 and 7:30 p.m. Vidiots, 4884 Eagle Rock Blvd. vidiotsfoundation.org*

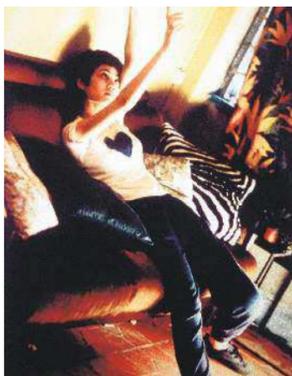
**FRIDAY**

**Día de Los Muertos With Dudamel** The L.A. Phil and Gustavo Dudamel are joined by the L.A. Master Chorale and the Tambuco



CHRIS PIZZELLO Invision / AP

**MAXWELL**, shown at the Billboard Music Awards in 2022, performs Sunday with Jazmine Sullivan at Inglewood's Kia Forum.



Jet Tone Production

**"CHUNGKING Express"** is screening in Westwood.

Percussion Ensemble to celebrate the Day of the Dead with an infusion of Afro-Mexican and Brazilian music

● *8 p.m. Friday and Saturday, 2 p.m. Sunday, Walt Disney Concert Hall, 111 S. Grand Ave., downtown L.A. laphil.com*

**The Diva Play** Vivienne Powell wrote and performs this drama about a renowned Australian opera singer reconstructing her life through a fractured mind.

● *Through Nov. 10, Zephyr Theatre, 7456 Melrose Ave divatheplay.com*

**Giant Robot film series** Celebrate the 30th anniversary of the influential Asian American pop cul-

*Drive, Costa Mesa. pacificsymphony.org*

**The Stone Guest** The Independent Opera Company begins its new season with a 19th century Russian work by Alexander Dargomyzhsky based on a short play by poet Alexander Pushkin that was inspired by the legends of Don Juan.

● *7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday, St. Andrew's Lutheran Church, 11555 National Blvd. independentopera.eventcube.io*

**SATURDAY**

**Giants** Artist J Maskrey exhibits a series of paintings that connect the natural beauty of California's sequoias with the cityscapes of her youth via rich oils and acrylics.

● *Through Nov. 17, Arcane Space, 324 Sunset Ave., Unit G, Venice. arcanespacela.com*

**Madame Gandhi** The former drummer for M.I.A. and Thievery Corporation unleashes her own electronic percussive sound.

● *8 p.m. UCLA Nimoy Theater, 1262 Westwood Blvd., Westwood. cap.ucla.edu*

**Romeo and Juliet** LA Opera performs composer Charles Gounod's interpretation of the Shakespeare classic, conducted by Domingo Hindoyan and Lina González-Granados.

● *Through Nov. 23, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 135 N. Grand Ave., downtown L.A. laopera.org*

**BESTSELLERS**

**Fiction** weeks on list

- Intermezzo** by Sally Rooney (Farrar, Straus & Giroux: \$29) Two grieving brothers come to terms with their history. **4**
- The Waiting** by Michael Connelly (Little, Brown & Co.: \$30) LAPD Det. Renée Ballard tracks a serial rapist whose trail has gone cold. **1**
- All Fours** by Miranda July (Riverhead Books: \$29) A woman upends her domestic life. **23**
- Creation Lake** by Rachel Kushner (Scribner: \$30) An American woman infiltrates an anarchist collective in France. **7**
- The God of the Woods** by Liz Moore (Riverhead Books: \$30) Two worlds collide when a teenager vanishes from her Adirondacks summer camp. **15**
- James** by Percival Everett (Doubleday: \$28) A reimagining of "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn." **31**
- Tell Me Everything** by Elizabeth Strout (Random House: \$30) A return to the town of Crosby, Maine, and its cast of characters. **6**
- Playground** by Richard Powers (W.W. Norton & Co.: \$30) The Pacific Ocean-set novel explores one of the last wild places we have yet to colonize. **4**
- Colored Television** by Danzy Senna (Riverhead Books: \$29) A novelist in L.A. gets the opportunity to cash in on her biracial background. **7**
- The Life Impossible** by Matt Haig (Viking: \$30) A retired math teacher reckons with her past. **7**

**Nonfiction** weeks on list

- The Message** by Ta-Nehisi Coates (One World: \$30) The National Book Award winner travels to three sites of conflict. **3**
- War** by Bob Woodward (Simon & Schuster: \$32) The Pulitzer winner's account of one of the most tumultuous periods in presidential politics. **1**
- Be Ready When the Luck Happens** by Ina Garten (Crown: \$34) The Barefoot Contessa shares the story of her rise in the food world. **3**
- Nexus** by Yuval Noah Harari (Random House: \$35) How the flow of information has shaped our world across the centuries. **6**
- Sonny Boy** by Al Pacino (Penguin Press: \$35) The legendary actor opens up about his creative journey. **1**
- From Here to the Great Unknown** by Lisa Marie Presley, Riley Keough (Random House: \$32) A memoir from the late singer and only child of Elvis and Priscilla Presley, completed by her daughter. **2**
- Meditations for Mortals** by Oliver Burkeman (Farrar, Straus & Giroux: \$27) A guide to living a more meaningful life. **2**
- The Creative Act** by Rick Rubin (Penguin Press: \$32) The music producer's guidance on how to creative. **92**
- The Friday Afternoon Club** by Griffin Dunne (Penguin Press: \$30) A memoir of growing up in Hollywood and Manhattan. **16**
- Revenge of the Tipping Point** by Malcolm Gladwell (Little, Brown & Co.: \$32) The author reframes the lessons of his first book 25 years later. **3**

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**SCREEN GAB**

This week, staff writer Mark Olsen and television critic Robert Lloyd recommend a look at the dark side of pop music fandom and a rollicking satire/sex opera.

**FANATICAL: THE CATFISHING OF TEGAN AND SARA**

Hulu  
Erin Lee Carr's documentary does tell the story of how identical twins Tegan and Sara Quin rose to fame as a queer indie-pop music group, in part through the direct connections they made with their fans, often on social media. But the film also tells a parallel story that happened out of view of their public-facing one, in which, over a span of many years, someone



Disney

**QUIN** twins in "Fanatical: The Catfishing of Tegan and Sara," above. David Tennant in "Rivals."



posed as Tegan online and lured numerous unwitting fans into emotionally fraught relationships. A front-row seat to the dark side of contemporary stardom, the film becomes a gripping on-

line detective story as the sisters, their management and even the fans who were misled all try to unravel the identity and motives of the person they come to refer to as "Fegan," for fake Tegan. —*M.O.*

**RIVALS**

Hulu  
This rollicking social satire wrapped in a comic sex opera is set in 1986 among an incestuous group of wealthy neighbors and colleagues living adulterous and otherwise



ROBERT VIGLASKY Disney

frisky lives in manor houses in the Cotswolds. Based on Jilly Cooper's 1988 novel, the second of her Rutshire Chronicles, it plays like Evelyn Waugh with a lot more fornication. (A lot.) The eponymous rivals are David Tennant's Lord Tony Baddingham, head of an independent television network, and Alex Hassell's Rubert Campbell-Black — a champion equestrian serving as Margaret Thatcher's Minister of Sport, whose naked rear end, in a bath-

room on the Concorde, opens the series. Entering their treacherous world, along with his wife (Victoria Smurfit) and daughter (Bella Maclean), is hard-hitting TV journalist Declan O'Hara (Aidan Turner), lured from the upright BBC to Lord Tony's fictional commercial network. With the divine Katherine Parkinson as a successful romance novelist not, one supposes, unlike Cooper, Claire Rushbrook as Lady Baddingham and Cameron Cook as an ambitious producer over from America, it's a big bag of boiled sweets. —*R.L.*



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ZOE SALDAÑA  
 MICHAEL KELLY  
 WITH  
 MORGAN FREEMAN  
 AND  
 NICOLE KIDMAN



THE MISSION IS HOME

# LIONESSES

NEW SEASON  
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Los Angeles Times

# WEEKEND

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2024



## PARANORMAL ACTIVITIES

13 SPOOKY THINGS TO DO IN L.A. YEAR-ROUND. **L6-7**

# AT 96, SHE THINKS OF L.A.'S HOUSING FUTURE

ISABEL JANKEN LIVED IN HER WESTWOOD DUPLEX FOR MORE THAN 40 YEARS. TODAY, ITS GARAGE HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO AN ADU.



Photographs by GENARO MOLINA Los Angeles Times

BY LISA BOONE

**I**SABEL JANKEN, her son Glen by her side, slowly ascends the stairs to her family's newly built accessory dwelling unit, or ADU, in Westwood. Every step is a struggle, but Janken perseveres, her 96-year-old hands tightly gripping the railing. Her uncertainty without her walker is evident, but after several minutes, she reaches the top. "You made it, Mom," says Glen Janken, 72, with a smile as she completes the last step. "It's taken more than two years of collaborating with architect Melissa Shin of Shin Shin Architecture, and Janken is finally seeing the ADU for the first time. The 715-square-foot, one-bedroom secondary dwelling located behind Janken's duplex is a testament to their shared perseverance in the face of delays driven by Los Angeles Department of Water and Power requirements, including low-impact development, or LID, stormwater runoff practices (three months), overhead power line clearance (five months) and a contractor who disappeared mid-project but eventually finished the job. "The hard work — and the payoff — is worthwhile. For Janken, it's more than just a structure. It's her former home.

"It's lovely, just lovely," Janken says once inside the brightly lit one-bedroom rental with vaulted ceilings.

She enters the full-size kitchen, which is outfitted in colorful pink tile from Fireclay Tile, and proceeds to the living room, which includes a custom-built entertainment center, before looking left and right, trying to take it all in.

"We talked about the kitchen a lot," says Shin, who describes Janken as "forward-thinking about the future of L.A. housing." ADUs are usually 600 to 1,200 square feet; given their small floor plan, most don't have formal dining rooms. Shin designed a bar in between the kitchen and living room where tenants can eat. "Isabel wanted a full kitchen," Shin says of the layout. "She wanted it to be family-oriented."

With her son shadowing, Janken proceeds down the hallway, looking into the bathroom. Inspired by Le Corbusier's famous Villa Savoye, Shin designed a blue-and-white tiled shower that echoes the bathroom of the 1928 Modernist home in Paris. "I told Isabel that she and the Savoye were born the same year," Shin says laughing.

Small details like color help to differentiate the zones in the home without adding walls —

pink in the kitchen, blue in the bathroom, white in the living room and bedroom and green with the rooftop deck. In a move that helps to maximize space further, Shin designed a custom entertainment center with integrated millwork that elevates the living experience.

"I wanted the ADU to feel like a home and not a tiny home," Janken says as Shin notes the two types of tile installed in the kitchen — glossy and matte — that help make the ADU feel special.

When she enters the bedroom just past the bathroom and storage closet, Janken is impressed by the clerestory windows and the fact that there's enough space for an office. "This will indeed make someone very happy," she says.

For more than 40 years, Janken lived in the Westwood duplex at the front of the property with her husband, Harold, who died in 2007. Today, she lives in an assisted-living facility, which the rent from her duplex helps to subsidize.

"It was a lovely home," she says. "All of our tenants have been wonderful people. The same man has rented the front apartment for more than 20 years."

Born and raised in Los Angeles, Janken has witnessed how the city has changed, including



the Fairfax District where she grew up. "We used to get 10 cents apiece for hangers at the dry cleaners and then go to the movies at the Fairfax Theatre on Beverly and Fairfax," she says. "They tore it down but kept the beautiful façade."

After she and Harold married, they lived in Beverlywood, not far from Hamilton High School, which their two sons attended. When their sons moved out, the couple sold their house in 1977 and moved to the duplex in Westwood despite some of their family members' misgivings.

"We wanted something that my husband could repair because he was very handy," she says of their move. "He reroofed a house without knowing how. But when we looked at the duplex, my sister and brother-in-law objected strenuously and told us, 'You don't want to live

**ISABEL JANKEN** recently got a look at her new accessory dwelling unit in Westwood, which sits behind the duplex she once shared with her late husband, Harold. Architect Melissa Shin demolished the duplex's previous garage, below left, then built the ADU atop a new three-car garage. The 715-square-foot secondary dwelling offers a private rooftop with panoramic views.

off an alley.' "

Ultimately, the couple bought the duplex for about \$121,000, and Harold's mother lived in the unit next door. "That way, her son was there to see her every day right after dinner," Janken says. "She not only had privacy but she had family nearby."

Decades later, Shin says the alley helped to facilitate the demolition of the garage and the addition of the ADU and parking for three cars. "Without the alley, we'd be giving up the parking to build the ADU, because there is no driveway or room for a driveway unless we demolished the existing house," she says. The alley also provides

a private entrance to the ADU, which means tenants won't have to pass through the front property to get to the back house.

Although Glen Janken and Shin were the ones who interacted daily, Janken had strong opinions about what she wanted for the ADU: The exterior should be white with a traditional roof to match the front of the duplex. "It was important that the ADU be discreet and not look like a Modernist box," Shin says of the back house, which is barely perceptible from the street. Janken also wanted each unit to have its own parking spot. Also non-negotiable: The decades-old Fuyu persimmon tree in the backyard had to stay.

"I do have opinions," she says, adding, "They didn't follow all of them," as her son and Shin laugh. "I wanted to add the ADU because it was wise from our standpoint, as well as for the economy and other people. I'd tell Melissa, 'I read all the ADU stories in the L.A. Times,' " and then ask her, 'Are you doing this to ours?'"

Because Janken insisted on parking, Shin designed the ADU on top of a three-car garage and a shared laundry and storage space. Also, in a splurge, the family added a rooftop outdoor space on top of the ADU, which offers panoramic views of Los Angeles. "I think it's so important in L.A. to have some private outdoor space, which we are often eliminating with ADUs," Shin says of increasing density.

The project ultimately cost around \$484,000, including approximately \$364,000 for the ADU and roof deck and \$120,000 for the three-car garage, the laundry and storage room, landscaping, concrete work, fencing, the electrical meter and power upgrades that are shared by the entire property. After a 12-month design and permit process and 18 months to build, the family recently received their certificate of occupancy; they hope to rent the ADU for between \$3,500 and \$4,000 a month.

