

# Israeli premier defends his plans for Gaza

Amid global outcry, Netanyahu announces wider assault aimed at destroying Hamas.

By WAFAA SHURAF, SAM METZ AND SAMY MAGDY

JERUSALEM — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Sunday defended a new military offensive in Gaza that's more sweeping than previously announced, declaring in the face of growing condemnation at home and abroad that Israel "has no choice but to finish the job and complete the defeat of Hamas."

Even as more Israelis express concern over the 22-month war, Netanyahu said the security Cabinet last week instructed the dismantling of Hamas strongholds not only in Gaza City but also in the "central camps" and Muwasi. A source familiar with the operation, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to the media, confirmed that Israel plans the operations in both areas.

The crowded camps — sheltering well over a half a million displaced people, according to the United Nations — had not been part of Israel's announcement Friday of the offensive in Gaza City. It was unclear why, though Netanyahu faced criticism this weekend within his ruling coalition that targeting Gaza City was not enough. The prime minister said there would be "safe zones," but such designated areas have been bombed in the past.

Netanyahu's office late Sunday said he had spoken with President Trump about the plan and thanked him for his "steadfast support."

Hours after Netanyahu spoke, broadcaster Al Jazeera announced that one of its correspondents, Anas [See Gaza, A4]



ALLEN J. SCHABEN Los Angeles Times

THE 777 TOWER sold a year ago for \$120 million, a 70% drop from its 2013 sale price, according to CoStar.

## A second act for office towers?

The transformation of a sleek, granite-clad office tower on the edge of the 110 Freeway into deluxe apartments is about to begin, and developer Garrett Lee thinks the nearly 40-year-old building can be competitive with downtown L.A.'s much newer upmarket housing.

A mock-up of an apartment assembled in the L.A. Care tower on 7th Street reveals high ceilings, tall windows and sweeping views of the city that speak to the appeal of urban living.

It could also be a harbinger of what's to become of other fancy office towers.

With downtown's office rental market mired in high vacancies and falling values, stakeholders are clamoring for more city support to convert high-rises to housing that would help address the city's persistent housing shortage.

Amid high vacancies and falling values in downtown L.A.'s rental market, a push is on to boost housing

By Roger Vincent

Among the suggested targets for conversion are elite Financial District towers that commanded top rents before offices were shut down by COVID-19 pandemic stay-at-home orders, leaving many buildings more than one-third vacant.

Failure to make at least some of them into housing could be financially catastrophic for taxpayers, according to a new study commissioned by the Central City Assn. of Los Angeles, a downtown business advocacy group that says the city should consider giving developers financial incentives to convert their buildings.

Office values have fallen dramatically in recent sales, and many owners are seeking public reappraisals of their buildings in hope of reducing their property taxes. When assessed values of buildings [See Offices, A6]

## Heat in the fields keeps on killing

20 years after safety law, farmworkers are still getting sick. Some blame Cal/OSHA.

By Jessica Garrison

KNIGHTS LANDING, Calif. — Though it was not yet noon, the temperature was already inching toward triple digits, and it felt even hotter for the scores of farmworkers hunched in the rows

of watermelon plants in this field tucked by a bend in the Sacramento River north of California's capital. They were clad in long-sleeved shirts, pants and face coverings to protect their skin from the sun and the tiny spikes on the watermelon vines, and they were stooping and standing over and over again, painstakingly plucking flowers off each plant.

Their boss, Jose Chavez, said he tries to be vigilant about the danger of heat ill-

ness, making sure there is plenty of drinking water in the fields and that workers can take breaks in the shade and knock off early on blistering days. It's a lesson he said he learned the hard way, after having to summon ambulances to the fields in past summers because workers were hobbled by heat stroke. "We learned from that," he said. "When you start taking people to the hospital, it's not fun."

That lesson, however, has not stuck with many em-

ployers, and 20 years after California enacted a landmark heat safety law, farmworkers across the state are still getting sick and sometimes dying from preventable heat illness. Advocates and some lawmakers say a toothless enforcement system is often to blame.

The law "is failing because of a lack of enforcement. It's not doing what it was intended to do," said state Sen. Dave Cortese (D-San Jose), a former farm- [See Farmworkers, A12]



CHRISTINA HOUSE Los Angeles Times

SYDNEY sticks close by Carrie Henderson outside the Langham Huntington.

COLUMN ONE

## From rescued to rescuer

Shy but striking dog adopted from a shelter seems to sense fire evacuees need contact, as does he

By Carrie Henderson

Two years ago, before the Eaton fire would change my life and his, I met Sydney — half German shepherd, half Great Pyrenees and enigma with a capital E.

Two days before I met him, I'd put down Lord Byron, my 15-year-old shepherd rescue, after nursing him for a year. I was a wreck. My friend Bob finally put me in his car, a la "let's just hang out with dogs and stop the tears."

A half-hour later, we walked into West-

side German Shepherd Rescue where, a few feet away, stood this tall, elegant beast of a dog. We looked at each other. I was struck. I ran over, wrapped my arms around him and wouldn't let go. A nervous staffer pulled me away because he was mostly an unknown.

That week, Sydney had arrived from the Apple Valley shelter. He was a runner and escape artist. Too many times. No owner. No tags. No chip. A volunteer brought him to safety in downtown Los [See Evacuees, A12]

Voices PATT MORRISON COLUMNIST

## A requiem for L.A.'s lost, loved restaurants

Here we are again, mourning at yet more tombstones in Los Angeles' culinary cemetery, the last resting place of restaurants.

The newest obituary is for the oldest restaurant in the city of L.A., Cole's French Dip, in downtown. It opened in 1908, the year the first Model T rolled off Henry Ford's assembly line. It's a place that I suspect many Angelenos had not heard of until they heard it was closing, so Cole's got a temporary deathbed reprieve because of the crush of people wanting a last — or first and last — meal there.

The Original Pantry Cafe, Cole's younger sibling about a mile away, opened in 1924 and flourished on the

strength of its we-never-close pledge. COVID-19 curtailed its hours, and the Pantry closed altogether this spring, two years after the death of its owner, former Mayor Richard Riordan. Its fare was stick-to-the-ribs and elsewhere kind of food that works wonders on a hangover, as did the coffee that was as thick as the meaty ceramic mugs the waiters kept filled.

Also on the death notice list: La Golondrina, opened in about 1930 in Olvera Street, in a brick building that was nearly 80 years old even then. It closed its double doors last year, doomed by money and legal troubles.

The Pacific Dining Car just west of downtown came up a year short of its centen- [See Morrison, A7]



GINA FERAZZI Los Angeles Times

COLE'S French Dip said it would shut, then delayed its closure when a crush of people descended on it.

# Newsom, UC gird to fight Trump penalties

Despite addressing demands, UCLA is hit with a \$1-billion fine. State plans to sue.

By Jaweed Kaleem

Two weeks ago, UCLA was optimistic.

For months, it had successfully avoided clashes with President Trump as university leaders declined to publicly criticize him by name over his battle to remake American higher education, first raging against several Ivy League schools.

The morning of July 29, UCLA announced it had settled a federal lawsuit with students who accused it of discrimination, paying more than \$2 million to Jewish civil rights groups and millions more in legal fees.

University leaders hailed the action as "real progress" to combat antisemitism. Privately, they pointed the Trump administration to the agreement, eager to convince federal officials they had made good with Jewish communities.

The high lasted just a few hours — and touched off an extraordinary 14 days of rapid-fire accusations, investigative findings and a massive federal freeze of UCLA's research funding.

It culminated Friday afternoon when Gov. Gavin Newsom unleashed furious comments in response to a federal demand that UC pay a \$1-billion fine over a host of allegations against UCLA: antisemitism on campus, illegal use of race in admissions and policies that allow transgender athletes to compete according to their gender identity.

"He has threatened us through extortion with a billion-dollar fine, unless we do his bidding," Newsom said, adding that California would sue. "We will not be complicit in this kind of attack on academic freedom on this extraordinary public institution."

Spokespeople for the Justice Department did not respond Sunday to a question about Newsom's comments and legal threat.

The escalating events lead up to decisive moments this week, starting with an emergency meeting of the UC Board of Regents on Monday afternoon. On Tuesday, a federal court hearing will unfold in a pre-existing case that could lead to some — but not all — UC grants being restored.

The developments bring the fight over America's [See UCLA, A6]

### CDC shooter blamed vaccine

A union for health agency workers calls on federal officials to condemn misinformation. **NATION, A5**

### Newsom faces fossil fuel reality

Governor eases up on his criticism of the oil industry as the closures of two refineries loom. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

### Good vibrations never fade away

Singer Mike Love shares the Beach Boys' legacy after Brian Wilson's death. **ENTERTAINMENT, E1**

### Weather

Sunny and warm. L.A. Basin: 85/65. **B6**

### Opinion Voices ..... A11

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PERSPECTIVES



PATRICK AFTOORA-ORSAGOS Associated Press  
**LITTLE MIAMI** River's water level was raised at the U.S. Secret Service's request, eliciting criticism.

# Ohio river level raised for Vance's birthday kayaking

BY JULIE CARR SMYTH

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Vice President JD Vance's security detail had an Ohio river's water level raised to accommodate a kayaking trip he and his family took to celebrate his 41st birthday this month.

The U.S. Secret Service said it requested the increased waterflow for the Little Miami River, first reported by the Guardian, to ensure motorized watercraft and emergency personnel “could operate safely” while protecting the vice president, whose home is in Cincinnati.

But critics immediately blasted the action as a sign of the vice president's entitlement, particularly given the Trump administration's focus on slashing government spending.

Richard W. Painter, who served as chief White House ethics lawyer under President George W. Bush, said on X that “it's outrageous for the Army Corps of Engineers to spend taxpayer money to increase water flow in a river so @VP can go canoeing when budget cuts to the National Park Service have severely impacted family vacations for everyone else.”

The Army Corps of Engineers declined to address any financial effect of raising the river. Spokesman Gene Pawlik said the agency's Louisville District temporarily increased outflows from the Caesar Creek Lake in southwestern Ohio into the Little Miami “to support safe navigation of U.S. Secret Service personnel.” He said the move met operational criteria and fell within normal practice.

“It was determined that the operations would not adversely affect downstream or upstream water levels,” he said in a statement. “Downstream stakeholders were notified in advance of the

slight outflow increase, which occurred Aug. 1, 2025.” Vance's birthday was on Aug. 2.

Vance spokesperson Taylor Van Kirk said the vice president was unaware the river had been raised.

“The Secret Service often employs protective measures without the knowledge of the Vice President or his staff, as was the case last weekend,” she said via text.

The sprawling 2,830-acre Caesar Creek Lake has an unlimited horsepower designation and five launch ramps, according to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources website. A marina, a campground and a lodge are also located on site. The department provided two natural resources officers to assist the Secret Service with the Vance event, spokesperson Karina Cheung said.

The Vance family has already become accustomed to certain accommodations being made as they move about the world. During a recent trip to Italy, the Roman Colosseum was closed to the public so that his wife, Usha, and their children could take a tour, sparking anger among some tourists. The Taj Mahal also was closed to visitors during the Vance family's visit to India.

Such special treatment isn't reserved for one political party. When Democratic Vice President Al Gore, then a presidential candidate, paddled down the Connecticut River in 1999, utility officials had opened a dam and released 4 billion gallons of water to raise the river's level. That request too came after a review of the area by the Secret Service — and Gore also experienced political pushback.

Gore's campaign said at the time that he did not ask for the water to be released.

Smyth writes for the Associated Press.

# Congressional delegations and will of voters do not always align

BY ROBERT YOON

WASHINGTON — The Constitution makes it clear: “The People” get to pick those who'll represent their interests in the U.S. House of Representatives.

But just how closely do those choices reflect the overall political leanings of the people? The question is at the heart of a power play in Texas, where Republicans are trying to reshape the state's congressional boundaries to help them maintain control of the House in next year's midterm elections.

In many cases, a state's congressional delegation doesn't align very closely with what would seem to be the will of the voters, although that's not always because of partisan gerrymandering.

Every state decides how to draw its own congressional boundaries. Some, like California, rely on independent redistricting commissions, while most leave it to the state Legislature and the governor to hammer out a plan. It's states where one party controls all the levers of government where redistricting dramas such as the one in Texas often play out as the majority tries to maximize its power.

Regardless of the process, the resulting maps often produce congressional delegations much more lopsided in favor of one party than the state's partisan demographics might suggest.

A state's presidential vote result isn't a precise tool for measuring what its congressional delegation ought to look like, but it can provide a compelling point of comparison. Politicians frequently cite it when decrying partisan redistricting practices they think are unfair.

President Trump, who's pushing Texas and other GOP-controlled states to redraw their maps, has said that Republicans are “entitled to five more seats” in Texas based in part on the size of his win there in November. Trump won 56% of the Texas vote, but Republicans already hold 65% of the state's congressional delegation — which would rise to 79% if the GOP's new maps are adopted and past voting patterns hold in the next election.

During an event with Texas Democratic lawmakers in Boston, Missouri state Rep. Ashley Aune cited her state's presidential vote results in warning of possible Republican-driven redistricting efforts there.

“Fifty-eight percent of Missouri voted for Trump, but they want to send an 87% representation to Congress,” said Aune, a Democrat.

It's actually fairly common for a state's congressional delegation not to align with statewide presidential vote results.

In 41 of the 44 states with more than one congressional district, the party of the winning presidential candidate had a larger share



LEAH WILLINGHAM Associated Press

**DEMOCRATIC** lawmakers across the U.S. at a Massachusetts protest last week.

of the state's congressional seats than its share of the presidential vote, an Associated Press analysis found. In most cases, it was a much larger share, a gap of at least 10 percentage points.