"Part of our thought process is that we wanted to create something comfortable for a tenant who will want to stay long-term," Glen Janken says.

For Janken, it's reassuring to know that her property will now serve as a community of three rentals. "It makes me feel good that others will use my former home," she says. "I hope the future tenants will be as comfortable as we were."

"This is my last time here," she adds, motioning to the Times photographer. "I'll treasure your pictures."

Times staff photographer Genaro Molina contributed to this report.



MELISSA SHIN

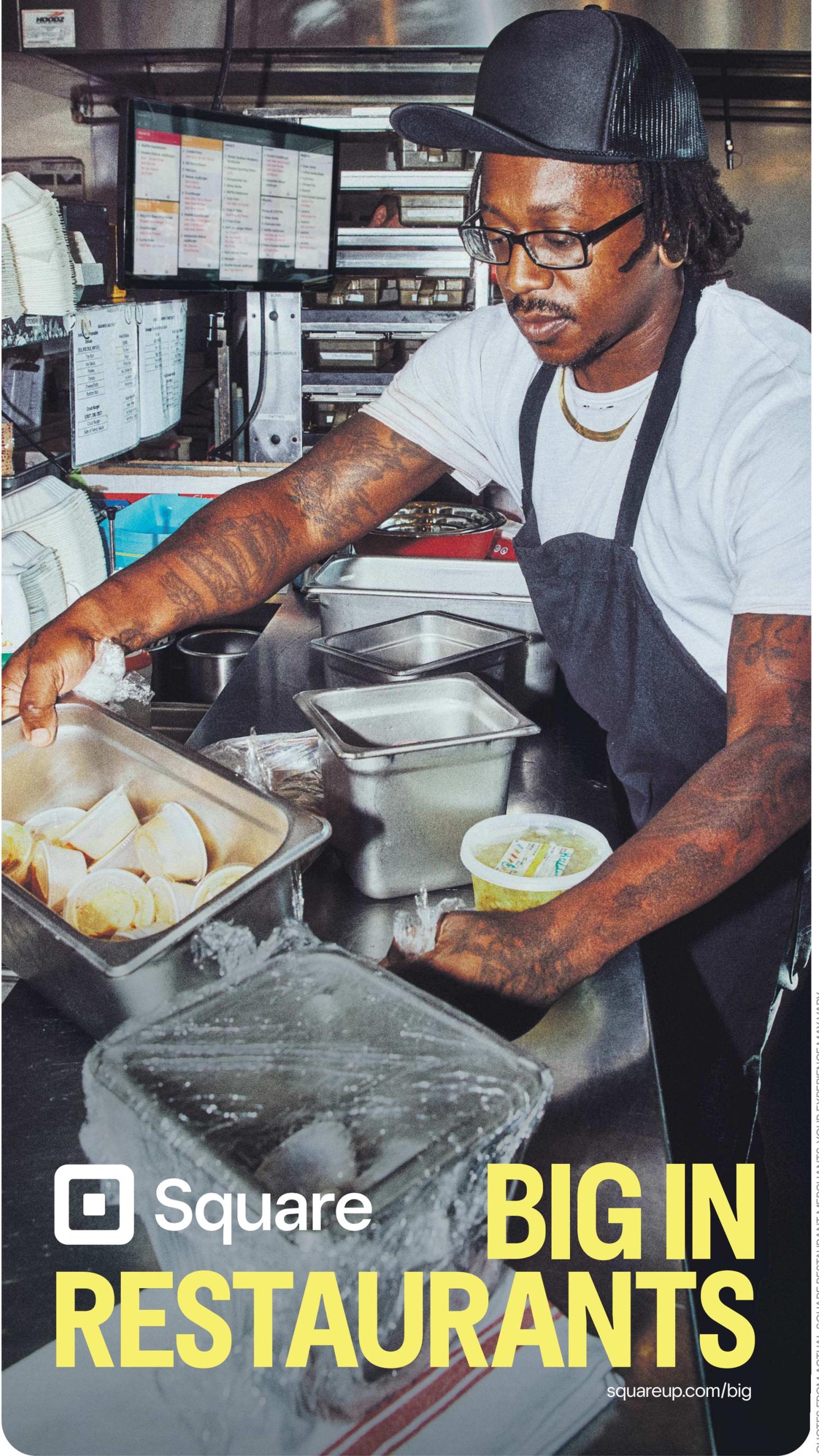


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SHELBY MOORE Los Angeles Times

**ARTURO ENCISO** displays a freshly baked pan de muerto, in honor of the upcoming Día de Muertos, at his Long Beach bakery, Gusto Bread.

# A lesson in pan de muerto, sweet bread for Day of the Dead

ARTURO ENCISO OF GUSTO BAKERY IN LONG BEACH GIVES US A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE. **BY BETTY HALLOCK**

**O**N AN EARLY fall morning, Gusto Bread owner-baker Arturo Enciso ties on his yellow apron, puts Coltrane on the record player and makes himself an espresso. The October fog that rolls through the 4th Street corridor of Long Beach says it's the season of pan de muerto, the sweet buns that the tiny bakery makes every year for Día de Muertos, up to 400 a day. In the middle of the neatly crammed bakery kitchen, which smells of sugar and butter and yeast, is a double-wide butcher-block table for preparing breads and pastries. Enciso's making a home version of his pan de muerto recipe, an experiment with a bubbly sponge of flour, milk and yeast, combined with his sourdough starter.

"I'm not trying to make the same exact thing every time. This isn't the same as the last time or last year or yesterday," Enciso says. "That's who I am. It's artisanal. You're making it by hand. I try to not get too caught up in making perfect." That might be exactly why customers queue down the block for Gusto's naturally leavened bread with stone-milled grains, sourdough concha and nixtamal queen, Enciso's version of the flaky Breton pastry kouign amann but made with his own masa. "Pan de muerto is an exploration in my cultural background," says Enciso, who grew up in Lebec, Calif., and moved

to Long Beach after high school. He taught himself to bake in a wood-fired cob oven, turning out pain au levain and baguettes. Initially, he and his partner, Ana Belén Salatino, operated Gusto Bread from their living room, then opened the bakery on Retro Row in 2020. In the beginning, baking in a wood-fired oven "was for me a spiritual practice," he says. "It was my time to just be alone with the fire and work on cultivating this [sourdough] starter, but really, it was cultivating myself." Something stirred in him, he says. At the time, he was selling only baguettes and galettes,

and "it started not to feel like me as someone with a multicultural background. I've never been to France, I don't know what pain au levain is. I started to feel like an impostor in a way.

"My parents are both from Mexico. I want to now do things I grew up with that my parents can see, and I want to see their faces light up to something familiar to them."

## ENTER MASA

A few years ago, when a cook from erstwhile Taco Maria, the visionary Mexican restaurant from Carlos Salgado in Costa Mesa, showed up at Enciso's cottage with a gift of fresh masa, it sparked an impulse. "I was like, 'Wow, this is the aroma of fresh dough.' It was just really captivating."

Salgado brought him calcium hydroxide for nixtamalizing corn, and Enciso started making masa himself.

"So when I did, I just threw it in the sourdough mix [for baguettes], and then when I baked that, I was really amazed by the aromas.

"It kind of reminded

me of working with rye. It was familiar but also a different texture. ... It brought so many memories of tamales, bolillos and bread."

He started playing with the idea of masa in kouign amann, inspired not by pastry chefs such as Dominique Ansel, who helped popularize it, but by the bread bakers of Brittany.

The original kouign amann is made with bread dough, folded with butter to create layers and baked until the sugar caramelizes, for a crispy exterior and a soft interior.

"The original one is more what I wanted to do, a very rustic form of pastry," Enciso says. "A lot of people use croissant dough, which almost seems like a cheat. I was always connected to the bread baking side of it."

Enciso incorporated about a third masa into his dough and dubbed the result the nixtamal queen, a hefty, flaky pastry of butter and sugar and the flavor of corn.

**FROM CONCHA TO PAN DE MUERTO**  
Masa was the launch pad

for a reinterpretation of pastries. "I had learned to make masa, and I was making nixtamal queen, but again that wasn't traditional" to Mexico, Enciso says.

When he signed the lease for the bakery, he asked himself, "What's the menu going to look like?" So he experimented with a sourdough concha, what might be the most emblematic of Mexican pan dulce, typically topped with a sugar-shortening mixture cut to resemble a shell.

"What was concha like 100 years ago? There were no dough conditioners, no white flour, it was rustic," he says. "That was how I approached our concha.

"Anyone has access to starter anywhere you are in the world — just ferment flour." Sourdough starter adds to the conversation: "What is a concha? Does it have to have dough conditioners? Does it have butter? Some people don't even add eggs."

He now uses what he knows from making sourdough concha — one of Gusto's bestselling pastries — to apply it to seasonal pan de muerto, available at the bakery every year from October through Día de Muertos, which takes place Nov. 1 and 2.

Based on his concha, the pan de muerto recipe "evolved every year," he says. "I didn't used to add egg yolks, and now we're adding yolks. I started introducing a sponge too. Just adding things to it along the way, making it more tender.

"And I like the concha being the concha. I wanted [the pan de muerto] to be a smoother dough, more golden. Egg yolks and a sponge helped for it to be different."

## MIX THE DOUGH

Into the bowl of a standing mixer he adds his foamy sponge. "It's very active. You want to see webbing," he says.

He tips in orange zest and ground fennel, traditional flavorings for pan de muerto, which is eaten right away or placed on altars as a gift for ancestors and a reminder of the cycle of life and death.

In go the eggs and yolks and the stretchy sourdough starter — a living culture of beneficial yeast and bacteria for making bread rise and creating flavor — that's central to the bakery. It's fed every morning and left out to ripen for several hours before it goes back into the walk-in refrigerator for the next day's loaves and concha.

Like many other bakeries, Gusto sells its

sourdough starter to customers. "It's abundant," Enciso says. He's not precious about it, dispelling a myth that older starters are somehow better. "It's just wild yeast."

On a trip to a vineyard in Valle de Guadalupe, Mexico, he grabbed a few grapes and put them in a bag in his pocket. He later crushed them into flour with a little bit of water. The next day, he had active grape yeast starter, which he's still using.

With the mixer on low speed, he slowly adds the sugar and flour. He has just received a shipment of flour milled from Sonora wheat (the first variety successfully cultivated in the New World, used in northern Mexico to create wheat tortillas). The wheat was grown and milled by his friend Mai Nguyen, a Northern California farmer of heirloom grains.

Butter goes into the dough a bit at a time and makes the bread rich and pillowy with a crumb that "shreds" when you tear into it. Straight out of the oven, the interior is "like a marshmallow," he says.

After several minutes of kneading by the machine so that every last bit of butter is fully incorporated, Enciso dumps the smooth, elastic dough into a bowl, covers it with a clean towel and lets it proof until it doubles in size.

## SHAPE THE BREAD

Less than an hour later, he's ready to shape the pan de muerto, maybe the most intimidating part about making the breads, which are topped with decorative pieces meant to resemble bones or tears.

First, he divides the dough, which makes enough for six large panes de muerto: He pats it out into a rectangular shape on a lightly floured surface so that it's easier to cut with his metal bench scraper into eight equal pieces (six for the buns and two — which will be divided further — for the decorative "bones").

He skillfully shapes each piece of dough into a round, cupping it in his hands and rolling it across the surface of his butcher-block table until it's completely smooth. They're so big that only three will fit onto one baking sheet.

## MAKE THE 'BONES'

The "huesos," or bones, distinguish this style of pan de muerto — there are many styles across regions. This one's the most typical Day of the Dead bread of Mexico City, where Enciso's father is from.

Some say the decorations are the bones of the dead, others say they're the tears of the Aztec goddess Chimalma, who cries for the living. Either might require a little practice shaping, but it isn't hard to get the hang of it.

He crisscrosses the "bones" across the tops of the dough. You also can create braids, crisscrossing them over the bread and topping the center with a small ball of dough that represents a skull.

Once he has decorated the bread, Enciso usually bakes them as is, but he tests one — brushing egg wash over its surface and sprinkling it with sesame seeds.

When Enciso pulls them out of the oven, they look gloriously puffy and are well browned. Not a golden brown but deeply burnished. "A successful bake," he says.

*Gusto Bread is at 2710 E. 4th St., Long Beach, (562) 343-1881, gusto bread.com*

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Photographs by SHELBY MOORE Los Angeles Times

**Gusto Bread's Pan de Muerto**

3 hours 30 minutes. Makes 6 large buns; each can serve 4.

Gusto Bread makes pan de muerto every year in the weeks leading up to Día de Muertos on Nov. 1 and 2. This version incorporates both a yeast sponge (a mixture of flour, yeast and milk) and sourdough starter. (This recipe also works with the yeast sponge alone.) These are bigger than what the bakery sells, making six big buns. The shaping of the "huesos," or "bones," that decorate the tops takes a little practice, but they don't have to be perfect. Pan de muerto takes a few hours to make, but much of that time is to allow the dough to rise. The first rise is for the just-mixed dough. The second is for the shaped buns before they go into the oven. Once the buns have cooled, brush them with melted butter and sprinkle with sugar.

**SPONGE**

- 20 grams (2 tablespoons) instant dry yeast (2 1/2 packets)
- 300 grams (2 1/4 cups) all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 cups milk

**DOUGH**

- 1 teaspoon ground fennel
- 1 teaspoon orange zest
- 4 large eggs
- 3 large egg yolks

- 130 grams (1/2 cup) Sourdough Starter
- 700 grams (5 cups) all-purpose flour
- 190 grams (1 cup) sugar, plus more for dusting
- 1 tablespoon plus 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 2 1/3 cups butter, cut into cubes, room temperature melted butter for brushing



**1** In a mixing bowl, mix the instant dry yeast, flour and milk for the sponge until well incorporated, cover and let rest in a warm area until it nearly doubles in size, about 30 minutes. When the sponge is ready, transfer it to the bowl of a stand mixer with the paddle attachment along with ground fennel and orange zest. With the mixer on low speed, slowly add eggs and yolks to the sponge along with 1/2 cup sourdough starter until just combined.



**2** Continue to mix on low for 5 minutes while slowly adding the flour and sugar. Once it's homogeneous, add the salt and mix on medium for three minutes. The dough at this point will be fairly sticky and shaggy.



**3** Change to a dough hook, then add the bits of butter little by little until it's fully incorporated and no butter chunks are visible, kneading for eight to 10 minutes. Look for a smooth, elastic dough.



**4** Transfer the dough to a large, lightly greased bowl (pan spray works great or you can rub the bowl with a small piece of butter or oil). Keep covered in a warm area where it can rest and rise, until nearly doubled in volume, about one hour.



**5** Prepare two baking sheets lined with parchment paper (or greased) and set aside. Transfer the dough to a lightly floured surface and pat it into a loose rectangular shape.



**6** Using a metal dough scraper or knife, divide the dough into 8 pieces (approximately 250 grams each). Form 6 of the dough balls into round buns: Take one portion at a time and pull and pinch the dough toward the bottom to begin the shape of a round. Place the dough on the floured surface, rounded side up, and gently spin it toward you, continuing to tuck and pull the dough underneath to create a smoothly rounded surface on top. Place three of the round loaves on each pan. Set aside.



**7** With the last two dough pieces, make the decorative "huesos" (or "bones") that go on top of the rounds. Divide each dough ball into 6 pieces so you have 12 total (approximately 40 grams each). Roll each piece into a small log, each approximately 2 inches wide. With 6 of the logs, spread your fingers and roll the dough toward yourself along the length of your fingers to create four little knobs in between and on the ends. Then with the other 6 logs, roll the dough with spread fingers to create three little knobs in between and on the ends. Note: You can create as many knobs as you like as long as they extend across the top of each bun. (Each loaf will get 2 criss-crossed huesos forming an X shape; see next step.)



**8** Decorate the tops of each round with the huesos. Using a damp towel, pat the 6 rounds on the baking sheets and place two huesos in an X position on each roll: First lay the one with four knobs and then the one with three knobs with the center knob at the top of the roll. Cover with a clean kitchen towel and let rise until nearly doubled in size, 45 minutes to one hour.



**9** Heat the oven to 350 degrees. Bake the bread for 15 minutes, then rotate and turn the pans and bake for another 15 minutes or until deep golden brown (an instant read thermometer inserted into the rounds should read 210 degrees). Remove the pans from the oven and let cool for at least 15 to 20 minutes.

**10** Thoroughly brush the top of each bread with melted butter, getting all sides of the huesos too. Then liberally sprinkle each with sugar for a glittery finish. These should be eaten the same day, or placed on your ofrenda.

**CREEPY COCKTAILS WITH A TIKI SPIRIT**

A BIG TOAST TO HORROR FILMS AT LONG BEACH'S BAMBOO CLUB

BY STEPHANIE BREIJO

**C**OBWEBS drape across bamboo. Arms and legs dangle from the ceiling and the thatched-roof bar where tiki drinks are garnished not just with little paper umbrellas but plastic skeleton arms and gummy-candy eyeballs. A heavy fog periodically pumps out across the space, taking on the hues of shifting red, purple and orange lighting, while the occasional animatronic ghoul is meant to give guests a scare. This is Halloween at Long Beach's Bamboo Club, a new-wave tiki bar that's renamed itself the Tremble Club all October long.



STEPHANIE BREIJO L.A. Times  
**SPOOKY** decor at the Tremble Club, the Bamboo Club's Halloween pop-up.

Beverage director Dustin Rodriguez helped open Bamboo Club — one of the best tiki destinations in Southern California — nearly six years ago. While the horror buff loves to celebrate Halloween, this is Bamboo Club's first blowout, monthlong pop-up for the holiday, complete with new drinks, costume contests, live music, spooky-item marketplaces and more.

two creepy cocktails during October; for the Tremble Club's inaugural event, the beverage director is serving six — and they're all inspired by horror films.

"Horror movies are kind of my forte," Rodriguez said. "A lot of these are riffs on cocktails that I felt would work for spooky season." To Rodriguez, tiki and horror go hand in hand: Typically dark, windowless tiki bars are easily made spooky, and the subcultures overlap in mood and aesthetic.

He and the rest of the team annually serve themed menus in December, but given the popularity of last year's Tinsel Club, which Rodriguez noted was the busiest month Bamboo Club had ever seen, they decided to add a Halloween pop-up to the roster. In the past he's dabbled with one or

"It melds really well with the horror movie scene, especially older [films] like Universal Monsters," he said. "That all comes [from] around the same era too — we're talking from the '30s and early '40s — and the lore of Polynesian culture: being in the jungle and the unexpected."



STEPHANIE BREIJO Los Angeles Times

**Bamboo Club's Fall of Romulus Cocktail**

10 minutes. Makes 1 cocktail.

When it came time to develop a menu of creepy cocktails for Bamboo Club's monthlong Halloween pop-up, the Tremble Club, beverage director and longtime horror fan Dustin Rodriguez knew just what to do. One of Rodriguez's most popular concoctions is the Fall of Romulus, paying homage to the most recent "Alien" film as well as tiki legend Donn Beach's peachy, minty icon: the Missionary's Downfall. Rodriguez adds extra rum to the mix of fresh mint, peach liqueur and pineapple, then finishes with a gory float made from fresh raspberry. While spruced up for the season with that red raspberry "blood" and its garnishes, the Fall of Romulus is bright and fruity — making it a perfect year-round cocktail without the addition of its Halloween adornments.

- 4 ounces honey
- 1 small container fresh raspberries, roughly 6 ounces
- 1 ounce granulated sugar
- 10 fresh mint leaves, plus small bundle for garnish
- 1/2 ounce fresh lime juice, roughly 1/2 of a lime
- 1 ounce pineapple juice (not from concentrate)
- 1/2 ounce crème de pêche (peach liqueur)
- 2 ounces white rum, ideally Copalli

30 seconds to one minute. Set aside.

**2 To make the raspberry float:** Add raspberries to a blender with 1 ounce sugar and 1/2 ounce water. Blend until smooth, then strain. Set aside.

**3 To make the cocktail:** Add fresh mint leaves to a shaker and muddle. Add honey syrup, lime juice, pineapple syrup, peach liqueur and rum and shake very hard, for roughly one minute.

**4** Pour contents of shaker into a glass and top with raspberry purée. Garnish with pineapple wedge, mint bouquet and any optional spooky adornments (gummy-candy eyeballs, skeleton arms, etc.).

**1 To make the honey syrup:** In a metal shaker or small cup or bowl, combine honey with 4 ounces warm water. Shake or stir until mixed,



IRIS SCHNEIDER Los Angeles Times

### GREYSTONE MANSION AND GARDENS

This stunning Tudor-style Beverly Hills estate turned public park might be the lesser known of oil tycoon Edward Doheny's L.A. mansions, but it's the one where shots rang out one fateful night in 1929, leaving two men dead, a mystery for the ages and, according to many, some very restless spirits. Doheny, the loose inspiration for "There Will Be Blood" (which used the Greystone as a filming location), found himself embroiled in a scandal that threatened prison time. Soon after, both his son and his son's secretary were found dead in the guest bedroom in what the police deemed a murder-suicide, though many believe the official narrative to have been a cover-up.

Today, Greystone's opulent gardens and jaw-dropping city views are open to all from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., with self-guided tours of the first floor offered once a month. If you're looking for an audio guide with all the scandalous details, theories and ghost stories about the case, check out the BBC's eight-episode "Oil in the Blood" series from the "Assume Nothing" podcast. The city of Beverly Hills hosts many other lovely events here year-round, from screenings of films that feature the mansion to play readings and even gardening classes.

● 905 Loma Vista Drive, Beverly Hills, beverlyhills.org/greystone-mansion

#### Spooky Meter: 🦇 🦇 🦇

It isn't just death that haunts this place. It's the dark shadow of the American Dream, which cost Doheny everything in the end.



# 13 L.A. HAUNTS TO VISIT ALL YEAR LONG

BY JESS JOHO



FOR HALLOWEEN LOVERS, there is only one major problem with spooky season: It ends. But in a city where the change in seasons is more of a shift in mindset anyway, it doesn't have to. Where there is a will to celebrate Halloween all year long in Los Angeles, there is a way. ¶ There's a unique, distinctly SoCal character to what haunts Los Angeles. A place as youthful and as sunny as L.A. shouldn't have so many ghost stories to tell. Yet few would deny that something dark and eerie pulsates just below the balmy surface of the City of Angels. Some might argue it stems from L.A.'s history as "the serial killer capital," giving rise to such dark true-crime legends as the Night Stalker and Hillside Strangler (among many others). Others blame the city's notorious inability to preserve its iconic history and local communities, with countless landmarks and neighborhoods bulldozed for the sake of a new highway or commercial development, leaving citizens with only the fading memory of their bygone golden ages. Most put the blame on Hollywood, which is not only a notoriously cutthroat and exploitative industry but also the birthplace of so many collective nightmares thanks to decades of horror films. ¶ As the entertainment industry faces yet another existential crisis threatening to turn Tinseltown into a ghost, it seems that what truly haunts L.A. are echoes of the same sad story repeated again and again through the ages: the meteoric rise of a few titans of industry inevitably ending in a catastrophic downfall, while the city caught in the wake of their ruin is left to pick up the pieces. ¶ Regardless of its root cause, at the heart of every great haunting is one essential element that Los Angeles has always had in spades: great storytellers.



JESS JOHO Los Angeles Times

### OLD ZOO PICNIC AREA AND HIKE

Rusting cages and graffiti-ravaged enclosures are all that remain of the abysmal failure that was the Griffith Park Zoo (now known as the Abandoned or Old Zoo) ever since it opened in 1912. The infamous Griffith J. Griffith — who in a bout of paranoia once shot his wife in the eye — all but forced the city to accept his "gift" of a dilapidated ostrich farm. Despite being refitted for 15 animals (including bears, lions, monkeys, elephants and reptiles), it was still criticized as an ugly, underfinanced eyesore. Legend has it you can still hear the growls and roars from inside the decaying cages of the mistreated. The picnic area captures that distinct uncanniness of L.A.'s hauntings, with a beautiful expanse of lawn juxtaposed against the dilapidated remnants of a mogul's dying empire. While you can walk straight up to the site via a flight of stairs from the small parking lot adjacent to Merry Go Round Lot 2, you can also reach it from above by hiking the easy 1.5-mile loop that diverges from the Fern Canyon Trailhead near Merry Go Round Lot 1.

● Merry Go Round Lot 1, off of Springs Drive/Griffith Park Drive, Los Angeles, laparks.org/griffithpark

#### Spooky Meter: 🦇 🦇 🦇

A lovely (if still unsettling) picnic spot by day, there's a reason the annual Haunted Hayride uses this location to terrify after dark.



JASON ARMOND Los Angeles Times

### HOLLYWOOD FOREVER CEMETERY

As the resting place of so many famous Angelenos, from Judy Garland to Griffith J. Griffith, this 1899 cemetery abounds with myths of restless spirits. But in typical L.A. fashion, Hollywood Forever Cemetery is less a place for mourning the dead and more a place for experiencing gratitude for the living, or rather, for the people who have come from all walks of life to make this city great.

A number of events are held at the Cathedral Mausoleum, Masonic Lodge and Fairbanks Lawn, most popularly the Cinespia outdoor film screenings, which have expanded beyond just summertime to include an entire month

dedicated to horror classics in October. On any given morning, you can catch one of the free daily yoga classes offered on Fairbanks Lawn, join locals walking their dogs and admire the free-roaming peacocks flaunting their stuff. If you're lucky, you can even spot an adorable member of the feral cat colony that's lovingly looked after by the cemetery's groundskeeper.

● 6000 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles, hollywoodforever.com

#### Spooky Meter: 🦇 🦇 🦇

There's no better way to test your mettle as a horror movie aficionado than to attend a nighttime screening while feet away from the corpses who helped bring those scares to life on the silver screen.

### HERITAGE SQUARE MUSEUM

Tucked away in a corner of Montecito Heights are eight pristinely preserved Victorian-era structures, each with their own story to tell about the Southern Californians who lived in them during our first century of statehood. Though the Cultural Heritage Foundation that preserves this living history acknowledges the many "tales of interesting paranormal occurrences that have happened at our museum," it still insists that none of the buildings is haunted per se, but rather "visited" from time to time by their original owners.

Increasingly, Heritage Square Museum is becoming a hot spot for the occult-curious thanks to regular events like the Magic Market Pop-Up

(which will return to the location in spring 2025), ghost tours, outdoor movie screening nights (most recently featuring Guillermo Del Toro's gothic "Crimson Peak") and seasonally themed performances including horror operas, ballets and spooky immersive live theater. But the overall vibe is best encapsulated by the spirit of Belle Boy, the museum's late and beloved orange cat, who reportedly still haunts his favorite room in the Octagon House; some visitors claim to have felt him brush past their legs in a cold gust of air.

● 3800 Homer St., Los Angeles, heritagesquare.org

#### Spooky Meter: 🦇 🦇 🦇

The stained-glass church outfitted with a wooden altar inside is by far the most cursed corner.



RICHARD HARBAUGH Getty Images

### THE QUEEN MARY

What is more quintessentially weird L.A. than a 90-year-old WWII ghost ship permanently docked in, of all places, Long Beach? The Queen Mary is the crown jewel for history and lore lovers alike in the SoCal area, with a mythic legacy that spans from the tragic mass casualties she caused in the fog of war to, decades later, being mishandled by the House of Mouse as a failed Disney attraction. After millions of dollars of repairs over the last eight years, the Queen is back and better than ever, with year-round ghost tours like the family-friendly Haunted Encounters and more in-depth Paranormal Ship Walk. The truly daring should test their resolve with "57

Ghosts" (a live theater performance exploring the documented deaths on the ship through a seance) and the Grey Ghost Project (where you can participate in a genuine, evidence-based paranormal investigation that's been underway since 2020). The masochistic scare-seeker can even book an overnight stay at the recently reopened room B340, which legend claims to be the most haunted hotel room — though, as the tour guides explain, this reputation initially stemmed from it being rigged for scares under Disney's stewardship.