Here's a comparison of the congressional delegations and presidential vote results in a sampling of states, including some of those considering a redraw of their congressional boundaries after Texas called its special session.

## California and Illinois

In remarks to CNBC, Trump pointed to California and Illinois as justifications for redrawing the Texas map in Republicans' favor.

“You notice they go to Illinois for safety, but that's all gerrymandered,” he said in reference to the Texas Democrats who relocated to the Chicago area to block, at least temporarily, the Republican redistricting efforts.

“California's gerrymandered. We should have many more seats in Congress in California,” he said.

He's right about Illinois: Democrats have gerrymandered the lines so they hold 14 of the 17 House seats. Not so in California.

Democrats there do have an outsized majority, holding 43 of the state's 52 House seats, about 83%. Vice President Kamala Harris, a Democrat, received about 59% of the November vote. But that's not because of Democratic gerrymandering. A ballot initiative took the process away from state lawmakers and gave it to an independent citizens commission.

California's lopsided map is due in part to the way like-minded people cluster: California Democrats tend to live in and near major cities that get more congressional districts because of their population.

## Florida

Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis scored a legal victory in July when the state Supreme Court upheld his congressional redistricting plan redrawing a district with a large Black population. That plan resulted in

Republicans holding about 71% of the state's 28 U.S. House seats. Trump carried the state in November with 56% of the vote.

DeSantis later indicated that there may be more “defects” in the map that need to be addressed before the next census.

Republicans held an 18-7 advantage over Democrats in Florida's House delegation after the 2000 census. Democrats slowly narrowed the gap, reaching 13 seats to Republicans' 14 after the 2018 election. But Republicans reestablished their advantage after the redistricting that followed the 2020 census, when they reached the 20-8 split they hold today.

## New York

Democrats have long enjoyed an advantage at the New York ballot box in presidential and congressional elections. Harris received nearly 56% of the vote in 2024, while Democrats hold 73% of the state's 26 House seats.

With Democratic advantages in both chambers of the state Legislature, New York might have been a ripe target for Democrats looking to offset Republican redistricting gains in Texas and elsewhere. But they would need to amend the state Constitution to conduct a new round of redistricting before the next census. That constraint means the earliest Democrats could enact a new map would be for 2028.

## North Carolina

North Carolina, among the most closely divided states, has been embroiled in its own redistricting drama.

State Republicans implemented new House boundaries in 2023 that turned a 7-7 congressional delegation into one in which Republicans took a 10-4 advantage with the 2024 elections. Several districts are now the subject of a federal lawsuit, with Democrats alleging that Republicans illegally diluted Black voting power.

The state has been among the most competitive in the last several presidential elections. Although Trump carried the state in November with about 51% of

the vote, it has elected Democrats as governor and attorney general as well as to other statewide offices.

In the 2008 presidential election, Democrat Barack Obama narrowly edged Republican John McCain with 49.7% of the vote. The congressional delegation at the time mirrored that with an almost even split, with Democrats holding seven seats and Republicans, six, after the 2010 midterms.

But after rounds of GOP-controlled redistricting after the 2010 census, Republicans held a 10-3 or 9-4 advantage in the congressional delegation for the rest of that decade.

After the 2020 census, a Democratic-majority North Carolina Supreme Court threw out a Republican-drawn plan and permitted elections under a map adopted by trial judges that produced the 7-7 split. The U.S. Supreme Court allowed the boundaries to be used in the 2022 elections.

After flipping to a Republican majority in 2023, the state Supreme Court ruled that partisan gerrymandering wasn't outlawed by the state Constitution, allowing GOP lawmakers to redraw a congressional map in use today that led to their party's 10-4 majority.

## Minnesota

Minnesota is the state where the congressional breakdown most closely matches the 2024 presidential result. Harris received 51% of that vote, compared with Trump's 47%. Democrats and Republicans split the state's eight House seats with court-imposed maps.

## Nevada

Nevada, where a Democratic Legislature drew the lines, is the only state where the party of the winning presidential candidate is outnumbered by the other party in the state's congressional delegation. Trump received 51% of the vote in Nevada, but Democrats hold three of the state's four House districts.

Yoon writes for the Associated Press. AP writer Leah Willingham in Boston contributed to this report.

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THE WORLD

# Europe shows Kyiv support before U.S.-Russia talks

By SAMYA KULLAB

KYIV, Ukraine — European nations have rallied behind Ukraine, saying peace in the war-torn nation can't be resolved without Kyiv, ahead of a planned meeting this week between President Trump and Russia's Vladimir Putin.

Trump had said Friday's meeting in Alaska with his Russian counterpart was to discuss ending the more than three-year war.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky responded by thanking European allies and wrote on X on Sunday: "The end of the war must be fair, and I am grateful to everyone who stands with Ukraine and our people."

### Worries in Europe

Saturday's statement by top European leaders came after the White House confirmed the U.S. president was willing to grant Putin the one-on-one meeting Russia has long pushed for, and suggestions from Trump that a peace deal could include "some swapping of territories."

That raised fears that Ukraine may be pressured into giving up land or accepting other curbs on its sovereignty.

A White House official, who spoke on condition of anonymity as they aren't allowed to speak publicly, told the Associated Press that



DAN BASHAKOV Associated Press

**FAMILY** and soldiers pay respects Saturday near the coffin of a Georgian volunteer soldier in Kyiv, Ukraine.

Trump remained open to a trilateral summit with the Russian and Ukrainian leaders, but for now he will have the bilateral meeting requested by Putin.

Trump had earlier said he would meet with Putin even if the Russian leader would not meet with Zelensky.

On Saturday, U.S. Vice

President JD Vance met with top European and Ukrainian officials at the British foreign secretary's weekend residence to discuss how to end the war.

The Trump-Putin meeting could prove pivotal in a war that began when Russia invaded its smaller neighbor in 2022 and has led to tens of thousands of deaths, al-

though Moscow and Kyiv remain far apart on their conditions for peace.

### Leaders' statement

Saturday's statement, signed by the president of the European Union and leaders of France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Finland and the U.K., stressed the need for a "just and lasting peace" for Ukraine, including "robust and credible" security guarantees.

"Ukraine has the freedom of choice over its own destiny. Meaningful negotiations can only take place in the context of a ceasefire or reduction of hostilities," the statement said.

"The path to peace in Ukraine cannot be decided without Ukraine. We remain committed to the principle that international borders must not be changed by force," the Europeans added.

### Truce proves elusive

A monthlong U.S.-led push to achieve a truce in Ukraine has so far proved fruitless, with Kyiv agreeing in principle while the Kremlin has held out for terms more to its liking.

Trump had also moved up an ultimatum to impose additional sanctions on Russia and introduce secondary tariffs targeting countries that buy Russian oil if Moscow did not move toward a settlement. The deadline was Friday. The White House did not answer questions Saturday about possible sanctions.

Russia last week reiterated demands that Ukraine give up territory, abandon its bid to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and accept limits on its military in exchange for a withdrawal of Russian troops from the rest of the

country. Particularly galling for Kyiv is Moscow's insistence that it cede pockets of eastern and southern Ukraine the Kremlin claims to have annexed, despite lacking full military control.

Mark Galeotti, an expert in Russian politics who heads the Mayak Intelligence consulting firm in the United Kingdom, says Moscow's tactic of encircling towns in eastern Ukraine has brought a string of territorial gains for Russia, and Putin "seems to feel he is still winning."

"Putin does not appear to feel under pressure," Galeotti argued in an analysis published Sunday by Britain's Sunday Times newspaper.

He said that for Putin, "further delaying any more serious U.S. action and the optics of a meeting with the U.S. president will already be wins."

### Week of diplomacy

Zelensky said Saturday that Ukraine "will not give Russia any awards for what it has done" and that "Ukrainians will not give their land to the occupier."

Ukrainian officials previously told the AP privately that Kyiv would be amenable to a peace deal that would de facto recognize Ukraine's inability to regain lost territories militarily. But Zelensky on Saturday insisted that formally ceding land was out of the question.

Galeotti argued that any deal that involves Ukraine abandoning territory would be "agonizing" and politically dangerous for Zelensky.

Andriy Yermak, a top aide to Zelensky, noted Sunday that Kyiv will strive to boost its position before the Trump-Putin meeting.

"Ahead lies an important week of diplomacy," he said.

Kullab writes for the Associated Press. AP writer Michelle L. Price in Washington contributed to this report.

# More than 500 arrested in U.K. in pro-Palestinian events

By DANICA KIRKA

LONDON — London police said Sunday that 532 people were arrested the previous day when supporters of a pro-Palestinian group recently outlawed as a terrorist organization intentionally broke the law to test the government's ability to enforce the ban.

The Metropolitan Police Service released the updated figures as a separate group of protesters, demanding the immediate release of the remaining Israeli hostages in the Gaza Strip, held its own march through central London on Sunday afternoon.

The vast majority of those detained Saturday were arrested for displaying placards declaring their support for the banned group, known as Palestine Action. Police updated their earlier totals and said 522 people were arrested for supporting a proscribed organization in violation of anti-terrorism laws. Ten others were arrested on a variety of charges, including assaulting and obstructing police officers.

Supporters of Palestine Action staged the protest to underscore their contention that the government is illegally restricting freedom of expression by banning a direct-action organization that has challenged its policies.

Home Secretary Yvette Cooper, who oversees law enforcement in Britain, rejected that characterization, saying Palestine Action was outlawed after committing attacks involving violence, significant injuries and criminal damage.

"The right to protest is one we protect fiercely but this is very different from displaying support for this one specific and narrow, proscribed organization," Cooper said in a statement. "Many people may not yet know the reality of this organization, but the assessments are very clear, this is not a nonviolent organization."

Police released updated information on the Palestine Action protest after the front pages of Sunday newspapers featured photos of elderly protesters being carted off by officers.

One of those was La Pethick, an 89-year-old retired psychotherapist, who told the Times of London that she had the support of her five grandchildren. "We are having our right to peaceful protest being taken away," she said.

Almost half of those arrested were over the age of



ALBERTO PEZZALI Associated Press

**DEMONSTRATORS** march Sunday in London to call for the release of Israeli hostages held in Gaza.

60, according to figures released by the Metropolitan Police Service.

Police said the process of deciding whether to file charges against those arrested is likely to take weeks as officers from the Met's Counter Terrorism Command put together case files and seek approval from prosecutors and, in some cases, the attorney general.

Parliament voted to ban Palestine Action after activists broke into a Royal Air Force base and damaged two tanker planes to protest British support for the war in Gaza. Palestine Action previously targeted Israeli defense contractors and other sites in Britain that it believes have links with the Israeli military.

Supporters of Palestine Action are challenging the ban in court, saying the government has gone too far in declaring the group a terrorist organization.

More than 500 protesters filled the square outside the Houses of Parliament on Saturday, many daring police to arrest them by displaying signs reading, "I oppose genocide. I support Palestine Action." That was enough for police to step in.

As the demonstration began to wind down, police and protest organizers disagreed over the number of arrests, as the organizers sought to show that the law was unworkable.

"The police have only been able to arrest a fraction of those supposedly committing 'terrorism' offenses, and most of those have been given street bail and allowed to go home," Defend Our Juries, which organized the protest, said in a statement. "This is a major embarrassment to [the government], further undermining the credibility of this widely ridiculed law, brought in to punish those exposing the government's own crimes."

London's Metropolitan Police Service rejected that assertion, saying that many of those gathered in the square were onlookers, me-

dia members or people who didn't hold placards supporting the group.

"We are confident that anyone who came to Parliament Square today to hold a placard expressing support for Palestine Action was either arrested or is in the process of being arrested," the police force said in a statement Saturday.

On Friday, police said the demonstration was unusual in that the protesters wanted to be arrested in large numbers to place a strain on police and the criminal justice system.

The government moved to ban Palestine Action after the activists broke into an air force base in southern England on June 20. The activists sprayed red paint into the engines of two tanker planes at the RAF Brize Norton base in Oxfordshire and caused further damage with crowbars.

Supporters of the group are challenging the ban in court, saying the government has gone too far in declaring Palestine Action a terrorist organization.

"Once the meaning of 'terrorism' is separated from campaigns of violence against a civilian population, and extended to include those causing economic damage or embarrassment to the rich, the powerful and the criminal, then the right to freedom of expression has no meaning and democracy is dead," Defend Our Juries said on its website.

Though Prime Minister Keir Starmer has angered Israel with plans to recognize a Palestinian state later this year, many Palestinian supporters in Britain criticize the government for not doing enough to end the war in Gaza.

Pro-Palestinian protesters gathered Saturday afternoon in central London for a march that ended outside the prime minister's official residence and offices.

Kirka writes for the Associated Press.

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# Netanyahu says there's 'no starvation in Gaza'

[Gaza, from A1] al-Sharif, was killed along with other journalists in an Israeli strike in Gaza City. Israel confirmed his death.

As authorities were reporting this weekend that two more Palestinian children had died of malnutrition-related deaths — bringing their toll in Gaza to 100 since the start of the war — the Israeli prime minister asserted Sunday that there is “no starvation in Gaza,” dismissing the notion as a “global campaign of lies.”

Netanyahu spoke to foreign media just before an emergency meeting of the United Nations Security Council, which has been a platform for outrage but little action on the war.

“Our goal is not to occupy Gaza, our goal is to free Gaza,” Netanyahu said.