Even after removal of all the smoke and mirrors, though, reports of terrifying hauntings continue to this day. This spooky season, the ship will be celebrat-

ing the return of its Dark Harbor Halloween festival (which had been replaced by Shaqtoberfest), Haunted Cocktails in the Art Deco Observation Bar and a two-hour-long Graveyard Tour. But there are advantages to visiting the ship in its off-seasons, whether to avoid the hellish hours-long traffic jam for parking or to experience events like the Transatlantic Vacation or New Year's Eve bash where big band dance parties transport guests back into the ghosts' timeline.

● 126 Queens Highway, Long Beach, queenmary.com

#### Spooky Meter: 🦇 🦇 🦇 🦇 🦇

Those seeking out scares on the Grey Ghost will never leave disappointed.



LUIS SINCO Los Angeles Times



PATRICK HRUBY Los Angeles Times

**THE WOLVES**

Standing where the historic and purportedly haunted Hotel Alexandria's ballroom once saw her glory days hosting the likes of Charlie Chaplin, this Belle Epoch-style Parisian cocktail bar isn't afraid of leaning into spooky antiquity. Staff and patrons report feeling cold spots and hair-pulling near a painting that hangs in the back, and co-owner Isaac Mejia even had three different mediums confirm that the women's bathroom is haunted by a little girl. According to one medium, the ghosts are happy to see how their antiques that decorate the bar are still admired and lovingly cared for via regular polishing by Mejia. With fancy period-themed drinks like the 1920s Cocktail and one of the best burgers in Los Angeles, it's a place any soul, living or dead, would be happy to haunt forever. It's also ideally situated for a spooky bar crawl, with goth karaoke bar the Veil and the historic (and haunted) speak-easy Rhythm Room L.A. just a block away.

● 519 S Spring St., Los Angeles, [thewolvesdla.com](http://thewolvesdla.com)

**Spooky Meter:** 🦇🦇🦇🦇  
This is the only location on our list where the reporter experienced potentially paranormal activity, when a martini glass slid across the table seemingly of its own volition. Though, to be fair, it could've just been the result of a sweaty cup from the heat wave.



JESS JOHO Los Angeles Times

**SUGARMYNT GALLERY**

Situated next to the original Pasadena home featured in John Carpenter's "Halloween," this horror media-focused art gallery by local SaraRose Orlandini feels like stepping into one of your scary movie slumber parties of yesteryear. The current exhibit, "Nostalgic Nights in Haddonfield," features a cozy VHS corner that invites viewers to curl up with an '80s/'90s-kid memory of experiencing these life-changing classics for the first time. The gallery's permanent collection spotlights the special FX artists, set designers and behind-the-scenes photographers who have defined the essence of Halloween

for not just Angelenos but the world over. Aside from original scripts, screen-used costumes and a dedicated "Hocus Pocus" room, you'll also find antiques like the 1920s Dennison's Party Magazine that's credited with originating many of America's modern-day Halloween traditions. Those who can't get enough during business hours can even stay overnight at the gallery's ScareBnB.

● 810 Meridian Ave., South Pasadena, [sugarmynt.com](http://sugarmynt.com)

**Spooky Meter:** 🦇  
Like a warm blanket on a cool autumn night, you'll be lulled into a sense of security that doesn't end in a jump scare here.



JESS JOHO Los Angeles Times



JESS JOHO Los Angeles Times

**CLIFTON'S REPUBLIC**

There's no doubt that Clifton's is "cursed," if you ask current owner Andrew Meieran, whose multiple attempts to reopen this iconic redwood-themed 1930s DTLA landmark have been thwarted by flooding from burst pipes, the neighborhood's struggling economy and a global pandemic. "This is what happens when you, politely speaking, piss off the spirits here," Meieran explained, pointing to a bizarre 7-inch mound warping the hardwood floor in his office. Apparently, he'd made the mistake of moving furniture around the room right before the scheduled summer 2024 relaunch, and inexplicable equipment malfunctioned beneath the antique bar cabinet. This new mishap

left only the historic Pacific Seas tiki bar ready for limited weekend reservations. "This place has a life of its own. It's alive, fully aware and responsive," Meieran claims.

The Monarch Bar and Gothic Lounge recently reopened, along with a year-round Spirits & Spirits experience that pairs historic cocktails with haunted tales. There's an undeniable, intoxicating mystique embedded into every inch of the five-story building, which once primarily served as a cafeteria and community hub frequented by some of the city's greatest creatives, from sci-fi author Ray Bradbury to Walt Disney.

Meieran used to write off some of the more sensationalist legends about Clifton's, like rumors of a mistress' remains

being scattered in the ballroom. Until, that is, he confirmed that he himself had swept up said ashes without realizing it at the time. Now, he lets the haunting call the shots, as it guides him to reviving the building however it sees fit. "I know when it's happy, and I know when it's not," he says. "It loves people. It loves to be inhabited. It loves to be explored. It loves playfulness." And he learned the hard way that Clifton's also refuses to let any of its spirits be forgotten.

● 648 S. Broadway, Los Angeles, [cliftonsrepublic.com](http://cliftonsrepublic.com)

**Spooky Meter:** 🦇🦇🦇🦇  
The ballroom on the second floor is reportedly the most active spot, thanks to the specter of a woman who is reputed to show up in photos.



JESS JOHO Los Angeles Times

**MUSEUM OF DEATH**

While this recommendation comes with every disclaimer and trigger warning imaginable, we couldn't not include this relic of kitschy Hollywood Boulevard shock tourism. Despite moving to a new location on Selma Avenue, its guts remain the same unrelenting parade of human horror and depravity turned into a spectacle for your entertainment. Amid displays of everything

from violent crime-scene photos to cannibalism, serial-killer artwork and real autopsy footage, you'll find the bathroom situated beside a wall of human skulls rotating in protective cases like rotisserie chickens. You don't come to this museum for education, contemplation or anything redeeming whatsoever. But there is a certain honesty in its confrontation. "Here are your monsters, L.A.," the Museum of Death seems to say, with exhib-

its often showcasing the Los Angeles Times' own headlines. This is what we inflict on each other — if not literally, then through the morbid fascination that's led to an entire cottage industry of exploiting the worst crimes against humanity.

● 6363 Selma Ave., Hollywood, [museumofdeath.net](http://museumofdeath.net)

**Spooky Meter:** 🦇🦇🦇🦇🦇  
It is impossible to leave this place feeling undisturbed by the experience.



CHRISTINA HOUSE Los Angeles Times

**PHILOSOPHICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY**

The not-a-cult Philosophical Research Society located in a Maya-style courtyard in Los Feliz may seem mysterious from the outside looking in. But from the inside, this nonprofit arts and culture organization appears to be nothing more than a diverse community of inquisitive minds happy to spend an entire Saturday listening to lectures about death and dying at the Memento Mori Festival hosted in its 200-person auditorium. PRS boasts a packed calendar of esoteric events, like a monthly Death Cafe meetup (complete with tea), mystical workshops, obscure film screenings, theatrical readings of literature and folktales, macabre puppetry, magic lantern shows and much more. The library (open Thursday-Friday) is a purple-hued treasure trove of rare tomes spanning a wide range of thought-provoking topics, while the bookstore (open Tuesday-Friday) is tended to by volunteers who welcome your questions and curiosities.

● 3910 Los Feliz Blvd., Los Angeles, [prs.org](http://prs.org)

**Spooky Meter:** 🦇  
No ghosts, according to reporting by The Times' Deborah Netburn — but the PRS does have the skull of a German mass murderer somewhere.



JESS JOHO Los Angeles Times

**MYSTIC MUSEUM**

A perfect date spot for oddity-inclined couples and friend groups, the Mystic Museum is your one-stop shop for witchy wares, occult necessities, cursed antiques, horror movie merchandise and human bone collections. Its immersive exhibit in the back is worth checking out, with an intricately designed interactive maze that changes seasonally but currently showcases scenes from classic teen horror campus movies. The caffeine- and sugar-addicted might want to stop by the nearby Horror Vibes Coffee, where the staff is friendly, the patrons are gothy and the themed drinks are far tastier than they sound.

● 3204 W. Magnolia Blvd., Burbank, [themysticmuseum.com](http://themysticmuseum.com)

**Spooky Meter:** 🦇🦇🦇  
The exhibit is not quite up to par with the craftsmanship of Universal's Halloween Horror Nights, but it's still full of Instagrammable moments.



JESS JOHO Los Angeles Times

**COBB ESTATE, A.K.A. THE HAUNTED FOREST TRAIL**

Not much remains of the once-grand 1910s Cobb Estate, aside from the gated entrance, a couple of crumbling stone walls, one staircase and beautiful mountain views along the breezy hourlong hike colloquially referred to as the Haunted Forest Trail. Despite tales of seances, secret societies, satanic rituals and murder, the Altadena Historical Society traces rumors of its supposed haunting to after the Marx Brothers purchased it in 1956, before demolishing the decaying mansion in a failed bid to rezone it for a cemetery. In all likelihood, reports of screaming, chanting and strange lights can be attributed to the site becoming a popular destination for mischievous teens and vandals. The 1.5-mile loop forks to the left of the Sam Merrill Trailhead and ends at the covered reservoir.

● Cobb Estate Trailhead, 3302 Lake Ave., Altadena

**Spooky Meter:** 🦇🦇  
Allegedly, the staircase is haunted by the angry spirit of Charles H. Cobb, who pushes or even yells at trespassers to leave.



JESS JOHO Los Angeles Times

**HOLLYWOOD ROOSEVELT HOTEL**

As one of the few famously haunted Hollywood hotels still left standing and mostly intact, the Roosevelt is a gorgeous relic worth treasuring. Offering respite from the tourism raging right outside its front doors on the Walk of Fame, when you step into the Roosevelt you feel transported to the Golden Age of Hollywood. Guests can be found dancing to the weekly free jazz nights in the lobby, which is across from the ballroom that hosted the first Oscars ceremony. The lively Spare Room speakeasy on the mezzanine has two bowling alleys available for reservations, while classic film screenings and shows take place at the Cinegrill Theater. Staff

acknowledge that, as part of their onboarding, they do learn all of the hotel's lore and ghost stories, especially tales of Marilyn Monroe, who had her own penthouse at the hotel and reportedly can still be seen applying her makeup in the mirror hanging on the mezzanine staircase. But many also claim to have had their own paranormal experiences, especially the security and cleaning staff, who say that the activity is most frequent during the quiet hours of early morning.

● 7000 Hollywood Blvd., Los Angeles, [thehollywoodroosevelt.com](http://thehollywoodroosevelt.com)

**Spooky Meter:** 🦇🦇  
The real terrors are kept outside, on this notoriously hellish stretch of Hollywood Boulevard.



GWEN HUERTA For The Times

# From midlife crisis to midlife reboot

ON TURNING 50, A WRITER STRUGGLED WITH DEPRESSION, LONELINESS AND A CHANGING BODY. SO SHE WENT ON A QUEST TO CONNECT WITH HER COMMUNITY — AND HERSELF. **BY TARA ELLISON**

**A**RE YOU LEAVING AGAIN? ” I asked my husband, Rob, as he packed for his second trip with the guys in three weeks. “Only for a few days.” “I could sense the elation he felt in escaping. He was heading out to chase ski runs, and I was staying home, taking care of the dogs and eating “girl dinners” alone. I hated that I wasn’t having fun adventures anymore. I didn’t give myself permission to pursue what interested me, partly because I had no idea what to pursue. How did people figure out what to do when their nests emptied out? “ When I turned 50 in 2018, I was struggling with depression, and any sense of feeling good in my body had been turned upside down. I was recovering from open-heart surgery, menopause was looming and I was losing a sense of purpose. For years, I had set aside the writing goals I held dear and opted to put Rob and our blended family first, but in the quiet moments, I felt empty. Although I was tremendously grateful to have a spouse whose paycheck covered our needs, I felt there was something missing in my own personal development. I attempted to fill that emptiness through overeating or shopping, which left me feeling worse.

With my daughter in high school and entering a highly independent phase and Rob’s kids launched (this was a second marriage for us both), I wondered what was next.

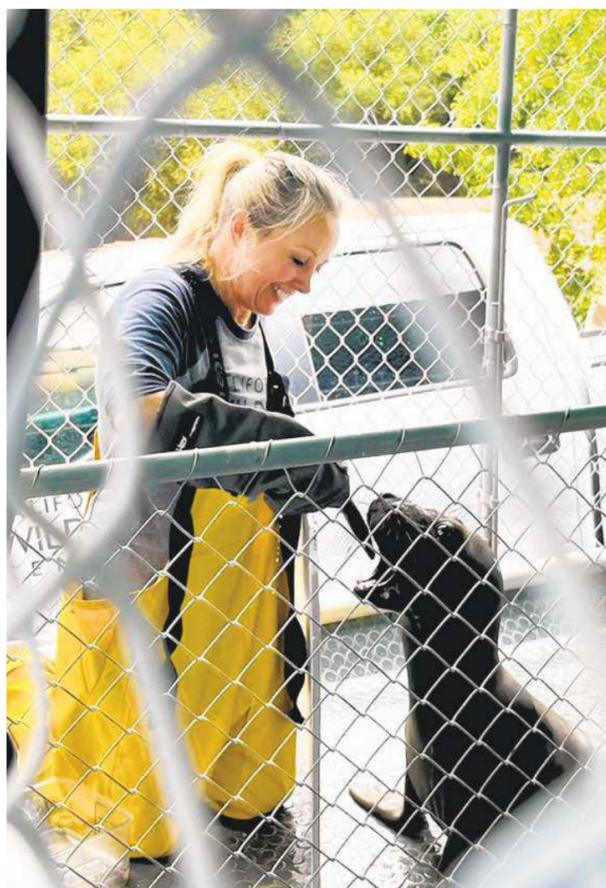
Suddenly, it seemed like the built-in social structures I had leaned on in my 30s and 40s were evaporating in midlife. Volunteering at my daughter’s school was a thing of the past, and the mom groups had long disbanded. My daughter needed me much less — and spent half her time at her dad’s. I realized that part of what I was feeling was loneliness.

It’s well known that loneliness can increase the risk of heart disease, dementia, stroke, anxiety and depression in older adults, but its negative effects are not limited to seniors.

The surgeon general declared loneliness a nationwide epidemic last year. But for older generations in particular, research shows that friendship is important for slowing cognitive decline and has a host of other health benefits.

I wasn’t sure where to start, because it felt like so many shifts were happening at once, but I knew that being married wasn’t an automatic cure for loneliness. The relationship dynamics between Rob and me began to shift with age.

Rob was a high achiever who worked hard and played hard, while I struggled to find my footing as a part-time writer. When I was younger, it felt natural to prioritize him and his needs as the breadwinner. But that got harder as I hit



my late 40s.

In some ways, I had stunted my own development to make my marriage succeed. I chose not to pursue work that might have been too demanding or taken me away from my family. Those choices felt like the right thing to do at the time, but I had no economic power.

In counseling, our couples therapist told me, “You need to do something about this inequality. Sometimes you need to grow apart before you can grow together.”

So I did something about it. I launched my own midlife reboot.

Midlife occupies the intersection between how you’ve lived in the past and how you want to proceed going forward.

In recent years, women have begun to rework the narrative around menopause, reimagining it as a type of coming home to oneself. The upside is the moment offers a chance for reinvention, an opportunity to chart a new course. I might have been up against a changing body and wacky hormones, plus

**TARA ELLISON** has found joy volunteering at the California Wildlife Center’s marine mammal rescue division. Her tasks include hand-feeding sea lion and elephant seal pups.



a side of loneliness, but I was determined to rework that hand into something more favorable — even if I had no idea how.

I had to make peace with my body and better understand its needs. A prescription for more fresh air and sunshine, going for walks became essential for my mental health (especially during the COVID-19 pandemic).

To feel my best, I paid closer attention to my hormones and hunted for a gynecologist interested in what happens to women beyond child-bearing years. That proved harder than I imagined, considering that menopause happens to half



Photographs from California Wildlife Center

the population.

Years ago, when I entered perimenopause, there weren’t resources for women on social media. The stigma attached to perimenopause meant nobody was going to own up to being on a downward slope (especially not in L.A.) I had to learn to advocate for myself — and be a guinea pig — to manage my symptoms. It was a maddening journey but I learned a lot.

With the goal of meeting other women my age, I began attending book signings, workshops or menopause symposiums solo so that I would be forced to work through my social anxiety and make conversation. It’s fun to hear what other people are up to, and it turns out that indulging in creative passions is high on their lists. One woman I know rediscovered her love of playing the piano; another spends her free time painting.

Sometimes it’s not as easy as falling back into an old hobby. “I spent all this time caring for my family and now I get time for myself — I just don’t know what



Illustrations by LINDSEY MADE THIS; photo from Joe Gall

to do with it," one of my girlfriends in her 60s confided.

Another friend shared that two years before her retirement, she started carrying a notebook to which she added a note every time she found something she was interested in exploring. Once she retired, she started working her way through that list. Through these conversations I realized that, contrary to what society wants you to believe, the oldest women in the room are often the most interesting.

Creativity was an important part of my reboot, but I also wanted to devote my time to something larger. Studies have confirmed that being of service or volunteering can be a vital step on the path to happiness and satisfaction.

After discovering an injured sea lion on a beach in Malibu, I met Heather Henderson, the marine program manager at the California Wildlife Center in Calabasas, and began volunteering with its marine mammal rescue division. The organization rescues and rehabilitates sea lions and elephant seal pups. The pups arrive skinny and malnourished, receive care and medical treatment and are released.

"It's not glamorous work; you might not like it," one of the volunteers warned me in the beginning. He was right; some of it is really gross. But sometimes you don't know what you're made of until you're tested. There's a lot of cleaning gear, chopping frozen fish for smoothies and scrubbing slimy pinniped poop out of the pens.

It's now a normal occurrence for me to find fish scales buried in my sports bra. But I've found that some of the mundane chores are relaxing and make me feel more present. I stop worrying about the declining health of my mother and other pressing issues when faced with the task of hand-feeding a young elephant seal.

I was surprised to find that many other volunteers also were middle-age.

"Due to the physical nature of the job, there is a common misconception that to be successful one must be young," Henderson said. She estimates that about 35% of the active rescue and rehabilitation team members are 45-plus.

"It has been rewarding to know that I remain relevant and necessary beyond the needs of my family," one of my fellow volunteers, Debra Loggia, told me. At age 64, she estimates she's one of the oldest volunteers at the wildlife center, but she takes pride in knowing that she's also one of the strongest. I understand what she means. Doing this work for six seasons has given me a new confidence, plus a sense of purpose and community.

Now, six years into this reboot, I occupy a completely different emotional space. I'm far less dependent. Through identifying my interests, expanding my community and pursuing new work opportunities, I've effectively outsourced my happiness.

Without the weight of expectation, my relationship has thrived. I'm more engaged in what I'm doing. On volunteer days I come home full of stories about tube-feeding elephant seals. Because work has picked up — I'm in the process of writing a book and a screenplay — I sometimes have to prioritize those deadlines, even when it's inconvenient. Rob has been supportive throughout this process, largely because I'm a lot more fun. By pushing through a stretch of listless loneliness and embracing my fears, this midlife crisis ended up blooming into a midlife renaissance.

It's not all perfect. I still get lonely and have days when I'm down or need to lower my expectations. There's a certain amount of melancholy about aging that I can't simply jettison. But it doesn't upend me anymore — I still surprise myself.

"You're leaving me," Rob said as he watched me pack for a short trip with a girlfriend.

"It's only for two nights," I said. "I'll be back before you know it."

"I'll still miss you," he said. And I believed him.

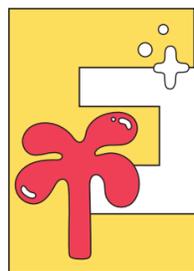
*Ellison writes about relationships and the challenges and triumphs of midlife. She's currently working on a memoir.*

SUNDAY FUNDAY

# HOW TO HAVE THE BEST SUNDAY IN L.A., ACCORDING TO TONY HAWK

THE BIRDMAN LIFTS OFF WITH A DOUGHNUT AND JAVA AND WINDS DOWN WITH A WHISKEY. IN BETWEEN ARE SKATE PARK VISITS, BURGERS AND A CEMETERY STROLL.

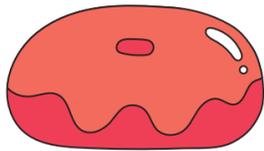
BY ADAM TSCHORN



**E**VEN THOUGH he officially retired from competition more than two decades ago, skateboarding legend and entrepreneur Tony Hawk seems to be everywhere these days. ♣ If you're an avid video game player, you can watch him (or maybe even help him) defy gravity in a long-running series. If you watch TV, you might catch him pitching Quinol turmeric gummies. If you're a fan of podcasts, perhaps you've heard his weekly "Hawk v. Wolf" (with Jason Ellis). If you live in an underserved community, you might see the Skatepark Project (formerly the Tony Hawk Foundation) working to fund your neighborhood skate park. And, if you tuned in to the 2024 Paris Olympics over the summer, you might have spotted the 56-year-old Snoop-adjacent during the skateboarding finals. (His skateboard company, Birdhouse, is a sponsor of Team USA's Tom Schaar, who took home a silver medal.) ♣ And, even though he lives in San Diego (where he was born and raised), the Birdman might also be spotted in Los Angeles, where he finds himself on a not-infrequent basis. When I caught up with him recently, Hawk not only had a jam-packed perfect SoCal Sunday to share but he also had suggestions of special places that boarders from beyond our borders might consider seeking out when they eventually make their way here to compete in the 2028 Games: the "iconic" handrail at **Hollywood High School** ("There are actually two, but one's bigger — and that's a proving ground") and **Sunset Car Wash**, which is now unskateable but "lives in infamy" after a few bold skaters jumped from the awning at the top and rolled down the sloped embankment. "Only a few people got the chance to do it," Hawk said. "The first one was 20-plus years ago, John Cardiel. And then Mark Gonzales, who's a famous skater, tried it right behind him, and he crashed. And later on Milton Martinez did a kickflip into it, which was kind of unheard of."

*This interview has been lightly edited and condensed for length and clarity.*

**7 A.M.**  
**ROLL NORTH FROM NORTH COUNTY**  
I would probably try to leave by 7 a.m. to get up to the Venice/Santa Monica area by 8:30 because that's when the freeway is working the way it should.



**8:30 A.M.**  
**DIVE INTO A DOUGHNUT**  
I'd probably start at **Holey Grail Donuts** — there's one in Santa Monica. My favorite is their usual glaze, which is a staple, but all of their flavors are good. They've got really good coffee too, so I'd get a doughnut and a cup of coffee.

**9 A.M.**  
**PAY A VISIT TO THE VENICE BEACH SKATE PARK**  
The **Venice [Beach] Skate Park** is so iconic, so I would start with that early in the morning before it gets crowded. I actually say that for any skate park, especially for beginners. I tell parents that if they want to get their kid to the skate park, they should show up in the early morning — daybreak if you can — because that's when the older skaters like me are there, or the beginners. And there's much more respect and much more freedom. By mid-morning, the better skaters start showing up, and you're just in the way. And the thing with Venice is that it can be intimidating because it's such a fishbowl. If you're there after 10 a.m., prepare to be on display. But the whole Venice, Dogtown, Z-Boys thing, it's all right there, so I feel a kinship to the area.

**11 A.M.**  
**POP OVER TO THE SANTA MONICA PIER**  
I might go up to the **Santa Monica Pier** and just sort of be a tourist and ride the roller coaster. The pier is pretty iconic. We put it in a video game ["Tony Hawk's American Wasteland"] about 20 years ago. Funny story: My son Keegan

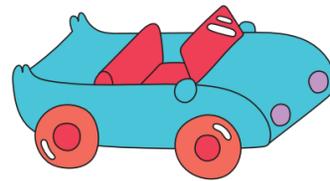
[Hawk], who is now 23, demanded that I take him to the Santa Monica Pier when he was about 7 because it was in the game. I remember him pointing out all these different landmarks that were in the game but that I had never noticed.

**NOON**  
**SNAP INTO A SMASHBURGER**  
For lunch, I'd go to **Burger She Wrote**, which just opened on the Strand in Venice, and get a double smashburger and fries. The menu is pretty basic, but they also have an Oklahoma burger that's kind of smoky. A skater actually opened the shop, and I became an investor late in the game. They closed the Los Feliz location to open this one.

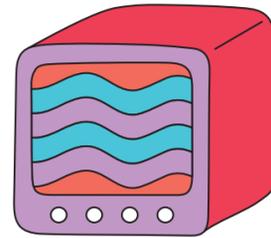
**3 P.M.**  
**DROP IN ON THE DEPARTED**  
I like going to **LACMA**, for sure. They have great exhibitions. There was one from maybe 10 years ago — the James Turrell retrospective — that was awesome. Or I might go over to the **Hollywood Forever cemetery**, which I think is super cool. Not to visit any graves in particular. I'd just wander and check it out. I just think it's a beautiful area, and I love that they do concerts and movies there.



**4:30 P.M.**  
**SWING BY SAPASI**  
One of my sons, Miles Goodman, actually has a skate shop in West Hollywood called **Sapasi** — on North Robertson Boulevard near Melrose Avenue — so I'd stop by to see him if he's there. [Editor's note: Sapasi isn't currently open on Sundays.] And we wander around that area a lot. There's good shopping: **Palace [Skateboards]** is there, and there are some clothing stores too.



**6 P.M.**  
**MOTOR OVER TO MATSUHISA**  
I'm old, so I eat early, and this is about when I'd probably go grab some dinner. My favorite is **Matsuhisa** on La Cienega Boulevard, so I would go there and get the omakase. Either that or go to the **Chateau Marmont** and get their spaghetti Bolognese. It's one of those two. If I went to Matsuhisa for the omakase, that's probably an hour and a half or two hours, so if I left around 8, I'd get back home at around 9:30.



**9:30 P.M.**  
**WATCH TV WITH A WHISKEY**  
On a Sunday, my wife and I are catching up on whatever shows we're watching, like "Last Week Tonight With John Oliver" or "House of the Dragon." And I love fine whiskey, so I would probably pour myself a glass of Hakushu 12 Years Old, which is my go-to right now.

**10 P.M.**  
**BANK ON AN EARLY BEDTIME**  
I'm up so early these days — especially on Mondays — so if it's a true Sunday night, I'm usually in bed by 10. My daughter just got her driver's license, but it's still a task to get her out the door on time, so I know my morning is going to start early, with me yelling to her in her room.

I SAW TREVOR around the gym for months — scattered tattoos and black tank top with a cute smudge of climbing chalk on their ears. They always made sure to say hi, looking in my direction frequently. They first asked me to hang out in December.

I asked when they were free, and they replied, “Christmas Day?” I thought it was a joke, but now I’m not sure. In January, I went on a hike with them. They tried to take me to an old mine in Millard Canyon, which we never found — but we did find a shared love of theater and making fun of capitalist overlords and loud, grunting men at the gym. Overall, it felt so ... friendly. No spark, but good conversation for hours.

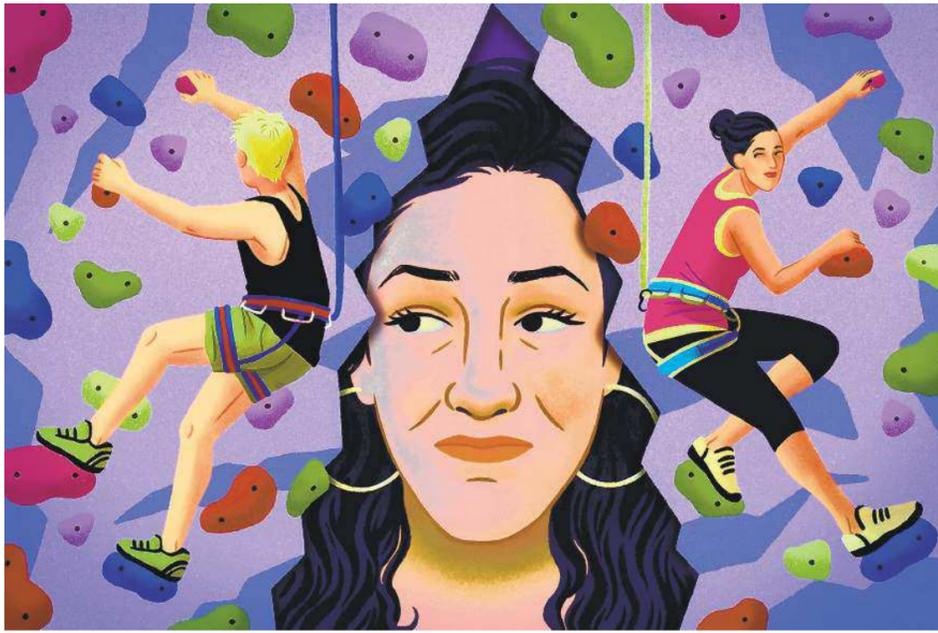
A few months later, they got me out again — this time to Geeky Tea and Games in Burbank. We were out until 2 a.m.