He said there is a “fairly short timetable” for next steps in Gaza, but didn’t give specifics. The goals, he said, include demilitarizing the territory, the Israeli military having “overriding security control” there and a non-Israeli civilian administration in charge.

Israel wants to increase the number of aid distribution sites, he said, but in a later briefing to local media, he asserted: “There is no hunger. There was no hunger. There was a shortage, [but] there was certainly no policy of starvation.”

Netanyahu also said he has directed Israel’s military to “bring in more foreign journalists” — which would be a striking development, as they haven’t been allowed into the Gaza Strip beyond trips with the military during the war.

He again blamed the militant group Hamas for many of Gaza’s problems, including civilian deaths, destruction and aid shortages. “Hamas still has thousands of armed terrorists,” he said, adding that Palestinians are “begging” to be freed from the militants.

Hamas responded with a lengthy statement that summed up Netanyahu’s remarks as “blatant lies.”

Late Sunday, heavy bombardment was reported in Gaza City. Shortly before midnight, Al Jazeera said Al-Sharif was killed in a strike along with other journalists and a driver, citing the direc-



ABIR SULTAN Pool Photo

**ISRAELI** Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called reports of starvation in Gaza a “global campaign of lies.”

tor of Shifa Hospital in Gaza City.

Israel’s military confirmed it, saying that Al-Sharif had “posed as a journalist” and alleging he was with Hamas. The Committee to Protect Journalists said last month that it was gravely concerned for his safety and that he was being “targeted by an Israeli military smear campaign.”

At Sunday’s U.N. Security Council meeting, the U.S. defended Israel, saying it has the right to decide what’s best for its security. It called allegations of genocide in Gaza false.

The U.S. has veto power on the Security Council and can block proposed actions there.

Other council members, and U.N. officials, expressed alarm. China said Israel’s campaign amounted to the “collective punishment” of the people of Gaza, which it called unacceptable. Russia warned against a “reckless intensification of hostilities.”

“This is no longer a looming hunger crisis; this is starvation,” said Ramesh Rajasingham with the U.N. humanitarian office. “Humanitarian conditions are beyond horrific. We have frankly run out of words to describe it.”

Israel faces growing un-

rest even among its closest allies. Netanyahu said Chancellor Friedrich Merz of Germany had “buckled under” the growing international criticism by stopping exports of military equipment to Israel that could be used in Gaza. Merz told public broadcaster ARD that Germany and Israel were talking “very critically” but Berlin’s overall policy of friendship hadn’t changed.

At least 31 Palestinians were killed while seeking aid in Gaza in the last 24 hours, hospitals and witnesses said Sunday.

The Associated Press spoke to witnesses of gunfire in the Israeli-controlled Morag and Netzarim corridors and the Teina area in the south. All accused Israeli forces of firing at crowds trying to reach food distributions or waiting for convoys.

Fifteen people were killed while waiting for aid trucks close to the newly built Morag corridor that separates the southern cities of Rafah and Khan Yunis, according to Nasser Hospital.

The situation is a “death trap,” said Jamal al-Laweh, who said Israeli forces opened fire there. “But I have no other choice to feed the kids.”

Six people were killed while waiting for aid in northern Gaza near the

Zikim crossing, according to Gaza’s Health Ministry and Shifa Hospital.

In central Gaza, witnesses said they heard warning shots before the fire was aimed toward crowds trying to reach a food distribution site operated by the Israeli-backed and U.S.-funded Gaza Humanitarian Foundation. The AP could not independently confirm who fired the shots. Al-Awda Hospital in the nearby Nuseirat refugee camp said four people were killed by Israeli gunfire.

“First, it was in the air, then they started to fire at the people,” said Sayed Awda, who waited hundreds of yards from the aid site.

Six other aid seekers were killed while trying to reach the foundation’s sites in Khan Yunis and Rafah, Nasser Hospital said.

The foundation sites opened in May as an alternative to the U.N.-run aid system, but their early operations have been marred by deaths and chaos, with aid seekers coming under gunfire near routes leading to the sites.

Responding to AP inquiries, the foundation’s media office said: “There were no incidents at or near our sites today and these incidents appear to be linked to crowds trying to loot aid

convoy.”

Israel’s military said there were no incidents involving its troops near central Gaza aid sites.

Seven people were killed in airstrikes, local hospitals said — three near the fishermen’s port in Gaza City, and two adults and two children in a strike that hit a tent in Khan Yunis. Israel’s military did not immediately comment on the strikes, but has accused Hamas of operating from civilian areas.

Israel’s air and ground offensive has displaced most of Gaza’s population and pushed the territory toward famine. Two more Palestinian children died of malnutrition-related causes Saturday, authorities said, bringing the toll among children to 100 since the war began. A total of 117 adults have died of malnutrition-related causes since late June, when the Health Ministry started to count that age category, it said.

The hunger toll is in addition to the ministry’s war toll of 61,400 Gazans. The Health Ministry, part of the Hamas-run government and staffed by medical professionals, doesn’t distinguish between fighters or civilians in its tally, but says around half of the dead have been women and children. The U.N. and independent experts con-

sider it the most reliable source on war casualties.

Hostages’ relatives have urged a labor strike in Israel next week over the plans to expand military operations, fearing it will endanger their loved ones. Fifty hostages remain after being taken in the Hamas-led attack on Oct. 7, 2023, that sparked the war. Twenty are believed to be alive.

Dozens of people sat outside the U.S. Consulate in Jerusalem to protest Israel’s offensive. “I think it’s a horrible decision. It’s like deciding that we don’t want [hostages] alive anymore,” said one person, Milly Rothschild.

Tens of thousands of Israelis rallied in Tel Aviv on Saturday night in what local media called one of the largest antigovernment protests in months.

Lishay Miran-Lavi, whose husband, Omri, is among the hostages, appealed to Trump and U.S. special envoy Steve Witkoff to halt the fighting.

“The decision to send the army deeper into Gaza is a danger to my husband, Omri. But we can still stop this disaster,” she said.

Also Sunday, Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz toured the northern part of the Israeli-occupied West Bank, where about 40,000 Palestinians have been driven from their homes this year in the West Bank’s largest displacement since Israel captured the territory in 1967.

Israel says the operations are needed to stamp out militancy, as violence by all sides has surged since the war in Gaza began.

Katz said the military would remain in the area’s refugee camps at least until the end of the year, and said the number of warnings about attacks against Israelis in the West Bank had decreased by 80% since the operation began in January.

Shurafa, Metz and Magdy write for the Associated Press and reported from Deir al Balah, Gaza Strip, Jerusalem and Cairo, respectively. AP writers Melanie Lidman in Tel Aviv, Sally Abou AlJoud in Beirut, Edith M. Lederer at the United Nations and Jamey Keaten in Geneva contributed to this report.

## Court orders burial in Zambia for ex-leader

By MOGOMOTSI MAGOME

JOHANNESBURG — A South African court on Friday ruled in favor of the government of Zambia and ordered that it can repatriate the remains of its former president and bury him in his home country, against his family’s wishes.

The Zambian government and the family of the late Edgar Lungu, Zambia’s president from 2015 to 2021, have been embroiled in a legal battle over his remains and burial.

Lungu died in June at a South African hospital after an undisclosed illness. He was 68.

His family wanted him to be buried in South Africa and for the current Zambian president, Hakainde Hichilema, neither to attend his funeral nor be involved in its arrangements.

The family said it was Lungu’s final wish that Hichilema should not get anywhere near his burial, but the Zambian government went to court to stop him from being buried in South Africa.

The court ruled Friday that Zambia had the authority to hold a state funeral for its former leader. The court noted that the Zambian courts previously emphasized that a state funeral is protocol for a person of national significance.

“Such that even if a presi-

dent has expressed a desire not to be given a state funeral, such a wish must be overridden by public interest,” said Judge President Aubrey Ledwaba.

Lungu’s family applied for leave to appeal the ruling Friday, but they will have to sway the same court that made the order that there are reasonable prospects for a different outcome.

Lungu and Hichilema were political rivals. Their conflict led to Hichilema’s imprisonment in 2017, when Lungu was president.

Last year, Lungu accused Hichilema’s government of using police to harass him. His family also said the government had initially prevented him from traveling to South Africa for treatment, a charge the government denied.

Zambian Atty. Gen. Mulilo Kabesha welcomed the ruling, saying he hoped it would bring the matter to a close even though the family still had a right to appeal.

“This is not winning. You don’t win over a burial. It’s just what makes good sense, that the former president of the Republic of Zambia should be buried in his own country, the country where he was president,” Kabesha said.

Magome writes for the Associated Press. AP writer Jacob Zimba in Lusaka, Zambia, contributed to this report.

## 6.1 quake collapses buildings in Turkey

ASSOCIATED PRESS

ISTANBUL — A magnitude 6.1 earthquake struck Turkey’s northwestern province of Balikesir on Sunday, causing about a dozen buildings to collapse, an official said. At least one person was trapped in the debris of a collapsed building.

The earthquake, with an epicenter in the town of Sindirgi, sent shock waves that were felt as far as 125 miles away in Istanbul, a city of more than 16 million people.

Interior Minister Ali Yerlikaya told the national broadcaster NTV that five people, including an elderly woman, were rescued from a collapsed building in Sindirgi, while rescuers were trying to reach a sixth person trapped inside.

Several houses collapsed in the nearby village of Gocuk, Sindirgi Mayor Serkan Sak said. The minaret of a mosque also tumbled down in the village.

Turkish Health Minister Kemal Memisoglu said on X that four people were being treated at the hospital. None



BAHADIR DEMIRCEVIREN IHA

**PEOPLE** remove building wreckage after a quake in Sindirgi, Turkey, on Sunday.

of them were in life-threatening condition, he said.

“Our hope is to get through this without any loss of life,” Ahmet Akin, the mayor of Balikesir city, the provincial capital, told HaberTurk news channel.

Turkey’s Disaster and Emergency Management Agency said the quake was followed by several aftershocks, including one that

was magnitude 4.6, and urged citizens to not enter damaged buildings.

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan issued a statement wishing all affected citizens a speedy recovery. “May God protect our country from any kind of disaster,” he wrote on X.

Turkey sits atop major fault lines and earthquakes are frequent. In 2023, a mag-

nitude 7.8 earthquake killed more than 53,000 people in Turkey and destroyed or damaged hundreds of thousands of buildings. An additional 6,000 people were killed in the northern parts of neighboring Syria.

On Saturday, a magnitude 5.9 quake hit off Guatemala’s southwestern coast. No significant damage or injuries were reported.

## Rhinos get radioactive horns to deter poachers

ASSOCIATED PRESS

MOKOPANE, South Africa — A South African university has launched an anti-poaching campaign to inject the horns of rhinos with radioactive isotopes that it says are harmless for the animals but can be detected by customs agents.

Under the collaborative project involving the University of the Witwatersrand, nuclear energy officials and conservationists, five rhinos were injected in what the university hopes will be the start of a mass injection of the declining

rhino population.

They’re calling it the Rhisotope Project.

Last year, about 20 rhinos at a sanctuary were injected with isotopes in trials that paved the way for the July 31 launch. The radioactive isotopes even at low levels can be recognized by radiation detectors at airports and borders to track down poachers and traffickers.

Researchers at Witwatersrand’s Radiation and Health Physics Unit say that tests conducted in the pilot study confirmed that the radioactive material was not harmful to the rhinos.

“We have demonstrated,

beyond scientific doubt, that the process is completely safe for the animal and effective in making the horn detectable through international customs nuclear security systems,” said James Larkin, chief scientific officer at the Rhisotope Project.

“Even a single horn with significantly lower levels of radioactivity than what will be used in practice successfully triggered alarms in radiation detectors,” he said.

The tests also found that horns could be detected inside filled 40-foot shipping containers, he said.

The International Union

for Conservation of Nature estimates that the global rhino population numbered around 500,000 at the beginning of the 20th century but has declined to around 27,000 due to continued demand for rhino horns on the black market.

South Africa has the largest population of rhinos with an estimated 16,000, but the country experiences high levels of poaching, with about 500 rhinos killed for their horns every year.

The university has urged private wildlife park owners and national conservation authorities to have their rhinos injected.

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THE NATION

# Trump’s judges could reshape abortion rights

By Christine Fernando

CHICAGO — During Donald Trump’s campaign for president last year, he sought to ease the concerns of voters alarmed that the Supreme Court he helped shape during his first term had overturned the constitutional right to abortion, saying he thought the issue should be decided not by federal decree but by individual states.

More than six months into Trump’s second term in the White House, a review by the Associated Press shows that several of his nominees to the federal courts have revealed antiabortion views, been associated with anti-abortion groups or defended abortion restrictions.

Several have helped defend their state’s abortion restrictions in court, and some have been involved in cases with national ramifications, including on access to medication abortion.

The nominees, with lifetime appointments, would be in position to roll back abortion rights long after Trump leaves the White House.

### Trump’s shifts

Trump has repeatedly shifted his messaging on abortion, often giving contradictory or vague answers.



BEN CURTIS Associated Press

**PRESIDENT** Trump holds an order about clemency for antiabortion protesters.

In the years before the 2024 campaign, Trump had voiced support for a federal ban on abortion on or after 20 weeks in pregnancy and said he might support a national ban around 15 weeks. He later settled on messaging that decisions about abortion access should be left to the states.

Throughout his campaign, Trump has alternated between taking credit for appointing the Supreme Court justices who helped

overturn *Roe vs. Wade* and striking a more neutral tone. That’s been an effort to navigate the political divide between his base of antiabortion supporters and the broader public, which largely supports access to abortion.