After beating them in Catan (without witnessing an alpha male tantrum at losing!), we ended up at IHOP, where the server remembered Trevor from their youth. Her memory of them being sweet as a teenager calmed the “Is this person actually a serial killer?” intrusive thoughts.

We started texting throughout the day, sharing memes, cat pictures and jokes about the hypermasculine beasts at the gym. By May, I was working two jobs, hosting a fundraiser and arranging a group vacation.

I got sick and Trevor swooped in, making me soup, doing dishes, cuddling and eschewing activities outside the apartment because they just “wanted to talk.” Even though I didn’t feel romantically connected, I felt protected and loved getting to chat until the birds sang with someone emotionally aware and sensitive.

We giggled about all the ways cis men had to prove themselves. They repeatedly said they were happy with how the friendship was, that they would be just as happy if we never had sex and just slept next to each other. As someone on the asexual spectrum, that sounded perfect. However, they kept being more and more touchy in bed, talking about how much I turned them on and how they weren’t like other male-bodied folks. I was curious and didn’t want to lose my sleepover



CLAIRE WYMAN For The Times

L.A. AFFAIRS

## Rocky fall after sweet climb to friendship

AS WE PARTED WAYS, MAYBE I FINALLY MET THE REAL PERSON

BY JESS KIM

|||||||

buddy, so we agreed to be friends with benefits. Things went smoothly ... for about two weeks.

By mid-June, their communication became inconsistent. Suddenly, the playful messaging, reliability, the soothing sound of them reading at night — all my favorite things about our time together — disappeared. When I asked what changed, they said that now that they “had me,” there was “no reason to do any of that.”

The sex was fun for those first few weeks, but then they stopped doing any sort of foreplay. I cried. A lot. It felt like I was spending time with a stranger. I knew they were going through a rough patch financially, and I thought if they could just get through that, they would go back to being the fun, gentle friend from the spring.

But they started playing games of the non-board variety, such as messaging me, “What time are we meeting again?” at the time we were supposed to meet. They belittled creative ideas I had.

The long chats about our world and perspectives were reduced to watching a TV show in each other’s arms and falling asleep. Where was the emotional connection I enjoyed?

A few weeks later, they mentioned that they wanted to sleep with two climbers from the gym — two people in separate long-term relationships. They started making unrealistic plans to sleep with them (unbeknownst to the people). I calmly pointed out that if they continued to do this, they would lose me. Trevor looked me right in the eyes and said, “OK,” leaving me to feel like our friendship

was nothing to them.

I ended the sexual part of our relationship, but I held the door open for friendship. They responded, “Great, now I’m not gonna have sex for years.”

This cued a roller-coaster cycle — they’d come to the gym to say things like, “I’m going to cry myself to sleep tonight” and text that they needed me to come over, only to change their mind later. I slept over one more time to have a talk about what our future friendship could look like. Trevor bemoaned how I could possibly want to be friends with them and how badly they felt for hurting me.

I told them that I felt it was odd to ask for sympathy for causing me so much emotional pain. I told them that to be friends moving forward, I needed them to promise not to intentionally hurt me in the

future and to communicate if they were feeling anxious or insecure rather than lashing out.

When I woke up, they told me they didn’t want me to sleep over again because “it’s weird.” I left but then began receiving texts from them about how their week was going. They also shared YouTube clips with no context and fake cheery messages.

I felt like they were still putting on a front with me, when I wanted the real person. Or maybe I finally met the real person.

I wrote a long text message, explaining how our friendship still felt off to me, and suggested that we chat. They responded, “At this point, I do not think we would make good friends and I don’t want to be friends with you.” Ouch.

When the friendship ended, it felt like I was grieving someone who hadn’t existed. I think I should dislike them more, but the reality is that I miss my funny, talented friend. I wish for another late night of jolting up from laughing and hearing them playfully say, “Wait, are those birds starting to sing? Oh, nooooo, what are we gonna do?!”

I won’t ever know if my springtime buddy was genuinely there or if it was just a long-running mask. But I’m grateful for the friends who validated my feelings of sadness and confusion and firmly recommended running far, far away. For the next partner, I’ll keep the bar above the shirtless grunters at the gym and raise it up a notch to someone who can laugh through the birds singing and communicate even when they can’t.

*The author is a queer, multi-racial writer who took a part-time job at the climbing gym, only to accidentally unionize it. When she’s not playing outside, she can be found playing pretend at comedy venues around town. She’s on Instagram: @jessadventurin*

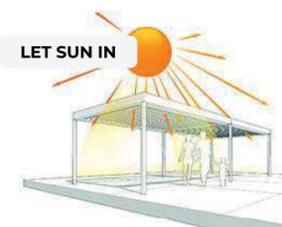
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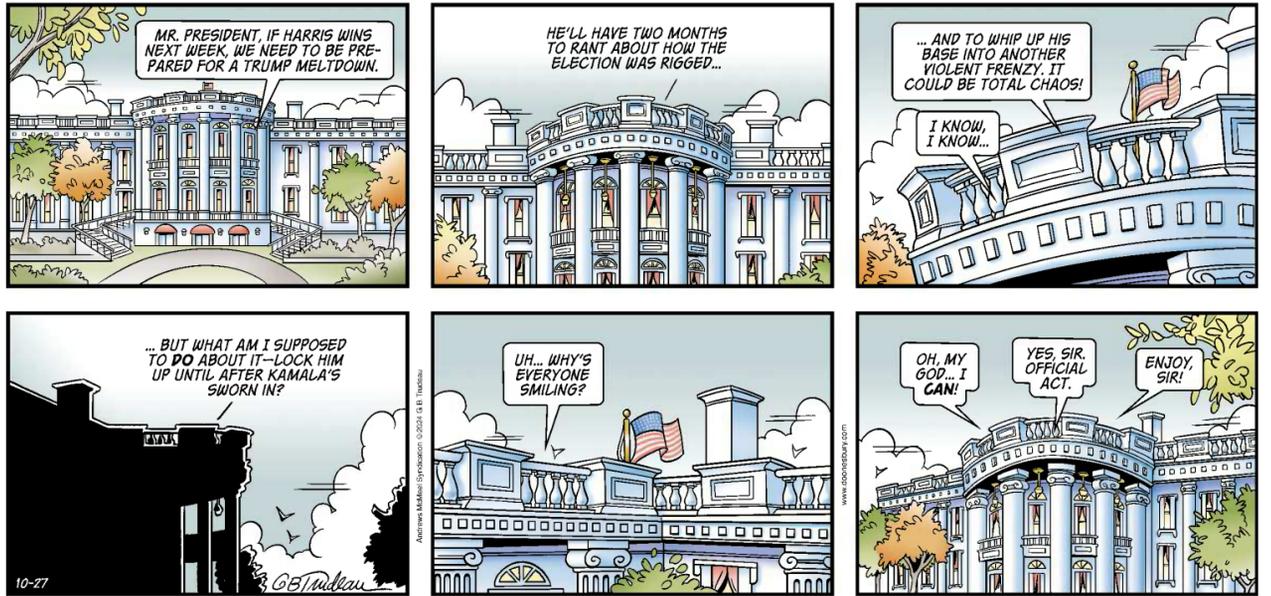
## PICKLES

by Brian Crane



## DOONESBURY

By Garry Trudeau



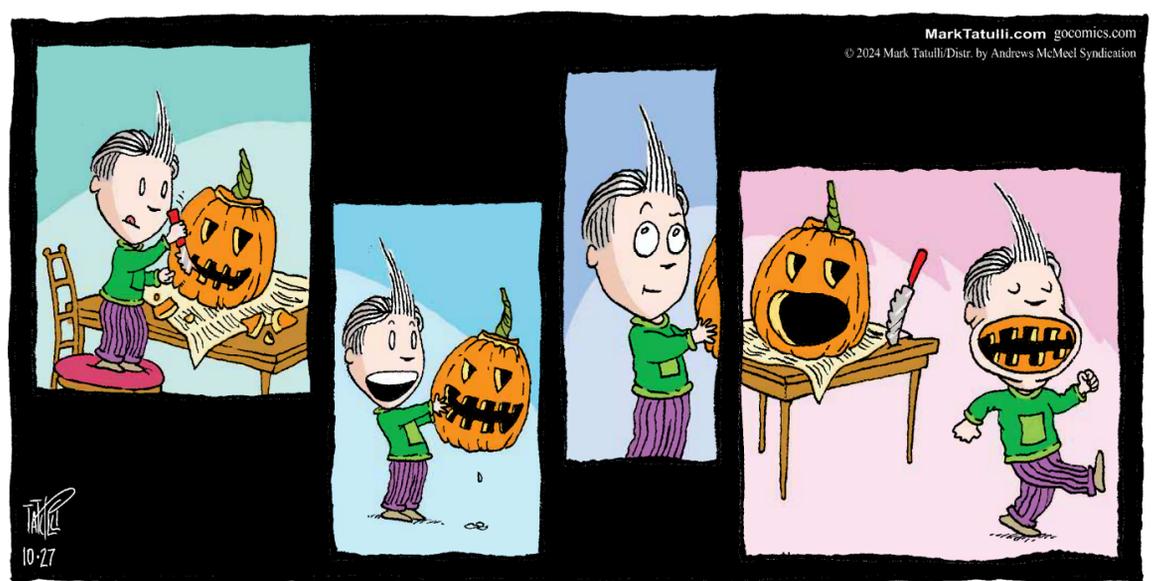
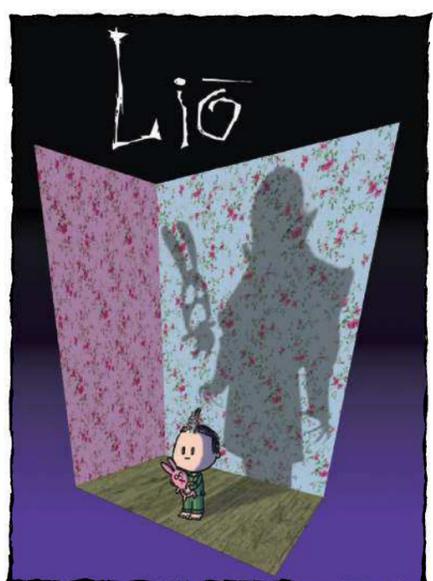
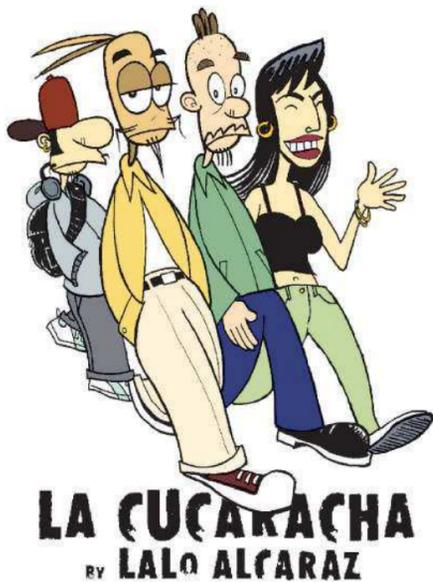
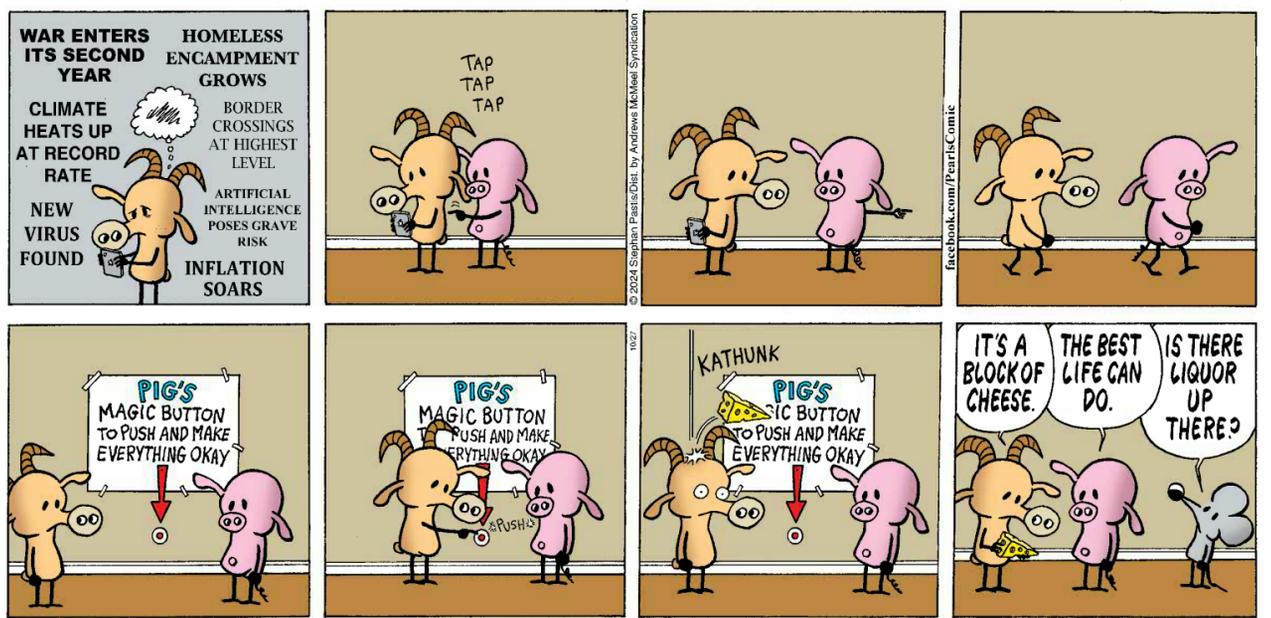
## CRABGRASS