### Nominees’ views

One Trump nominee called abortion a “barbaric practice,” while another referred to himself as a “zealot” for the antiabortion move-

ment. A nominee from Tennessee said abortion deserves special scrutiny because “this is the only medical procedure that terminates a life.”

One from Missouri spread misinformation about medication abortion, including that it “starves the baby to death in the womb” in a lawsuit aiming to challenge the Food and Drug Administration’s approval of the abortion pill mifepristone.

Legal experts and abortion rights advocates warn of a methodical remaking of the federal courts in a way that could pose enduring threats to abortion access nationwide.

Bernadette Meyler, a professor of constitutional law at Stanford University, said judicial appointments “are a way of federally shaping the abortion question without going through Congress or making a big, explicit statement.”

“It’s a way to cover up a little bit what is happening in the abortion sphere compared to legislation or executive orders that may be more visible, dramatic and spark more backlash,” she said.

### White House stance

Harrison Fields, a White House spokesperson, said that “every nominee of the President represents his promises to the American people and aligns with the U.S. Supreme Court’s landmark ruling.”

“The Democrats’ extreme position on abortion was rejected in November in favor of President Trump’s commonsense approach, which allows states to decide, supports the sanctity of human life, and prevents taxpayer funding of abortion,” Fields said in a statement to the AP.

Trump focused primarily on the economy and immigration during his 2024 campaign, the issues that surveys showed were the most important topics for voters.

### Antiabortion judges

Antiabortion advocates say it’s premature to determine whether the nominees will support their objectives, but they’re hopeful based on the names put forth so far.

“We look forward to four more years of nominees cut from that mold,” said Katie Glenn Daniel, director of legal affairs for the national antiabortion organization SBA Pro-Life America.

Abortion-rights advocates said Trump is embedding abortion opponents into the judiciary one judge at a time.

“This just feeds into this larger strategy where Trump has gotten away with distancing himself from abortion, saying he’s going to leave it to the states, while simultaneously appointing antiabortion extremists at all levels of government,” said Mini Timmaraju, president of the national abortion rights organization Reproductive Freedom for All, formerly known as NARAL Pro-Choice America.

Fernando writes for the Associated Press.

# After CDC shooting, a call to combat misinformation

By Susan Haigh

As authorities identified the shooter in the deadly attack on CDC headquarters as a Georgia man who blamed the COVID-19 vaccine for making him depressed and suicidal, a union representing workers at the agency is demanding that federal officials condemn vaccine misinformation, saying it was putting scientists at risk.

The union said that Friday’s shooting at the Atlanta offices of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which left a police officer dead, was not a random incident and that it “compounds months of mistreatment, neglect, and vilification that CDC staff have endured.”

The American Federation of Government Employees, Local 2883, said the CDC and leadership of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services must provide a “clear and unequivocal stance in condemning vaccine disinformation.”

The 30-year-old gunman, who died during the event, had also tried to get into the CDC’s headquarters in Atlanta but was stopped by guards before driving to a pharmacy across the street and opening fire, a law enforcement official told the Associated Press on Saturday.

The man, identified as Patrick Joseph White, was armed with five guns, including at least one long gun, the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to publicly discuss the investigation.

Here’s what to know about the shooting and the continuing investigation:

### Bullet holes

Police say White opened fire outside the CDC headquarters in Atlanta on Friday, leaving bullet marks in windows across the sprawling campus. At least four CDC buildings were hit,

agency Director Susan Monarez said on X.

DeKalb County Police Officer David Rose was mortally wounded while responding. Rose, 33, a former Marine who served in Afghanistan, had graduated from the police academy in March.

White was found on the second floor of a building across the street from the CDC campus and died at the scene, Atlanta Police Chief Darin Schierbaum said. “We do not know at this time whether that was from officers or if it was self-inflicted,” he said.

The Georgia Bureau of Investigation said the crime scene was “complex” and the investigation would take “an extended period of time.”

### CDC union’s call

The American Federation of Government Employees, Local 2883, is calling for a statement from the Department of Health and Human Services condemning vaccine misinformation. The agency is led by Robert F. Kennedy Jr., who rose to public prominence on healthcare issues as a leading vaccine skeptic, sometimes advancing false information.

A public statement by federal officials condemning misinformation is needed to help prevent violence against scientists, the union said in a news release.

“Their leadership is critical in reinforcing public trust and ensuring that accurate, science-based information prevails,” the union said.

Fired But Fighting, a group of laid-off CDC employees, has said Kennedy is directly responsible for the villainization of the CDC’s workforce through “his continuous lies about science and vaccine safety, which have fueled a climate of hostility and mistrust.”

Kennedy reached out to staff on Saturday, saying that “no one should face violence while working to protect the health of others.”

Thousands of people who work on critical disease research are employed on the campus. The union said some staff members were huddled in various buildings until late at night, including more than 90 young children who were locked down inside the CDC’s Clifton School.

The union said CDC staff should not be required to immediately return to work after experiencing such a traumatic event. In a statement released Saturday, it said windows and buildings should first be fixed and made “completely secure.”

“Staff should not be required to work next to bullet holes,” the union said. “Forcing a return under these conditions risks re-traumatizing staff by exposing them to the reminders of the horrific shooting they endured.”

The union also called for “perimeter security on all campuses” until the investigation is fully completed and shared with staff.

### COVID-19 vaccine

White’s father, who contacted police and identified his son as the possible shooter, said White had been upset over the death of his dog and had become fixated on the COVID-19 vaccine, according to a law enforcement official.

A neighbor of White told the Atlanta Journal-Constitution that White “seemed like a good guy” but spoke with her multiple times about his distrust of COVID-19 vaccines in unrelated conversations.

“He was very unsettled, and he very deeply believed that vaccines hurt him and were hurting other people,” Nancy Hoalst told the newspaper. “He emphatically believed that.”

But Hoalst said she never believed White would be violent: “I had no idea he thought he would take it out on the CDC.”

Haigh writes for the Associated Press.



CBS28

**SOME** motorists abandoned their cars. Above, a street in Milwaukee on Sunday.

# Wisconsin cancels state fair’s last day amid floods, damage

ASSOCIATED PRESS

MILWAUKEE — Flash flooding canceled the final day of the Wisconsin State Fair on Sunday as continued heavy rainfall in half a dozen Midwestern states forced motorists to abandon their vehicles, cut power to thousands of households and closed busy roadways.

Organizers of the fair said they were scrapping the final day of the 11-day event after rains flooded the fairgrounds in West Allis, Wis., just outside Milwaukee.

“We are saddened we cannot deliver this final day of the Wisconsin State Fair, but know that this is the best decision with current conditions and the forecast ahead,” organizers said in a statement.

The National Weather Service issued flood watches and warnings for parts of Kansas, Iowa, Nebraska, Missouri, Illinois and Wisconsin. After rainfall began Saturday, forecasters predicted “repeated rounds of heavy rain” in some areas along with hail, damaging winds and isolated tornadoes into Monday.

Among the worst hit was the Milwaukee area, where

up to 14 inches of rain had fallen in some areas by Sunday, according to the National Weather Service, which also noted river flooding in Milwaukee and Waukesha counties.

Some motorists left their stranded cars on roads. Nearly 47,000 customers of We Energies lost power in southeastern Wisconsin. In the suburban village of Wauwatosa, an overflowing and fast-moving Menomonee River submerged a popular playground.

“Really unfortunately, it’s just a really bad overlap of circumstances in terms of how all this rain fell, but then fell over such a populated area,” said Andrew Quigley, a National Weather Service meteorologist.

Firefighters responded to more than 600 calls including for gas leaks, flooded basements, electrical outages and water rescues, according to the Milwaukee Fire Department. Meanwhile, city crews worked overnight to clear surface water.

“We’re still in the middle of it,” Fire Chief Aaron Lipski told reporters Sunday. “We’re still catching up right now.”

USA Triathlon canceled

its Sprint and Paratriathlon National Championships in Milwaukee, where thousands of athletes were expected to participate. Meanwhile, the Sunday afternoon Brewers-Mets game at American Family Field was expected to continue as scheduled even as the parking lot remained inaccessible to traffic.

“We will not be able to guarantee parking for all fans, even those who purchased parking in advance,” the Brewers said in a statement.

City officials warned residents to avoid driving or walking in the standing waters.

“It remains dangerous,” the City of Milwaukee Department of Public Works said in a statement.

On Saturday, strong winds led to the death of one person in eastern Nebraska after a tree fell on a woman’s car.

In the state capital, Lincoln, the storms damaged two housing units at the Nebraska State Penitentiary, displacing 387 prisoners, the state Department of Correctional Services said. The agency said all staff and incarcerated people were safe and accounted for.

# President gives politicians control over grants, causing alarm

By Adithi Ramakrishnan

NEW YORK — An executive order signed by President Trump aims to give political appointees power over the billions of dollars in grants awarded by federal agencies.

Scientists say it threatens to undermine the process that has helped make the U.S. the world leader in research and development.

The order issued Thursday requires all federal agencies, including the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health, to appoint officials responsible for reviewing federal funding opportunities and grants, so that they “are consistent with agency priorities and the national interest.”

It also requires agencies to make it so that current and future federal grants

can be terminated at any time — including during the grant period.

Agencies cannot announce new funding opportunities until the new protocols are in place, according to the order.

The Trump administration said these changes are part of an effort to “strengthen oversight” and “streamline agency grantmaking.” Scientists say the order will cripple America’s scientific engine by placing control

over federal research funds in the hands of people who are influenced by politics and lack relevant expertise.

“This is taking political control of a once politically neutral mechanism for funding science in the U.S.,” said Joseph Bak-Coleman, a scientist studying group decision-making at the University of Washington.

The changes will delay grant review and approval, slowing “progress for cures and treatments that pa-

tients and families across the country urgently need,” the Assn. of American Medical Colleges said.

The administration already has terminated thousands of research grants at agencies such as the NSF and NIH, on topics including transgender health, vaccine hesitancy, misinformation as well as diversity, equity and inclusion. It also has threatened funding for scientific research in its battle with prominent universities,

including Harvard and UCLA.

The order could affect relief grants doled out by FEMA, public safety initiatives funded by the Department of Justice and public health efforts supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Experts say the order is likely to be challenged in court.

Ramakrishnan writes for the Associated Press.

# L.A.’s office buildings could boost housing

[**Offices**, from A1] are reduced, so are the taxes collected by the county and shared with the city, school districts and other public entities.

“Declining assessed values are likely to translate into significant losses in General Fund revenue” for the city, according to the report by BAE Urban Economics, a Berkeley real estate consulting firm.

Efforts to create a second act for underused office towers that were the height of corporate prestige a generation ago are part of a larger drama playing out in a financial center that has lost much of its shine in the years since the pandemic started.

Restaurants and shops have struggled with the departure of many workers while homelessness and a sense that sidewalks aren’t safe have risen and helped lead to the departure of some office tenants.

Downtown L.A. has 54 office buildings that are at immediate risk of devaluation and could result in nearly \$70 billion in lost value over the next 10 years, the report said, creating a potential loss of \$353 million in property tax revenues.

Buildings potentially would have more value as apartments or condominiums and could make a dent in expected tax losses. Converting just 10 big office buildings to housing would boost their combined assessed property value over a decade by \$12 billion, adding \$46 million in tax revenue and creating more than 3,800 residential units, the report said.

Meanwhile, demand for housing in downtown L.A. has held steady even as the need for offices has waned. Occupancy in apartments has remained about 90% for more than a year, slightly higher than the level before the pandemic. And unlike most neighborhoods in Los Angeles County, downtown

has seen a monumental housing construction boom in recent years.

In the last decade, 22% of the new housing in the city has been built downtown, where city planning policies encourage dense development, according to the DTLA Alliance business improvement district.

To be sure, downtown will retain its identity as a white-collar business center even as its housing component grows. At 56.5 million square feet, downtown is one of the largest office markets in the country and is an important economic engine for the city, said Nella McOsker, president of the Central City Assn.

Business leaders in the association will continue to support efforts to refill office buildings with workers, she said, even as they encourage the conversion of some buildings to housing.

“We’re not giving up on folks coming into the office in large numbers,” McOsker said, “but we need to always evolve.”

The BAE Urban Economics report does not identify the 10 buildings used to calculate the financial effects of converting them to housing, but previous discussions of prime candidates have included some of the most prominent towers on the city skyline that were built in the latter part of the 20th century.

Among them are 777 Tower and Union Bank Plaza, both on Figueroa Street, and Gas Company Tower at the foot of Bunker Hill near Pershing Square.

The list of conversion candidates is confidential because publicizing them might “put a scarlet letter around their neck” when most are “actually very good office buildings,” said John Adams, a managing principal at Gensler. The architecture firm selected potential candidates for conversion, which have recently



EDDIE SHIH E22 Studios

**A RENDERING** of an apartment in a 1980s office tower at 1055 W. 7th St. that will be converted to housing.

faced financial straits and low occupancy.

The Gas Company Tower was sold to Los Angeles County last year for about \$200 million, a steep drop from its \$632-million valuation in 2020. The 777 Tower traded a year ago for \$120 million, a 70% drop from its 2013 sale price, according to real estate data provider Co-Star.

Union Bank Plaza, a 40-story tower completed in 1967, is an attractive candidate in part because it has a retail complex at the base that would be a good amenity for residents as well as office tenants, Adams said.