By Tauhid Bondia

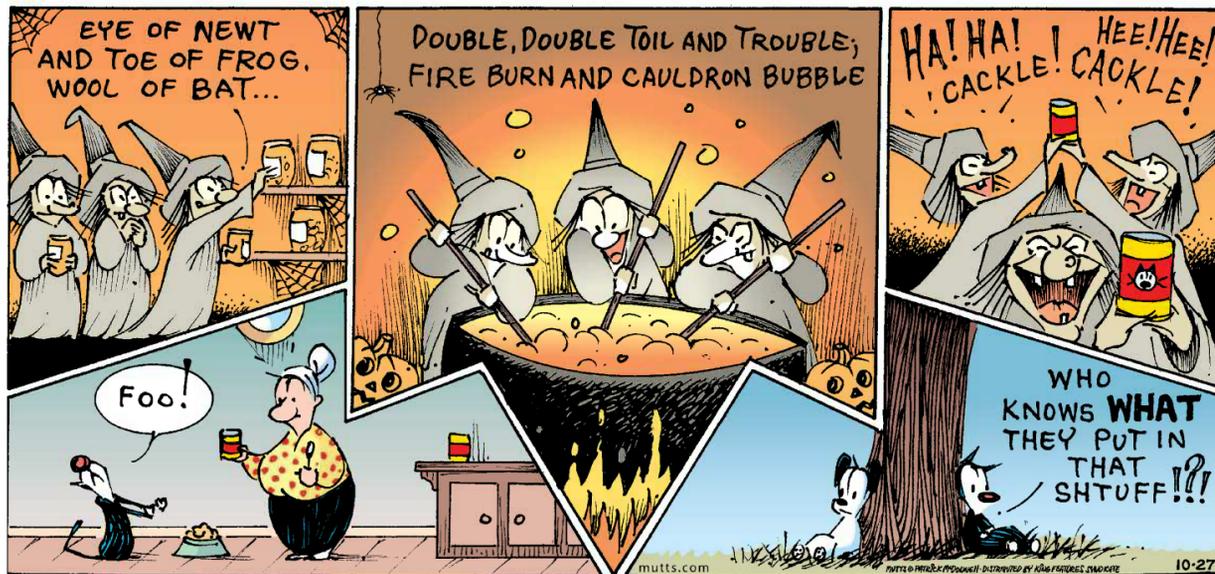


## PEARLS BEFORE SWINE

By Stephan Pastis



MUTTS By Patrick McDonnell

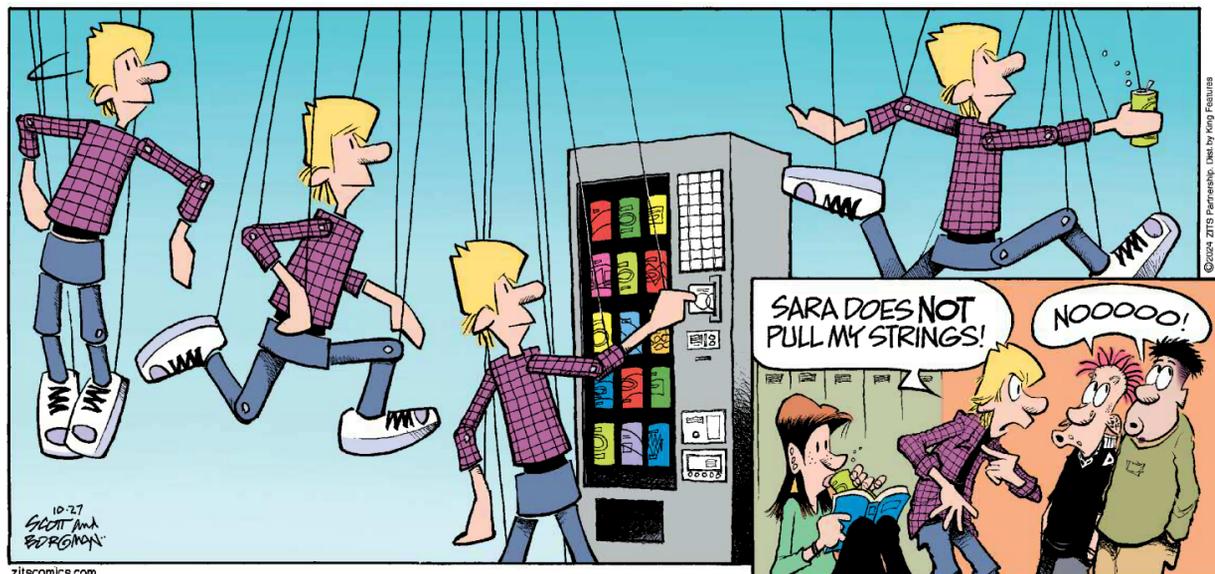


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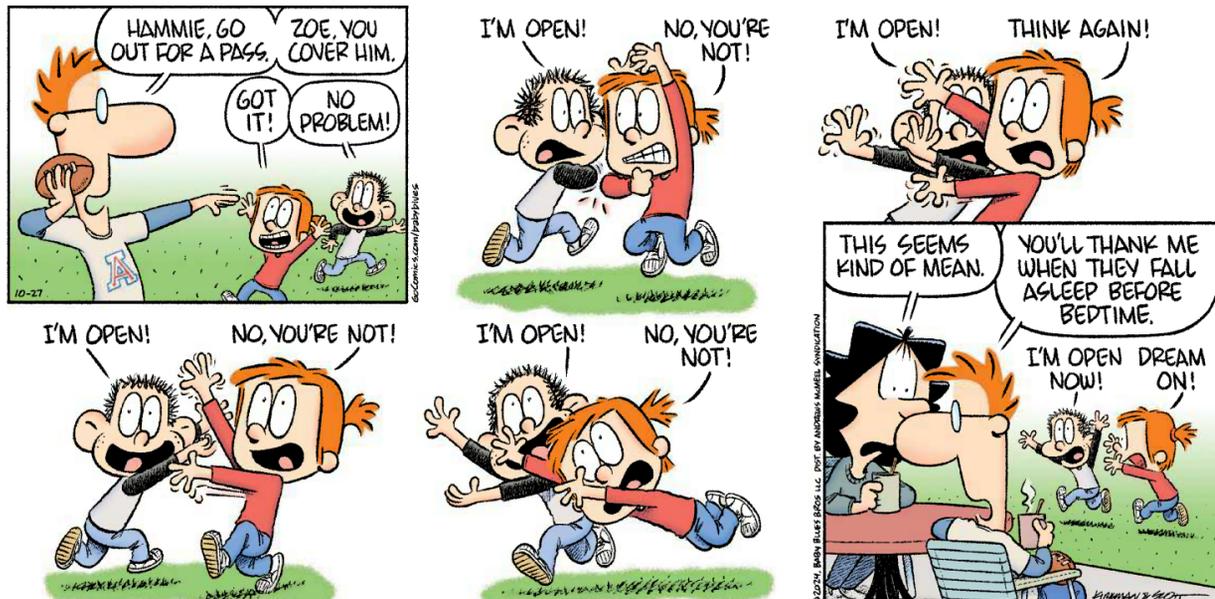
By Dean Young & John Marshall



ZITS By Jerry Scott and Jim Borgman

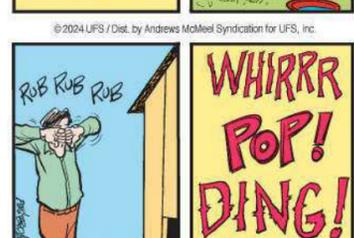
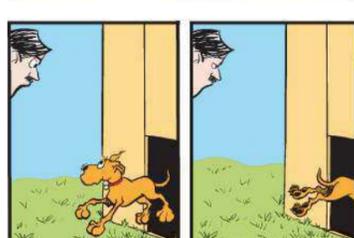


BABY BLUES By Rick Kirkman and Jerry Scott

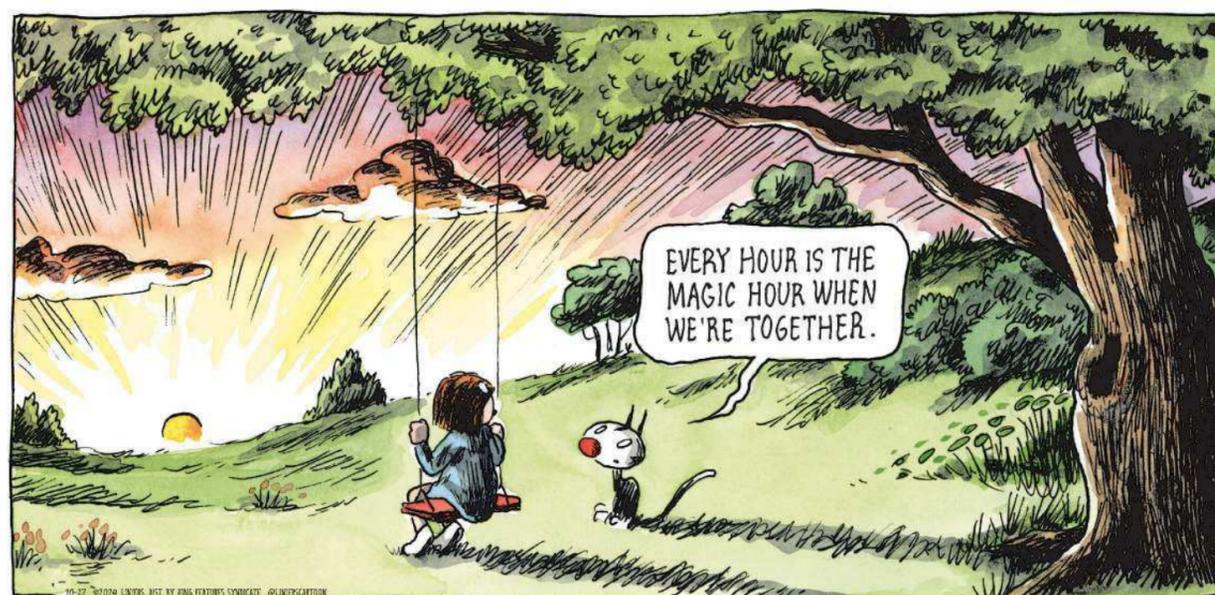


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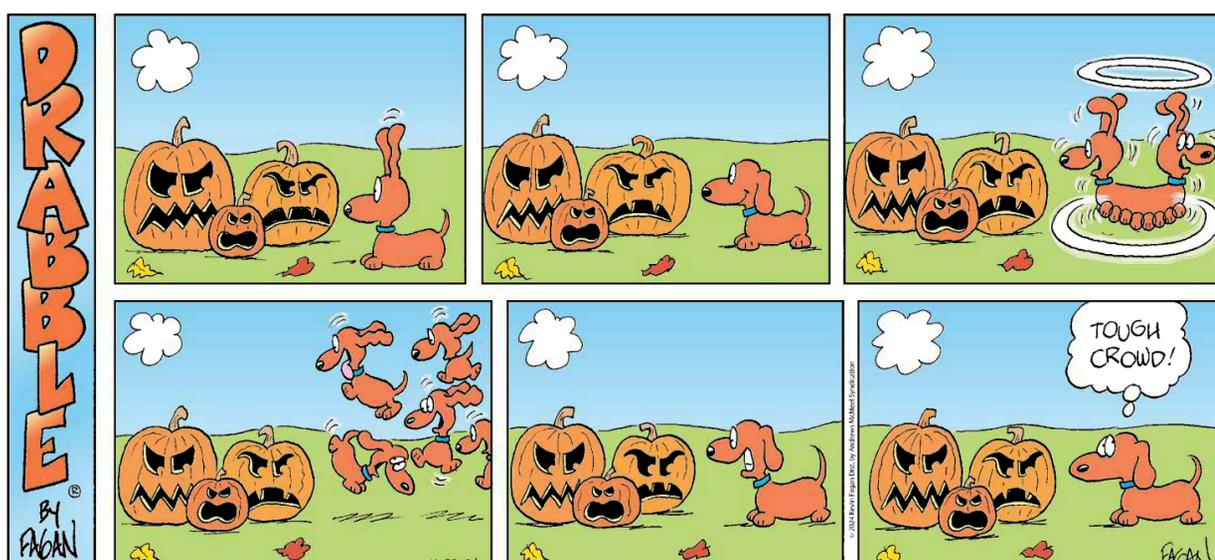
By Brad & Paul Anderson



MACANUDO By Liniers



**DOG GONE BONNIX** MISSION VIEJO, CA  
 RONALD BROH ADOPTED ANGEL, A LHASA APSO/SPITZ, AND BARNEY, A YELLOW LAB LAPDOG. BARNEY CLAIMED THE PRIZED FOOTSTOOL, WHERE HE RESTED HIS CHEST AND FRONT PAWS IN TOTAL COMFORT. ANGEL CAME INTO THE ROOM, BARKING, AND LED BARNEY OUT. BARNEY JUMPED AHEAD TO FIND THE DANGER. ANGEL DASHED BACK IN AND CLAIMED THE STOOL. BARNEY CAME BACK IN AND DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.



**HOROSCOPE**  
HOLIDAY MATHIS

**Aries** (March 21-April 19): When you're unsure of the next move, think about what attracts you. You're after a certain response. How can you get it?

**Taurus** (April 20-May 20): Feelings are stubborn travelers. Just when you think you can chart their course, they wander as they please. Whisper your wishes into the wind.

**Gemini** (May 21-June 21): Expansion and contraction are the themes as you spread your wings. Feel out the balance between exploration and retreat. How close do you need to be to the earth to feel grounded?

**Cancer** (June 22-July 22): The mind craves certainty, even if that familiar path is paved with misery. The unknown feels daunting. Just because a road is well worn doesn't mean it's right.

**Leo** (July 23-Aug. 22): Maybe you wouldn't believe how others experience you. It's the quiet knowledge, the details, the way you show you've been listening. That's the magic money can't buy.

**Virgo** (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You can be on the right team playing the wrong game. Having good people around you is something to celebrate. Look at the rules. What needs adjusting?

**Libra** (Sept. 23-Oct. 23): The critics may show up, but it won't matter whether they praise or criticize your work. Their presence legitimizes it and creates buzz you need.