The 55-story 777 Tower, completed in 1991, was designed by architect César Pelli, who designed some of the world’s tallest buildings including the Petronas Towers in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Part of its appeal is that it has separate banks of elevators for different tiers of floors, Adams said, which could make it easier to convert some floors to housing while others remain offices. With renovations, residents could have a separate lobby entrance from office workers.

Many early 20th century office buildings downtown have already been converted to apartments and hotels, but housing advocates are

now eyeing the newer generation of towers that dominated the office market in the last three decades.

Among them are ripe candidates to become residences, mostly built from the 1970s to 1990s, Adams said.

Their “slick glass-and-marble aesthetic” is visually appealing, he said, and they were built in a way that the outer skins can be modified to include balconies and operable windows.

“These towers are hackable,” Adams said.

The city is close to adopting a new building code that will make it easier for developers to get approvals to convert offices built after 1975. A previous code for conversions that focused on buildings erected before that year, when construction standards were less stringent, led to a boom in office, apartment, condo and hotel conversions starting in the early 2000s.

Newer buildings such as the L.A. Care tower are “night and day” more attractive to convert to housing than the midcentury buildings Lee’s company, Jamison Properties, has converted in the past, he said.

Downtown’s Class A buildings have more modern systems such as elevators and electrical service, and

may require fewer upgrades to meet seismic standards than older structures. The city recently determined that Jamison Properties did not need to perform a structural retrofit of the L.A. Care tower at 1055 W. 7th St., Lee said.

Los Angeles County officials, meanwhile, have declared that Gas Company Tower is seismically safe, but are reviewing bids to perform more than \$230 million worth of proactive upgrades “to ensure that the building performs optimally in the decades ahead,” a representative said.

The highest hurdle for private landlords considering turning an office building into apartments or condos is typically financial; it often costs more to acquire and convert a building than can be justified by expected rents.

City leaders should consider offering financial incentives such as those found in other cities to bridge the gap to profitability, the report said, citing programs in other central business districts.

New York, Washington and Boston have property tax abatement programs, for example. San Francisco offers transfer tax exemptions, and Chicago uses tax-increment financing to en-

courage some redevelopments. In Canada, Calgary offers direct grants.

The Central City Assn. wants the city to consider financial incentives for conversions, even though it is experiencing budget shortfalls, McOsker said. As of May, the city faced a nearly \$1-billion budget shortfall.

McOsker suggested that the city form a team to focus on conversions and perhaps do it at a scale “well outside of downtown Los Angeles.”

Helping turn unused offices into housing is important to city officials, said Rachel Freeman, deputy mayor of business and economic development.

“We have a deep need for more housing at all levels of affordability,” she said. “Adaptive reuse has the potential to be a tool to help achieve our goals towards housing production and also the revitalization of our core urban centers.”

Zoning and building codes should be “more supportive” of the process, she said, adding that the mayor’s office also is open to the idea of financial incentives for builders.

For the vibrancy of downtown and other core business centers also facing falling office values, Freeman said, “there is a cost to doing nothing.”

# Newsom, UC face off against Trump on UCLA actions

[**UCLA**, from A1] higher education institutions — which has roiled elite private East Coast universities for months — to the nation’s most powerful and lauded public university system.

“We are in uncharted territory,” said Ted Mitchell, president of the American Council on Education, which represents more than 1,700 colleges and universities. “We have seen the government come after Columbia, Brown, Harvard and others. But this, now, is a test. Will UCLA be the defender of public universities? Will it strike a deal? And what role will money — taxpayer money — play?”

California is facing off against a president who has been relentless in his aims to rein in what he calls “Marxist” universities that in his view are bastions of liberalism that have done too little to protect Jewish students, have been too soft on pro-Palestinian protests, and rely too heavily on international student dollars.

His administration has accused a host of elite colleges nationwide — Harvard, Columbia, Brown, Stanford and three UC campuses — of illegally considering race in admissions and programming to the detriment of white and Asian American students.

In response to pro-Palestinian protests, Trump has said colleges have enabled “jihadists,” saying demonstrators are “pro-Hamas” terrorists.

“UCLA is not a random selection,” Mitchell said. “The administration has had issues with California, with the governor, for some time. This is part of a larger battle between the administration and the state of California.”

## What’s at stake

Since July 30, when UCLA Chancellor Julio Frenk began receiving notices from the federal government announcing grant suspensions — totaling nearly half a billion dollars — UCLA leaders have scram-

bled to assess the effect on what they describe as life-saving, groundbreaking research.

Deans and departments have been told to be prepared for layoffs if the cuts last.

Science and medical professors, whose research labs would not exist without federal funding, have solicited private donations. Doctoral and postdoctoral students, whose tuition and living expenses are often funded by grants in exchange for lab work, are rushing to speed up their graduation plans to before stipends become depleted.

“The federal government claims antisemitism and bias as the reasons. This far-reaching penalty of defunding life-saving research does nothing to address any alleged discrimination,” Frenk said about the messages from the National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health and Department of Energy.

UC as a system and UCLA in particular have been under multiple federal investigations for months:

■ **Alleged employment discrimination** against Jewish employees and job applicants.

■ **Civil rights complaints** from Israeli and Jewish students.

■ **The alleged consideration of race** in admissions practices.

■ **UCLA is also on a shortlist of 10 campuses**, including UC Berkeley and USC — that a federal task force on combating antisemitism singled out in February.

The ongoing investigations were launched by the Education, Justice, and Health and Human Services departments.

UCLA leaders thought they were being cooperative by sharing internal records over the months with government lawyers and making progress in quiet negotiations over the accusations, senior UC officials said.

They hoped the government took notice of efforts that could appease the pres-



GENARO MOLINA Los Angeles Times

**STUDENTS** walk on UCLA’s campus on Thursday. The university has been under federal investigations.

ident: a new campus initiative to combat antisemitism, the banning of Students for Justice in Palestine groups, a UC-wide ban on student government boycotts of Israel, quick shutdowns of pro-Palestinian campus protests, and strict discipline of pro-Palestinian students accused of time, place and manner violations during demonstrations.

But the federal government’s stance is now clear: It believes UCLA is guilty of all allegations.

The NSF letter said that UCLA “engages in racism, in the form of illegal affirmative action, UCLA fails to promote a research environment free of antisemitism and bias; UCLA discriminates against and endangers women by allowing men in women’s sports and private women-only spaces.”

## Trump’s demands

Federal lawyers want UC to pay the billion-dollar fine against UCLA in installments and contribute \$172 million to a fund for Jewish students and other individuals affected by alleged civil rights violations.

The settlement demands include ending scholarships that focus on race or ethnicity, forcing UCLA to share more admissions data than it already publicly releases with the government and changes to campus protest

rules such as a ban on overnight encampments.

In addition to the sticker-shock fine, some requests have puzzled UCLA leaders — as the UC system has already significantly overhauled many practices outlined by the federal government.

It has ended the use of “diversity statements” in hiring. Last fall, UCLA declared a “zero-tolerance” policy for encampments. The government wants transgender women off women’s sports teams. But as a member of the National Collegiate Athletics Assn., the university is already required to follow new association rules that bar transgender players from women’s teams.

“It feels like a cut-and-paste job,” a senior UC official said about Trump’s proposal. The official was not authorized to speak publicly about negotiations. “It’s like they took parts of letters to the Ivy Leagues, cobbled them together and added the words ‘UCLA.’”

## What comes next

The 24-member UC Board of Regents, which must approve any settlement or payout to the federal government and would be involved in a suit, has called an emergency, closed-door meeting Monday afternoon.

It’s unclear whether New-

som, who is an ex-officio member of the board, will attend.

Another pivotal moment comes Tuesday in San Francisco federal district court. There, Judge Rita F. Lin has ordered the Justice Department to explain why the UCLA cuts are not a violation of a June order in which she blocked certain science grant terminations for all of UC.

The case, filed by UC Berkeley and UC San Francisco researchers, is being argued by Erwin Chemerinsky, UC Berkeley law school dean and constitutional expert. If the judge rules in UC’s favor, it would apply to NSF cuts that account for about half of those in limbo at UCLA.

In an interview, Chemerinsky said actions against UCLA were “clearly illegal” because “the president lacks constitutional authority to refuse to spend money appropriated by Congress.”

He outlined what would probably be California’s argument in a suit: The government’s actions violate the Impoundment Control Act of 1974, which restricts the president’s ability to halt spending that Congress has authorized.

“The cutoff of funds has been without the due process required by federal laws and the Constitution,” Chemerinsky said. “Agencies cutting off funds, like NIH and NSF, are violating the Administrative Procedures Act in that the actions are ‘arbitrary, capricious, and an abuse of discretion.’ Many of the cutoffs of funds violate the 1st Amendment for being based on viewpoint.”

## Talks still possible

But California faces a risk if it files a suit against the administration’s orders.

When Harvard pushed back against billions in similar cuts earlier this year, the Trump administration hit the university with additional costly funding clawbacks and a termination of its ability to host foreign stu-

dents, an issue it further sued over.

Carl Tobias, a law professor at the University of Richmond, said time — and politics — is not on UCLA’s side.

“At some point you have to be ready for fall classes and international students coming in and the campus trying to deal with the uncertainty and losing all your grants,” said Tobias.

Litigation can take months, if not years, he said. California “might do well in the district courts and then in the 9th Circuit, but I don’t know what would happen in the Supreme Court.”

After Newsom threatened a suit, UC Regents Chair Janet Reilly told The Times that negotiation is still on the table — but not on the current “unacceptable” terms.

“The university remains willing to engage in a constructive and good-faith dialogue with the federal government but the University of California will always stand firm in protecting the integrity and values of our institution,” Reilly said.

Mark Yudof, a former UC president who led the system from 2008 to 2013, believed negotiations were still likely.

“While litigation is certainly a possibility, my sense is that both sides will first try negotiating a settlement,” Yudof said.

He said the settlement UCLA came to with Jewish students in late July is “likely to be the initial framework for those discussions. Hard to say where it goes from there. The fact that UC is a public university system adds to the complexities.”

Mitchell, the American Council on Education president and former top administrator of Occidental College, said a quick resolution would benefit both sides.

He said a months-long process — as it’s been between Harvard and Trump — would have the potential for “great harm.”

“These things, the longer they go on, the worse they get,” he said.

# Clifton's, Jail Cafe among L.A.'s lost restaurants

[Morrison, from A1] nial when it closed in the COVID-19 year of 2020. It was a hangout for politicians and power muckety-mucks. During the Democratic National Convention here in 2000, you could show up at 2 a.m. and see statesmen and dealmakers eating the signature baseball steak, or my favorite, Eggs Sardou. Any hope of reopening the landmark went up in flames in March, right after the Pantry closed.

California, and especially L.A., were out of the nation's sight and mind for so long that we were left to cultivate our own notions of good food. The culinary mismatch between "here" and "back there" let the folks "back there" believe we shot our food on the hoof and ate it with bare hands. But our cosmopolitan eateries eventually created a singular "fusion," with its own explosion into a thriving restaurant scene. Not all of our stars are onscreen; more than two dozen are in the Michelin firmament.

Everyone has a lost restaurant to mourn. I would lay flowers at the grave of Ago, a flossy Italian restaurant on Melrose Avenue in West Hollywood, gone in 2019. I weep for its vanished gnocchi, sublime as angel farts (note: This is metaphor. Are angels corporeal? Would they even have farts? I do not know).

Restaurants have a high mortality rate; generally more than 80% make it through the first year, and about half are still around after five years. Yet so much can derail them: fractured supply chains, staff blow-ups, quirks of locations and traffic, social media ambushes, even the unexpected, like COVID.

So survivors are remarkable, and originals even more so. It borders on the impossible to verify anything venerable as "the first," but L.A.'s first restaurant was likely in the Bella Union Hotel, opened in downtown in 1850 in an even older building. The first freestanding restaurant may have been the "Old American," opened maybe a year earlier, but it too eludes confirmation.

Hard to know what restaurant food was like in that long ago, but very likely beef, the region's major food group, or mutton, with potatoes and onions and a palate cleanser of beer or wine or the local liquor, aguardiente. [A Bella Union newspaper ad 20 years later vaguely promised that its bill of fare "shall be inferior to none in the State,"]

I have my doubts that the Bella Union or even the Old American was L.A.'s first restaurant. Food was surely being cooked and served and sold in private houses and small shops and on street stands in ethnic enclaves under the Anglo-Angeleno radar. Eventually, such places did get "discovered," and the local gentry might have bragged that they had just found the most *delish* little cafe hidden away in an edgy neighborhood.

In 1921, The Times suggested that daring tourists might try the food in "foreign quarters," like "Chinatown's alleys," whose waiters were described in stereotypes. Italian restaurant-goers were advised to ditch steak and potatoes to try "authentic" Italian food like artichokes, and the "peculiarly seasoned tomato sauce." Or they could join movie stars and sports heroes for original chili



**TWO COUPLES** in a "cell" in the Jail Cafe on Sunset Boulevard in Hollywood give their order to a waiter.



**CLIFTON'S** cafeteria was notable for decor of religious dioramas, South Seas vistas and redwood faux forests.

burgers at "Ptomaine Tommy's" in Lincoln Heights, which started out in 1913 as a street lunch wagon.

Into the 20th century, some things Mexican were considered declass , except in designated quaint settings like Olvera Street. Restaurants serving Mexican food to Anglo-Angelenos often styled themselves "Spanish."

At Glendale's renowned Casa Verdugo, the food was straight-up Mexican — tamales, enchiladas, burritos — but advertised as "Spanish" cuisine. El Cholo, on Western Avenue, just celebrated its 100th birthday as a "Spanish" cafe. There are tales of Angelenos who traveled to Spain and were astonished to find that Spanish food was not, in fact, tamales and enchiladas.

Cafeterias have gone retro chic now, but L.A.'s early cafeteria craze wasn't ironic or hip. They served what working Angelenos needed: standard, middle-American comfort food at plausible prices — and, for nonworking Angelenos, sometimes no price at all.

Clifton's, founded in the Depression year of 1931, once ran a chain of cafeterias arguably less notable for the food — beef dishes, fried chicken, Jell-O salads — than for the elaborate decor of religious dioramas, exotic

South Seas vistas and redwood faux forests.

The founder, Clifford Clinton, was a good-government civic crusader, and his cafeterias' policy was to let folks eat free if they couldn't afford the tab. As a hungry young writer, Ray Bradbury made full use of that policy. What is left of this giant, Los Angeles' unofficial kitchen? It now bears the name Clifton's Republic, a weekend-only bar at Clifton's old downtown address.

In the 18 decades since the Bella Union's opened a kitchen, Angelenos never lost their beefsteak appetites, and 20th century steakhouses arose as *haute cuisine*, with steak places arrayed along La Cienega's "Restaurant Row."

In Studio City, Glendale, Palm Springs and Bakersfield, waiters at the Saddle and Sirloln restaurants handed diners a page of beef choices, and a few chicken and fish alternatives, printed on a die-cut menu embossed to look like a fancy gun holster.

On the far end of the grill sizzle was the vegetarian restaurant. It did not begin, as you might suppose, in the hipster 1960s. The Source, on Sunset Boulevard, was launched in 1969 by a Cincinnati-born guru who called himself Father Yod. Woody Allen made fun of the place and its vibe in "Annie Hall."

His character met Diane Keaton there and snottily ordered "alfalfa sprouts and mashed yeast."

The food reform movement was a hit with Angelenos.

The Vegetarian Cafe, in downtown Los Angeles, hosted a July 1901 lunch meeting of the Women's Christian Temperance Union. The menu: corn soup, beet salad, baked beans, unfermented grape juice, and sliced "protose" with lemon. Protose was a meat substitute of wheat gluten and peanuts, cooked up by the food reformer Dr. John Kellogg, the fellow whose name you know better from a line of sometimes quite sugary cereals.

In Hollywood, studios tended to lay claim to nearby restaurants almost as extensions of their own commissaries, with cocktail privileges. Paramount people adopted restaurants on Melrose: first Lucy's, and later Lucy's El Adobe, which together lasted a hundred years.

Lucy's opened in 1922, and silent stars like Clara Bow showed up in limos and ordered fistfuls of caviar. Paramount artists painted the murals in the restaurant's VIP room. Lucy's headwaiter Don Avalier was reportedly "discovered" there, and screen-tested for a biopic of Rudolph Valen-

tino. He didn't get the starring role, but he did get other movie parts, often playing ... a headwaiter.

This Lucey's closed some time in the 1950s. In 1964, the other Lucy's, the fabled Mexican restaurant, opened a little way away. It too was an actors' hangout, but celebrated as the place where Gov. Jerry Brown and singer Linda Ronstadt met and launched their headliner romance. That Lucy's closed in 2019, the year before COVID.

More than Sunset Boulevard or Hollywood Boulevard, Melrose Avenue was where the stars came out, and dined in. One of two Nickodell restaurants was nudged alongside Paramount. In 1928, it began selling affordable food to starving actors, and did so even after they were no longer starving.

In 1982, Nickodell's steak sandwich with grilled onion and potatoes cost \$6.95, a price you could hardly afford to duplicate at home, wrote Times food columnist Rose Dosti. Each day of the week offered a special: chicken cacciatore on Mondays, frankfurters and sauerkraut on Wednesdays, and so on. When it closed, in 1993, veteran TV actress Peggy Rea mourned its special dishes. "From here you go into the world of alfalfa sprouts."

Our big, warm climate and our wide-open spaces made possible something that earned its own genre: mimetic architecture, whimsical buildings that look like something else, often the thing that they sell. The Brown Derby restaurant didn't sell derbies, but the Tamale, on Whittier Boulevard in East L.A., sold tamales, and the trade of Randy's Donuts in Inglewood is unmistakably doughnuts.

In 1927, the Buffalo Times gave us an eyeroll in print over an igloo-shaped restaurant with papier-mache icicles, a merry-go-round restaurant with revolving tables, a "bullpen" restaurant with a live bull and waiters dressed as matadors. And it singled out the Jail Cafe on Sunset Boulevard in Hollywood, where the El Cid restaurant now stands. The Jail Cafe set tables and chairs in "cells" for patrons served by waiters wearing trustee uniforms, presided over by a cashier dressed as a warden. When two masked men showed up there in March 1926, customers thought it was just part of the show — until the robbers fired their guns and relieved diners of about \$500.

The cafe ship Cabrillo was a gigantic mimetic. Beginning in 1903, it was berthed in Venice, if you can say "berthed" about a vessel that wasn't a real ship. Early on, and briefly, waiters were unfortunately tricked out in white wigs and satin knee breeches, a la Versailles-on-the-Venice-canal. The dishes and the prices invited a well-heeled clientele — Charlie Chaplin, Jack Dempsey, Sarah Bernhardt. Sand dabs and halibut, still edible and plentiful there, were held in a net slung under the hull and served moments later. If you preferred food with legs, there was roast pheasant and, of course, steak. The place was auctioned off down to its timbers in October 1946.

Germans once had a large presence in Los Angeles, with beer gardens, restaurants, churches, and a downtown club and sports center. But as happened elsewhere in the country, much of L.A.'s public German community went to ground after May 1915, when a German U-boat sank the British ocean liner Lusitania.

So it was surprising to see that when the Second World War came around, a Manhattan Beach restaurant named Little Bavaria kept its doors open. On June 8, 1942, the restaurant ran an ad in The Times touting its 80-cent home-cooked dinners. That same night, the feds raided the place, and subpoenaed its owner, a German-born naturalized citizen, and three employees. The feds said the place was possibly an "important listening post" for German-friendly ears, considering that it was a popular lunchtime destination for dozens of workers at nearby defense plants.

If by now you're still hung up on first/oldest, I direct you to the oldest surviving restaurant in L.A. County: the Saugus Cafe. Best birth date estimate for this railroad cafe: 1886 or 1887, and its address is now in Santa Clarita, a town that didn't even exist then, but which rallied to save the cafe during COVID.

Why the longevity? Because fusion, flank steak, fusilli, futomaki — tastes come and tastes go. But diners are forever.

## Bad Bunny fan in Puerto Rico for concert fatally shot, police say

By DÁNICA COTO

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — A Bad Bunny fan who was visiting Puerto Rico for the hip-hop star's concert residency was fatally shot early Sunday in La Perla, a popular seaside shantytown in the capital, police said.

The victim was identified as Kevin Mares, a 25-year-old who lived in New York, according to a police statement.

The shooting happened in the predawn hours at a nightspot called Shelter for Mistreated Men in La Perla, a coastal community of San Juan that has struggled to shed its dark reputation.

Homicide detective Sgt. Arnaldo Ruiz said in a phone interview that the shooting

took place when several people near Mares began arguing and one pulled out a gun and shot at least three people, including Mares.

A brother and a sister in their mid-40s who live in La Perla were injured and remain hospitalized.

Ruiz said Mares was an innocent bystander. He was with three other friends who told police they were in Puerto Rico for one of Bad Bunny's 30 concerts, which have attracted tens of thousands of visitors to the U.S. territory, where the artist was born.

Mares was shot on the left side of his abdomen and was taken to Puerto Rico's largest public hospital, where he died, authorities said.

Ruiz said police don't yet



KEVIN MAZUR Getty Images

**BAD BUNNY'S** Puerto Rico concerts have attracted tens of thousands of visitors to the U.S. territory.

know what the people were arguing about and don't have a description of the shooter. "We have very little

information," he said.

Ruiz added that Mares' three friends also were from New York. He didn't know

their hometowns.

La Perla is on the outskirts of Old San Juan, a historic district popular with tourists. A couple of hundred people live in the shantytown, which once served as Puerto Rico's biggest distribution point for heroin and was known for its violence.

Police used to avoid the community, which had a sign proclaiming, "Not open to visitors. Do not enter."

But violence eased after federal agents raided the slum in 2011 and arrested dozens of people, including a community leader who was later convicted.

The neighborhood became even safer and more welcoming after Puerto Rican singers Luis Fonsi and Daddy Yankee featured it in

their hit "Despacito."

But isolated violence persists.

In February 2023, three tourists were stabbed, police said, after a person told them to stop recording in the community.

In April last year, a 24-year-old tourist from Delaware was killed and his body set on fire, police said, after he and a friend were attacked after a drug purchase. Police said the victims were trying to take pictures of La Perla after being warned to not do so.

The island of 3.2 million people has reported 277 killings so far this year, compared with 325 killings in the same period last year.

Coto writes for the Associated Press.



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Los Angeles Times

BUSINESS



Photographs by RICH PEDRONCELLI KFF Health

# A behavior health workforce buckles, and help is years away

Demand surges in California amid a shortage of addiction counselors and other workers. The state taps Medicaid funds to expand the pool, but that’ll take time.

By Christine Mai-Duc

REDDING — This spring, the Good News Rescue Mission, which runs the only emergency homeless shelter in Shasta County, received a game-changing, \$17.8-million state grant to build a 75-bed residential treatment facility in a region where thousands struggle with drug and alcohol addiction.

Now comes the hard part: recruiting and hiring 10 certified substance use counselors and about a dozen other staff members to work at the site, about 170 miles north of the state capital.

“Ask anyone trying to get staff and it’s difficult,” said Justin Wandro, the mission’s head of development. “Try to get people who are willing to work in very intense, very difficult environments. It’s hard.”

California has long struggled to revitalize its behavioral health system and expand its workforce to meet the needs of its residents, particularly in rural parts of the state like the far north.

Six years ago, the California Future Health Workforce Commission warned of a “severe and growing” shortage across the behavioral health field, including psychiatrists, therapists, social workers and substance use counselors, and noted that two-thirds of Californians with a mental illness go without treatment. Since then, Gov. Gavin Newsom and state lawmakers have set out to transform the behavioral health system, with the Legislature dedicating more than \$1 billion to train and recruit providers.

Yet, the shortage has only worsened since the pandemic, which exacerbated mental health and addiction issues for many. In April, state health officials revealed that California was short roughly a third of the 8,100 psychiatrists and 117,000 licensed therapists it needed based on 2022 data. And the state’s limited training capacity is making it hard to replace the number of retiring practitioners. As a result, existing workers are buckling under the workload while patients without quick access to help during a crisis are turning to costly emergency care.

“It feels helpless, because there is more than you can fix,” said Nick Zepponi, a social worker at the Hill Country Community Clinic CARE Center in Redding. The mental health urgent care clinic is one of the last lines of defense in the fraying behavioral health system in Shasta County, where the suicide rate is more than double the state average and overdose deaths increased more than threefold during the pandemic. “There’s more people than you can help that need it,” Zepponi said.

### Playing catch-up

Under Newsom, the state has increased funding for youth preventive care, revised conservatorship laws, and set up a court-based program to compel treatment for some of the state’s most severely mentally ill residents.

The Democrat also championed the passage of Proposition 1, a cornerstone of his response to the state’s homelessness and drug crises, saying it would add 10,000 treatment beds and housing units and increase access.



**KAREN MANESS**, top, is a frequent visitor to Redding’s Hill Country Community Clinic CARE Center, a mental health urgent care clinic where she can escape the heat and get referrals.

One of the biggest remaining bottlenecks is the acute shortage of psychiatrists — licensed medical doctors who can prescribe medications such as antidepressants as well as antianxiety and antipsychotic drugs. Although the state has opened more slots for training in recent years, it can cost as much as \$250,000 a year and requires 12 years of postsecondary education.

In 2025, 239 first-year residents enrolled in California psychiatry programs, an all-time high and up from 152 seven years ago. Yet it was far below the 527 first-year psychiatry residents the workforce commission estimated are needed annually from 2025 to 2029.

“The investments have lagged, and because they’ve been more recent, we’re not really seeing as much of the fruit of those investments yet,” said Janet Coffman, a UC San Francisco associate professor who specializes in healthcare workforce issues. “Some of these psychiatry programs that the state has funded haven’t graduated their first class yet.”

The state has also expanded the role of other providers, such as nurse practitioners trained to prescribe behavioral health drugs and certified peer counselors who might be able to meet with patients more frequently.

Mark Ghaly, former secretary of the state Health and Human Services Agency and one of the architects of Newsom’s behavioral health overhaul, said it’s better to spread responsibilities among various providers, including some with shorter training timelines, to expand capacity faster.

“You’re building workforce plans around models that, frankly, aren’t meeting people’s needs,” Ghaly said. “If we try to chase the current models today with the demand that has grown, I don’t think you catch up.”

In addition to the state’s own investments, California is tapping \$1.9 billion in Medicaid funds to train, recruit, and retain behavioral health workers, enticing them with scholarships and loan repayments, and helping schools fund

new residencies and fellowships. But the program took effect only recently, in January, and there is the looming threat that the Trump administration could rescind the funds at any time.

In a statement, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services spokesperson Emily Hilliard said the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has made clear that approved waivers remain in effect.

“That said, states should not rely on temporary demonstration funding as a substitute for sustained, direct investment in their healthcare workforce,” Hilliard added, saying the agency would continue to evaluate the outcomes of California’s experiment, which sunsets at the end of 2029.