**Scorpio** (Oct. 24-Nov. 21): No matter how good you are at compartmentalizing, every aspect of living affects the whole. You'll use this to your advantage.

**Sagittarius** (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Bright conversations, brilliant ideas and exciting plans come together today. It's only natural you should be rewarded for the actions you follow up with.

**Capricorn** (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Take winning and losing out of the equation now because the outcome will not matter in the least. You'll show up and do you.

**Aquarius** (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You've had moments of extraordinary strength where you've gone beyond what anyone expected. You'll now show that it's a pattern. Lead with grit.

**Pisces** (Feb. 19-March 20): You need momentum. You'll get it by diving in without hesitation. Make quick decisions and stick by them.

**Today's birthday** (Oct. 27): A surge of beautiful boldness runs through your year, especially in relationships. Habits and fears that held you back will dissolve. Fortune will smile on you so often, you'll need to be discreet so that you can invest your resources wisely without attracting too much attention. Highlights: a major creative win, new work, family expansion. Virgo and Libra adore you. Lucky numbers: 1, 12, 18, 39, 26.

Mathis writes her column for Creators Syndicate Inc. The horoscope should be read for entertainment.

**Interview With the Vampire**

EDITED BY PATTI VAROL

BY JOHN LIEB

**ACROSS**

- 1 Texas A&M athlete
- 6 Foldable dish
- 10 Study like mad
- 14 Nightstand lights
- 19 Hotel bookings
- 20 Wrinkle remover
- 21 Georgetown athlete
- 22 Words of empathy
- 23 "What is your least favorite form of advertising?"
- 26 Edible Arrangements bit
- 27 Australian hub, for short
- 28 Starters
- 29 March Madness openers?
- 30 Last part
- 32 Procedures
- 34 "What pricing advice do you have for garden centers?"
- 37 Les États—
- 39 High pts.
- 40 Spanish gold
- 41 Depends (on)
- 44 She, in Lisbon
- 46 Phillie Phanatic
- 48 HDTV choice
- 51 "What aspect of your personality are you working on?"
- 55 Domes
- 57 Help at a wedding, informally
- 58 Took a spill
- 59 Former SCOTUS monogram
- 60 Sunscreen
- 61 Garish
- 63 Does harm to

- 65 Pink cat in "Garfield"
- 66 "Tomorrow" musical
- 68 "What would you wear, say, when spending St. Patrick's Day in Madrid?"
- 70 Aquarium fish
- 73 Soy-based meat alternative
- 75 Inorganic
- 77 Sealed
- 78 Rum cocktails
- 80 Finish with zero cards in Uno, say
- 81 Couldn't stand still, say
- 83 Musician Brian
- 84 Throat part
- 85 "Not to put you on the spot, but who is your favorite pet?"
- 88 Math subj.
- 89 1970s Renault model
- 91 Fútbol cheer
- 92 Pan-fried
- 93 Sis or bro
- 94 "It's —brainer!"
- 96 Missives: Abbr.
- 97 "What investment do you recommend to your fellow creatures of the night?"
- 105 Trickster of the 109-Across
- 107 Title girl in a No. 1 song by the Knack
- 108 Poetic contraction
- 109 Norse pantheon
- 111 Poetic contraction
- 114 —grigio
- 115 "Above all else, what must your minions be?"
- 119 Oft-taped joint for athletes
- 120 Alan of "Bridge of Spies"
- 121 Running shoe brand
- 122 Actress McDonald with six Tony Awards
- 123 Bouquets, at a vineyard
- 124 Articulates
- 125 "Roundball Rock" composer John
- 126 Guide

**DOWN**

- 1 Shuttlecock paths
- 2 Like some horror movies
- 3 Film with the Boston-accented line "How do you like them apples?"
- 4 Some online exchanges, briefly
- 5 Composition
- 6 Run out of steam
- 7 Like a cheering crowd
- 8 Grammatical pause
- 9 Musician Yoko
- 10 Wind —
- 11 Perch
- 12 Author Rand
- 13 Virtuosity
- 14 Maximum or minimum

**Last week's solution: "Made From Scratch"**

TACT	ALMA	IPAD	SHAFITZ
UGLI	DEEP	CARE	HARLOW
BAUM	STARBUCKS	ESTATE	
EMBED	SLOE	SKIBOOT	
RESIGNE	KNEES	NANOBOT	
TAIRIS	FALLOON	RODA	
ONTARGET	BOWLING	GREEN	
LEANTOS	DONTILIE	RIALS	
SARGE	HERO	OSU	DIDDLY
ETIT	APAY	AMER	
NOT	CAPTAIN	LETTER	REX
RIDGE	SRI	GOGA	MANGA
AMODE	ROGANS	WOTZILY	
SKINK	REBA	ASTONTS	
EES	AESTE	BAYLOR	
DRRHOUSE	EDWIN	ORCHID	
BUST	SUP	AGTS	SLOPE
SCATHIE	GILGORE	BANK	AMAL
OLLIER	BARN	ESAT	MINI
BALLERS	EYES	NYPD	SEAS

**ASKING ERIC**

**Dear Eric:** My mother has been a widow for quite a few years now. Her days consist of watching TV. We took her on vacation with us once, but she wanted to just stay in the hotel and watch TV. She rarely sees friends or goes out.

My siblings and I live about an hour away, have full-time jobs, spouses and children so going over to see her a few times a month is all we can take on at this time.

We have suggested she might be depressed or lonely, but she scoffs, saying she likes spending time alone. We have suggested activities with a senior center, her church, etc., and she declines, stating she doesn't want to hang around old people. The last time we mentioned it she got really angry so we said we wouldn't speak of it again. But I'm worried about her mental health. Her world has gotten so incredibly small.

Maybe I want to feel off the hook somehow because I do feel guilty that I can't entertain her more. At some point, do I have to accept that this is the life she has

chosen for herself?  
UNCHANGED CHANNEL

**Dear Channel:** Accept that this is what she wants to do at this point in her life but keep an eye on her without pressure.

Per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, older adults are at greater risk for depression, which can show up as loss of interest in pleasurable hobbies. Be on the lookout for other symptoms of depression. But honor your commitment to not bugging her. Maybe TV is her hobby and that's just fine.

Our worlds change as we change. If your mother isn't expressing discontentment, you have to take her at her word. The last thing you want to do is undermine her autonomy by telling her how she feels. Your guilt may be more about the life that you want her to have, rather than the life she wants to have. Keep the lines of communication open and listen to what she's telling you.

Email questions to [eric@askingeric.com](mailto:eric@askingeric.com).

- 15 Northeast Corridor train
- 16 Oscar winner Rami
- 17 Given (to)
- 18 Elates
- 24 NBA stat: Abbr.
- 25 "This is only a —"
- 31 Standoffish
- 33 "Yeah, right!"
- 35 Apple desktop
- 36 Shofar, e.g.
- 37 "The Little Mermaid" witch
- 38 Liam of "Taken"
- 42 Pitcher's stat
- 43 Org. looking for alien life
- 44 Seder prophet
- 45 Relent
- 46 Peaty wetland
- 47 Everglades bird
- 48 "Enough with your sass!"
- 49 Murmur
- 50 Broadband letters
- 52 Yard dividers

- 53 Golf great Lee
- 54 "Peer Gynt" playwright
- 56 Highway divisions
- 60 Deliver a sermon
- 62 Meal plans
- 64 Send payment
- 65 Classified stat
- 67 Inbox message
- 69 Drive off
- 71 Athlete in a triathlon's last leg
- 72 Holding conflicting views
- 74 Supplies additional criticism
- 76 Many August babies
- 78 NYC subway org.
- 79 Early ISP
- 80 "One, two, three, four, I declare a thumb —!"
- 82 "Dance the Night" singer Lipa
- 85 Hindu "sir"
- 86 Middy

- 87 Brood
- 90 Noisy insects
- 94 Sports venues
- 95 Foam toy material
- 97 Channel created as a community service
- 98 Thick-skinned herbivore
- 99 BoSox rivals
- 100 Member of the working class
- 101 "For sure!"
- 102 Rambunctious
- 103 Make one's mark, in a way
- 104 Legendary Himalayans
- 105 Tell tales
- 106 Black-and-white whales
- 110 Deposed Iranian ruler
- 112 Memo starter
- 113 Coveted symbol in Dr. Seuss's "The Sneetches"
- 116 Lisbon greeting
- 117 Cheerios grain
- 118 Tennis call

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1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
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	32	33			34		35				36							
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114																	118	
119								120										
123																		126

**POKER** JONATHAN LITTLE

Imagine you are eight-handed in a \$300 buy-in poker tournament. You have 1.5 million chips with the blinds at 40,000/80,000/80,000 when the chip leader raises to 160,000 from first position. It folds around to you in the big blind with the K\*2\*.

When you are in the big blind facing a min-raise, you should not fold any suited hands when your stack is between 15-25 big blinds. If your opponent raises larger, you can fold some of your weakest suited hands, especially if you think the raiser has a tight range.

You call and the flop comes J\*J\*7\*. You check and your opponent bets 120,000.

Most players continuation-betting for small amounts do so with the vast majority of their range, so if they are betting with their entire range, what should you do? Given you have plenty of jacks in your range as well as strong flush draws and junky gutshots, making your range polarized, check-raising small is an excellent play.

**Flop:**

J♠ J♣ 7♣

**River:**

6♠

**Turn:**

A♣

You raise to 320,000 and your opponent re-raises to 600,000.

While somewhat of a bizarre play, your opponent may be doing this to induce you to go all in. Going all in with your decent draw is certainly tempting, but some opponents will find hero calls with hands as weak as ace-high. With the excellent pot odds you are being offered, calling allows you to stay in to see if you hit a fifth club.

You call and the turn is the A\*.

The times you want to lead from a GTO point of view are when the turn increases your equity and expected value. With your exact hand, you want to do

everything in your power to induce your opponent to value bet with a worse made hand or bluff, so checking is the only play that makes sense.

You both check and the river is the 6\*.

By checking on the turn, your opponent suggests they have a marginal made hand like a jack, ace, underpair, or total junk. Your opponent would likely check the river with most of these hands again, meaning you should bet for value.

Targeting your opponent's potential aces, you can likely get full value by going all in. While checking may be fine against especially aggressive opponents, going all in is the play that will extract the most value.

You go all in and your opponent calls, losing with the A\*5\*. Your river value shove extracted maximum from a marginal made hand that would have likely checked behind on the river.

Little is a professional poker player and author with more than \$7 million in live tournament earnings.

**SUDOKU**

	5							8
6			8					4
		1		4	7	2		
	9	5		3			1	
		3		2			5	
	8		9		6	3		
		6	1	9		4		
5					4			9
	4							7

Level: Impossible

5	6	7	9	1	8	3	2	4
8	9	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1
6	1	3	7	9	5	4	8	2
7	2	5	8	4	1	6	3	9
9	4	8	6	2	3	7	1	5
3	7	2	1	5	6	9	4	8
1	5	6	4	8	9	2	7	3
4	8	9	3	7	2	1	5	6

Solution to last week's puzzle

**More Online**

For other brain-teasing challenges, go to [latimes.com/games](http://latimes.com/games).

Level: Tough

		9						
	7					3		
	9	4		3		5	7	8
		5			9	8		
			2		3			
		8	5		6	7		
4	3			6		1		
	1						4	
						8		

Level: Tough

			4					
3	5							
		5		4				
	3		1					
							6	
						3	2	

3	9	8	5	6	2	4	1	7
4	5	2	7	8	1	9	6	3
7	6	1	4	9	3	5	8	2
8	3	5	1	7	4	6	2	9
6	7	4	2	5	8	3	1	9
1	2	9	6	3	8	7	4	5
9	1	3	8	4	7	2	5	6
5	4	7	2	1	6	3	9	8
2	8	6	3	5	9	1	7	4

Solutions to Saturday's puzzles

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 or 2-by-3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 (or 1 to 6 for the smaller grid). For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit [www.sudoku.org.uk](http://www.sudoku.org.uk).



# FoxTrot

by Bill Amend

DO WE OWN ANY METALWORKING OR WELDING EQUIPMENT?

UM, NO. WHY?

I'M TRYING TO BUILD THE ULTIMATE HALLOWEEN COSTUME.

I WANT TO GO TRICK-OR-TREATING AS A 20-FOOT-TALL, FULLY FUNCTIONAL TRANSFORMER ROBOT!

THEN, AFTER SOMEONE GIVES ME CANDY, I CAN TRANSFORM INTO A SILVER 2018 SUV AND ZOOM ON TO THE NEXT HOUSE!

MY CAR IS A SILVER 2018 SUV.

UM, YES, WHICH BRINGS ME TO MY NEXT QUESTION...

**No!**

10-27 AMEND

## JUMP START

Starring JOE & MARCY

By REEB NEHRSTROM

SHORTCUT

SO EAGER TO SEE LAST NIGHT'S HOMEWORK!

### IN THE BLEACHERS By Steve Moore

STAY FOCUSED, KEEP YOUR GUARD UP...

...AND JUMP ON HIS HEAD.

### NON SEQUITUR By Wiley

## SUNDAY COLORING PAGE

HALLOWEEN IS A VERY SPECIAL TIME FOR THE WILEY BEARS, AS THIS IS WHEN THEY START PREPARING FOR HIBERNATION. SO GRAB YOUR CRAYONS OR COLORED PENCILS AND HELP THEM FATTEN UP FOR WINTER!

### CANDORVILLE By Darrin Bell

WHAT'RE YOU DOING, LEMONT?

NOTHING.

WERE YOU TRYING TO CALL A "TIMEOUT" ON LIFE?

I DON'T SEE WHY I HAVE TO BE ANOTHER YEAR OLDER.

### FRAZZ By Jef Mallett

TELL ME YOU DON'T SEE COLORS WHEN YOU HEAR THAT.

IT'S A STRONG ASSOCIATION, AND A WONDERFUL ONE. BUT IT'S NOT TECHNICALLY SYNESTHESIA.

I SEE WHAT YOU'RE SAYING.

HEY! IS THAT...?

THAT IS ALSO NOT SYNESTHESIA.

I'm off to see my hip doctor.

Really? Ask him if he knows any groovy places to meet cool chicks.

Bizarro.com

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