Health advocates warn that California is so behind that any slowdown in behavioral health workforce funding would be detrimental. Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr.’s move to fold the nation’s mental health agency into a new department focused on chronic care and disease prevention, national advocates say, could spell trouble for program funding generally.

### Uber to the ER

Kelly Monck, who lives in a pool house behind her mother’s middle-class suburban home in Redding, struggles with depression. Despite having health coverage and knowing her way around the healthcare system, she often can’t get an appointment with her psychiatrist when thoughts of suicide creep in.

“We’ve been fighting this demon since I was 15 years old,” said Monck, 38, who is deaf and has Ehlers-Danlos syndrome, a connective tissue disorder that has collapsed her airway and left her reliant on a ventilator and feeding tube.

In April, Monck overdosed on her heart medication. Seeking help, she called her therapist, who eventually persuaded her to go to the emergency room. She took an Uber and waited in the ER for hours, she said, but there was no

open treatment bed and she was released.

Rather than go to the ER a second time, Monck called Hill Country when suicidal thoughts returned the following week. She had hoped that providers there could expedite an appointment with her county psychiatrist or adjust her medications. But clinic counselors aren’t licensed to prescribe medication and could do little more than ensure she wasn’t an immediate danger to herself.

It wasn’t until her mother drove her 250 miles to Stanford Medicine’s psychiatry unit that she was able to get her medications adjusted. She didn’t see her regular psychiatrist for two more weeks.

Monck isn’t alone. In some regions of the state, it can take patients months to see a psychiatrist, and those who urgently need help are increasingly turning to costly ER care.

In 2022, patients with mental health or substance use disorders accounted for 1 in 3 inpatient hospitalizations and 1 in 6 emergency room visits, state data show. In ERs, doctors can often do little more than temporarily stabilize these patients, because long-term treatment beds are nearly impossible to find.

Shasta Regional Medical Center, one of Shasta County’s two major hospitals, has created a temporary holding area in the ER for mental health patients, in addition to 18 existing inpatient beds, said Brenten Fillmore, the hospital’s director of behavioral health.

“It’s not how the system is designed to work,” Fillmore said. “There just are not enough beds to service the need, particularly when it comes to difficult cases.”

Healthcare providers say most patients are better served in office and outpatient settings where regular appointments with clinicians could help them avert a crisis.

The state estimates Shasta County has about a third of the psychiatrists and little more than half the licensed therapists it needs, significantly below the

state average.

More than once, clinicians at Hill Country have made the three-hour journey to take a client to the nearest medication-assisted detox facility, in Eureka, or farther south to San Francisco, said Brandy Gemmill, a substance use counselor. But once patients are sober, it’s rare to find an opening in a longer-term residential program.

“What I struggle with is the lack of resources,” Gemmill said. “Where do we send them? So then, they’re back on the street and it’s happening all over again.”

When patients repeatedly fall through the cracks, Zepponi said, workers like him are at high risk of burnout, something that has hit behavioral health clinicians particularly hard.

Every six months or so, when a slight twinge of dread starts to creep in at work, Zepponi knows he needs to schedule a week off if he wants to keep doing the job he loves.

“That’s when I know I really need time off, and I have to act quickly.”

### Turning to GoFundMe

In 2018, the Camp fire tore through the foothills of the Sierra Nevada in Butte County, killing 85, destroying about 14,000 homes, and displacing more than 50,000 people. Within weeks, patients with post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and anxiety flooded into local hospitals and doctors’ offices, but few providers were equipped to help them. An estimated 40 to 60 physicians left the region after the fire, deepening the shortage.

A group of local doctors set out to reverse the trend, and last year the nonprofit Healthy Rural California launched the state’s first psychiatric residency program north of Sacramento. Rachel Mitchell, director of the program, said even with a \$1.5-million grant from the state for planning, the organization had to cobble together roughly \$75,000 via private donations and a GoFundMe campaign to welcome its first class of four psychiatry residents. The federal grant money they rely on for operations, administered by the Health Resources and Services Administration, has been a volatile funding source.

“We’d love to get six students per class, but at this point we can’t afford to,” Mitchell said. Program administrators want to tap into a more stable funding stream through CMS but must first wait for its partner, Enloe Medical Center in Chico, to recruit psychiatrists to teach and supervise residents.

Its first class will graduate in 2028.

Mai-Duc writes for KFF Health News, which publishes California Healthline, an editorially independent service of the California Health Care Foundation.

### The Wide Shot

The newsletter does not appear today.

BUSINESS

Voices MICHAEL HILTZIK COLUMNIST

# Why are top U.S. institutions bowing to Trump?

Universities, law firms and judges just giving in. Such appeasement never works.

Like ancient oaks uprooted by tornadoes, some of America's richest and most powerful institutions have been capitulating to Donald Trump. Law firms, universities, even Supreme Court justices have surrendered to Trump's most outlandish demands that they cede their governing principles to him and pay financial tribute that runs into hundreds of millions of dollars.

The rationale for some of Trump's policies — social and economic — are mysterious. But a greater mystery is why these institutions have given in, sometimes without a whisper of defiance.

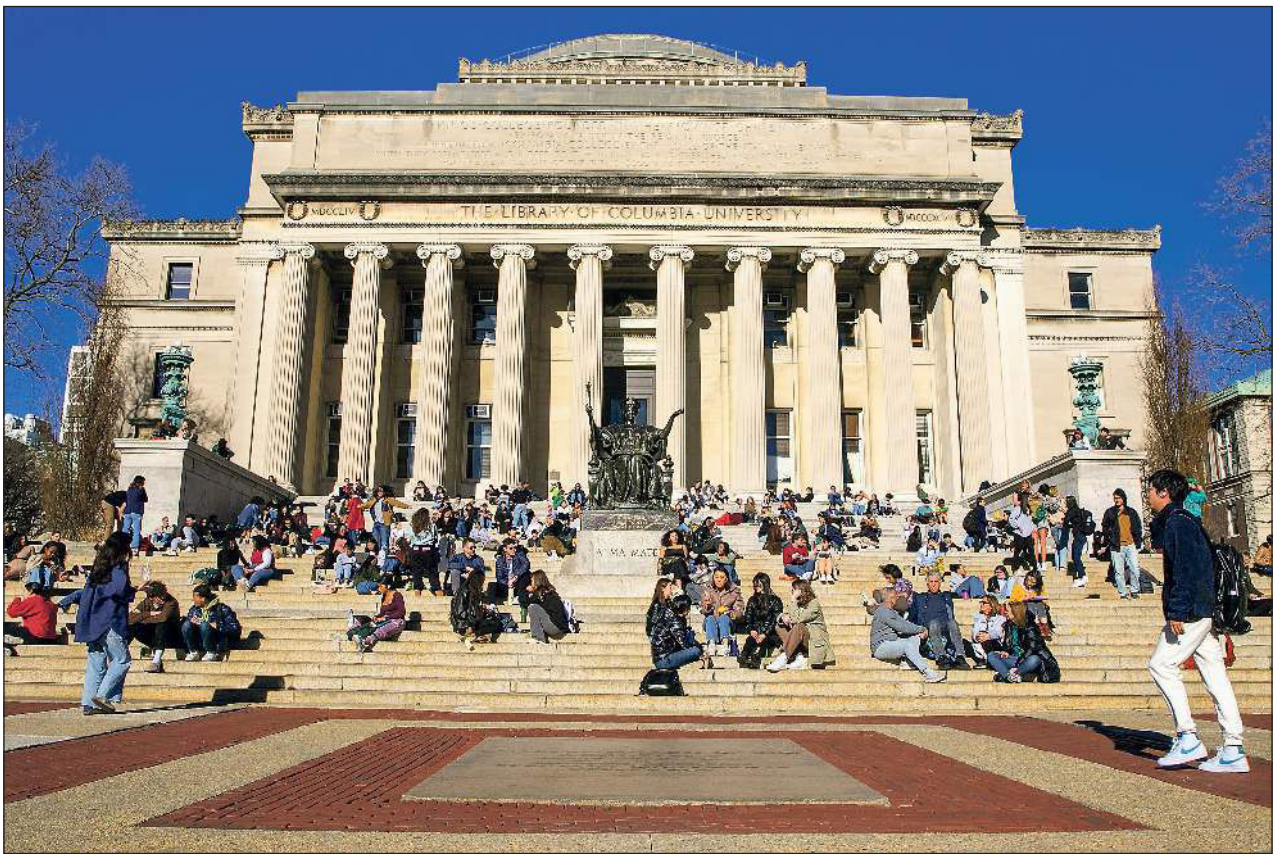
The capitulation trend has encompassed some American institutions that made their names standing firm against authoritarianism. One is CBS, whose parent, Paramount Global, last month settled a \$20-billion Trump lawsuit over the editing of an interview with Kamala Harris at "60 Minutes" by paying \$16 million, ostensibly to finance Trump's presidential library.

The settlement "resembled payment of an extortion-like penalty to the government for the standard editing" of the Harris interview, Jeffrey A. Sonnenfeld, senior associate dean for Leadership Studies and a leading professor at the Yale School of Management, wrote in the New Republic with two Yale colleagues.

As my colleague Meg James reported, critics blasted the settlement, with one calling it a "spineless capitulation" that would only embolden politicians and others to "weaponize lawsuits and bring regulatory pressure to bear to silence and censor independent journalism."

Shortly after the settlement, as it happens, CBS announced the cancellation of Stephen Colbert's "Late Show," silencing a widely followed Trump critic (at least on broadcast TV). The network attributed its decision to economic factors, but it's been commonly seen as related to the settlement with Trump.

Sonnenfeld ably placed the settlement in the context of CBS' distinguished journalistic history, which he traced back to the work of Edward R. Murrow in the 1930s and later; under Mur-



TED SHAFFREY Associated Press

**COLUMBIA** said the payout ends "a period of sustained federal scrutiny and institutional uncertainty."

row, he noted, the news division of CBS became "the gold standard of broadcast journalism."

In settling what many legal commentators regarded as a frivolous lawsuit, Sonnenfeld wrote, Paramount's goal appeared to be securing the government's approval of its then-pending \$8-billion merger with Skydance Media.

The merger promptly received approval from the Federal Communications Commission and closed on Aug. 7, completing what Sonnenfeld called a "sellout of the Columbia Broadcasting System's journalistic values to commercial interests."

Many of the other deals with Trump similarly subordinate the institutions' moral or ethical values to commercial or financial concerns.

I asked Paramount for a response to Sonnenfeld's commentary, and received a statement that "companies often settle litigation to avoid the high and somewhat unpredictable costs of legal defense, the risk of an adverse judgment that could result in significant financial or reputational damage, and the disruption to business operations that prolonged legal battles can cause.

CBS is far from alone. Indeed, in the media sphere it was preceded by Walt Disney Co., which in December settled Trump's lawsuit over ABC News anchor George Stephanopoulos' on-air assertion that the president-elect had been found civilly liable for raping

writer E. Jean Carroll. In fact, Trump had been found liable for sexually assaulting and defaming Carroll, not for rape. The settlement involved a \$15-million contribution for Trump's presidential library.

Leading universities have surrendered to Trump accusations of antisemitism and gender discrimination. Columbia (from which I hold a graduate degree) agreed last month to pay \$221 million to "resolve" government allegations that it has violated federal anti-discrimination laws. Brown University also reached an agreement with the White House last month to pay \$50 million toward workforce development programs in its home state, Rhode Island.

Trump has recently turned his crosshairs on UCLA, demanding a \$1-billion payment from the university in return for freezing more than \$300 million in research grants on the ostensible grounds that the university has failed to "promote a research environment free of antisemitism." The prospect that any such sum would be paid is exceedingly remote: Gov. Newsom, a member of the UC Board of Regents, called the demand "extortion" and said the state would sue to block it. UCLA Chancellor Julio Frenk also responded that "this far-reaching penalty of defunding life-saving research does nothing to address any alleged discrimination."

At least nine leading national law firms have also capitulated to Trump attacks by agreeing to payments totaling \$940 million, according to a compilation by Axios, including pro-bono legal representation for conservative entities and other commitments.

These settlements often involve nonfinancial commitments. Some institutions under Trumpian fire agree to end programs promoting workforce, student and faculty diversity, equality and inclusion, or "DEI," to cite the common conservative shibboleth, or to eliminate other forms of outreach. In effect, they're ceding control over their academic structures to the White House.

Institutions that have fought back have often been able to block administration threats in federal trial and appellate courts. That's been true for four law firms that have challenged Trump. Harvard, the target of a concentrated attack by Trump, has won a temporary restraining order against the administration's effort to prevent the university from enrolling foreign students. A separate lawsuit over Trump's threat to freeze scientific and other academic grants to the university and its affiliates is pending.

The surrendering institutions typically have cited the economic consequences of opposition. Trump's threat to withhold research funding, which can run to billions of dollars a year, has rattled universities. In explaining Columbia's nine-figure payoff to the administration, acting President Claire Shipman stated that most of the \$400 million in federal research grants that Trump canceled in March will be reinstated, "and Columbia's access to billions of dollars in current and future grants will be restored." The university said the settlement would close "a period of sustained federal scrutiny and institutional uncertainty."

At the law firm Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison — the first law firm

to reach a deal with Trump — Chairman Brad Karp said the deal was made to reverse Trump's executive order cutting its lawyers off from government contracts, revoking their security clearances and prohibiting them from entering government buildings or dealing with federal employees. That all amounted to "an existential crisis" for the firm, Karp told his partners and associates.

It's possible, though never stated outright, that the surrendering institutions recognize that the clock is running on Trump's authority. His presidency runs only until Jan. 19, 2029. (Never mind his musings about a third term, which would be unconstitutional. On the Gonna Happen scale, that's a Not.) They may simply be buying time in the expectation that a succeeding president will reverse the strictures he has imposed. In the meantime, courts may quash his threatened punishments as illegal or unconstitutional infringements of 1st Amendment rights.

"Appeasement may well be a viable strategy when the party being appeased is willing to take the win and stand down," writes Steve Vladeck of Georgetown law school. But it's "a potentially catastrophic approach" that can end up enabling, even encouraging, more bad behavior.

Columbia, for example, thought that by acceding to Trump's demands in March to discipline students involved in a pro-Palestinian protest and placing its Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies Department under "academic receivership" and appointing an outside chair to run the unit for five years, won it a restoration of research funding. This proved

to be untrue, leading to its \$221-million settlement in July.

Even while mounting a legal fight against Trump, Harvard has shuttered its diversity offices, which served minority and LGBTQ+ students and women, in July — steps that resembled demands from the Trump administration as part of an offer to restore potentially billions of dollars in research funding. But those actions haven't appeared to quell Trump's attacks on the university. The university has said that it "remains committed to cultivating a community where all of its members can thrive."

The truth is that Trump can do a lot of damage to institutional interests while he remains in office and legal challenges wend their way through the federal judicial system on their way to possible consideration by the Supreme Court. Even if the high court ultimately finds Trump's actions to be illegal, the process takes time and money, neither of which the plaintiffs will recover.

As Trump's public standing begins to erode, new signs of resistance are emerging among his likely targets. Within the Big Ten conference, faculty senates at 14 of the 18 member schools have passed what amount to mutual aid commitments, aimed at coordinating "a unified and vigorous response" to political attacks, in the words of the model resolution developed at Rutgers.

(The other 17 schools are the universities of Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, Oregon, Washington and Wisconsin; Indiana University; Michigan State, Ohio State and Penn State; Purdue; Northwestern; UCLA; and USC.) The faculties at Purdue, UCLA and USC haven't yet signed up, but dozens of other schools have inked so-called mutual academic defense compacts.

One can only wonder if the trend toward capitulation to Trump's bare-knuckled threats will have lasting consequences for the rule of law, social norms and the reputations of the submissive institutions. Some law firms that made deals with Trump to protect their business interests have lost clients that came to doubt that they would stand up forthrightly for the clients' interests.

Sonnenfeld alluded to the possible aftermath in his brief against Paramount/CBS, which he described as a "tragic capitulation of First Amendment rights, accompanied by a demoralizing and brand-tarnishing political appeasement."

He closed his essay with a fitting quote attributed to Murrow: "A nation of sheep will beget a government of wolves."

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# AI startup is valued at \$1 billion in deal

By KATE CLARK

Venture firm Andreessen Horowitz has agreed to lead a \$200-million investment in Periodic Labs, a startup building artificial intelligence for material science, according to people familiar with the matter.

The agreement values Periodic Labs at \$1 billion before the investment, an impressive price for a months-old company, according to the people, who asked not to be identified because the information is private.

OpenAI had previously agreed to lead the investment, but Periodic Labs decided that Andreessen Horowitz could offer more resources, one of the people said. OpenAI is still expected to participate in the financing and potentially team up with the company, the person said. The round hasn't closed, and terms of the deal could change.

Andreessen Horowitz didn't respond to a request for comment. Spokespeople for Periodic Labs and OpenAI declined to comment.

Periodic Labs was



Photo illustration by AVISHEK DAS SOPA Images/LightRocket

**VENTURE** capital firm Andreessen Horowitz is investing in Periodic Labs, a months-old company.

founded by Liam Fedus, OpenAI's former vice president of research and a key member of the team that launched ChatGPT, and Ekin Dogus Cubuk, a former research scientist at Google's DeepMind AI division. The idea is to use AI to study materials and potentially discover new ones.

The Information earlier reported some details of Periodic Labs' fundraising plans.

Little has been shared about the new venture. In a March tweet announcing his departure from OpenAI, Fe-

dus said he was excited about AI for science. He called it "one of the most strategically important areas" for OpenAI and said the company planned to "invest in and partner" with Periodic Labs.

Fedus is part of a growing group of former OpenAI staffers launching their own ventures, a cadre that's drawn comparisons to the "PayPal mafia," a group of prolific entrepreneurs including Elon Musk and Peter Thiel. Anthropic, the OpenAI rival, was started by former OpenAI executives

Dario and Daniela Amodei. Thinking Machines Lab, recently valued at \$10 billion, was founded by former OpenAI executive Mira Murati.

Investors are jostling for stakes in startups launched by alumni of OpenAI and other AI pioneers and are willing to pay lofty prices for what they see as rare talent. At the same time, larger companies are trying to retain employees with massive compensation packages worth hundreds of millions.

Several other OpenAI employees — including Rhythm Garg, Linden Li and Yash Patil — recently exited the company to launch a startup called Applied Compute. The startup quickly raised funding from Benchmark, Bloomberg reported.

Benchmark's investment valued Applied Compute at \$100 million, Upstarts Media reported. That's still remarkably high for such an early-stage deal, though it pales in comparison with the valuation that Periodic Labs commanded — thanks to Fedus' central role in creating ChatGPT.

Clark writes for Bloomberg.

OPINION VOICES

**Voices** **EARL OFARI HUTCHINSON** GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

# Six decades after the Watts riots, too little has changed

On Aug. 11, 1965, 60 years ago, I stood transfixed with hundreds of others on the corner several blocks from my house in South L.A. watching what seemed like a horrid page out of “Dante’s Inferno.”

But this was real life. Liquor stores, a laundromat and two dry cleaners blazed away. There was an ear-splitting din from the crowd’s shouts, curses and jeers at the police cars that sped by crammed with cops in full battle gear, shotguns flailing out of their cars.

There was an almost carnival air of euphoria among the roving throngs as packs of young and not-so-young people darted into the stores snatching and grabbing anything that wasn’t nailed down. Their arms bulged with liquor bottles and cigarette cartons. I was 18 and felt a childlike mix of awe and fascination watching this.

For a moment there was even the temptation to make my own dash into one of the burning stores. But that quickly passed. One of my friends kept repeating with his face contorted with anger: “Maybe now they’ll see how rotten they treat us.” In that bitter moment, he said what countless other Black people felt as the

flames and the smoke swirled.

The events of those days and his words remain burned in my memory on the 60th anniversary of the Watts riots. I still think of the streets down which we were shooed by the police and the National Guard during those hellish days.

They’re impossible to forget for another reason. Exactly six decades later, some of those streets look as if time has stood still. They are dotted with the same fast-food restaurants, beauty shops, liquor stores and mom-and-pop grocery stores. The main street near the block I lived on then is just as unkempt, pothole-ridden and trash littered now as it ever was. All the homes and stores in the area are hermetically sealed with iron bars, security gates and burglar alarms.

In taking a hard look at what has changed in Watts — and all of America’s neighborhoods like Watts — since the riots, the picture is not flattering. According to Data USA, Watts still has the runaway highest poverty rate in L.A. County. Nearly one-third of the households are far below the official poverty level. It has the highest jobless rate. It is still plagued by the same paucity of retail stores, healthcare services, chroni-

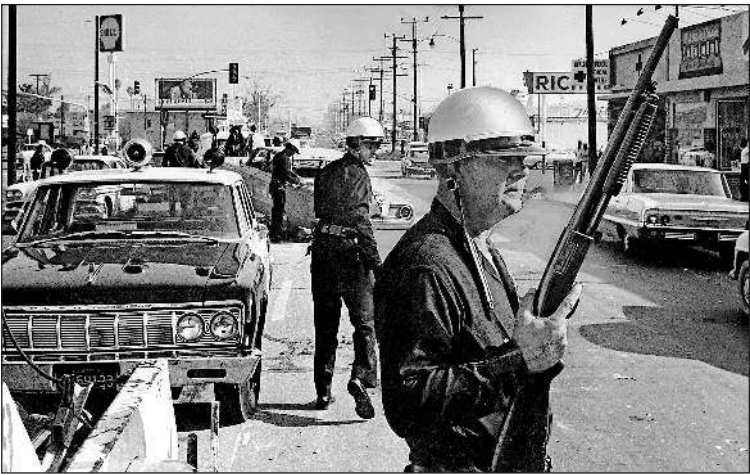
cally low educational test scores and high dropout rates.

The near-frozen conditions in Watts were hideously punctuated in the lengthy battle that residents and advocacy groups waged last year against city agencies to clean up the contaminated water that posed huge safety and health hazards to thousands. It’s a battle that’s still being fought.

In some ways, what I see in Watts now is worse than what I remember before the riots. Despite the grinding poverty among many in Watts six decades ago, nearly all the residents had shelter. The sight of people sleeping on the streets, at bus stops and in the park was practically unimaginable in Watts in 1965. That is not the case today. Homelessness, as in other parts of South Los Angeles, is a major problem.

However, this is only one benchmark of how little progress has been made since the riots in confronting racial ills and poverty in a still grossly underserved Watts.

Many Black people in the six decades since the riots have long since escaped such neighborhoods. Their lives, like mine, are now lived far from the corner in South L.A. where I once stood amid the flames and chaos. Their



**POLICE OFFICERS** stand guard on Aug. 13, 1965, as debris is cleared from Avalon Boulevard and Imperial Highway. RAY GRAHAM Los Angeles Times

flight was made possible by the avalanche of civil rights and voting rights laws, state and local bars against discrimination, and affirmative action programs that for many of them crumbled the nation’s historic racial barriers. The parade of top Black appointed and elected officials, including one former president, the legions of black mega millionaire CEOs, athletes and entertainers are evidence of that.

However, that does not alter the hard reality that a new generation of Black people now languishes on corners like the one I stood on in August 1965. For them there has been no escape.

But it’s not all doom and gloom. There are advocacy groups such as Watts Rising that press L.A. city and county officials for greater funding initiatives and programs in every area of life, including housing, jobs and income boosting programs, along with huge invest-

ment in improved healthcare services.

One other memorable moment for me during those hellfire days was when the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. came to Watts at the height of the riots. He was jeered by a few Black residents when he tried to calm the situation. But King did not just deliver a message of peace and nonviolence; he also deplored police abuse and the poverty in Watts. Sixty years later, he would almost certainly have the same message if he came to South L.A. or any of America’s other similar neighborhoods. Too little has changed. Too much has gotten worse. What I see in those communities 60 years after the Watts riots remains stark and troubling proof of that.

**EARL OFARI HUTCHINSON’s** latest book is “Day 1 The Trump Reign.” His commentaries can be found at [thehutchinsonreport.net](http://thehutchinsonreport.net).

**Voices** **ERWIN CHEMEKINSKY** CONTRIBUTING WRITER

# Trump isn’t lone villain in Texas’ gerrymander scheme

A Supreme Court ruling cracked open the door to more partisan tactics. Now, the president and his Texas cronies are kicking it in.

IF YOU WANT SOMEONE to blame for the recent crisis caused by President Trump’s rush to force a gerrymander of Texas’ congressional districts, and the harried responses from governors in California, Illinois and New York, you can start with the Supreme Court.

In 2019, in *Rucho vs. Common Cause*, the group held, 5 to 4, that challenges to partisan gerrymandering present “a nonjusticiable ‘political question’” and thus cannot be heard in federal court. This was widely considered a terrible ruling at the time, and we’re just now starting to see the consequences.

Gerrymandering occurs when the party that controls a state legislature redraws its districts to maximize smooth elections and safe seats for its party members. The notorious practice isn’t new — it’s nearly as old as the U.S., having taken its name from Founding Father Elbridge Gerry, an early governor of Massachusetts. Despite finding the practice “highly disagreeable,” Gerry signed off on the drawing of his state’s districts in

1812 to help his party gain competitive seats in the Legislature. During this process, someone apparently remarked that one bizarrely drawn district looked like the salamander — and the name “gerrymandering” took hold.

In the March 26, 1812, edition of the *Boston Gazette*, the paper ran a cartoon of the district, caricatured by artist Elkanah Tisdale to introduce “The Gerry-Mander: A new species of Monster.”

For most of American history, those engaging in gerrymandering would choose between a handful of maps based on their predictions of which could yield them the greatest advantage. Today, computers can generate thousands of these clever geographical divisions, with leaders ultimately choosing the map that provides them the best chance of partisan success. Intricate algorithms and detailed data about voters allow these map drawers to engage in gerrymandering with surgical precision.

*Rucho vs. Common Cause* arose in North Carolina, which is basically a purple state these days; presidential elections are always close, and statewide votes for congressional seats are evenly divided between Democrats and Republicans. However, when Republicans gained control of the North Carolina Legislature in 2010, they crafted a plan to redraw the boundaries for the state’s then 13 congressional districts in their favor.

State Republicans hired long-

time political consultant Thomas Hofeller to generate and evaluate roughly 3,000 distinctive maps, and then selected the one they believed gave Republicans the best chance of earning significant control over North Carolina’s House. In the 2018 midterm elections, Republican and Democratic candidates statewide each received roughly half of the votes, but Republicans won 10 of the 13 congressional races.

This, of course, isn’t unique to North Carolina. In Pennsylvania, across several elections, congressional races in districts drawn by a Republican legislature resulted in Democrats receiving between 45% and 51% of the statewide vote, yet winning just five of its 18 House seats.

In *Rucho vs. Common Cause*, a lower federal court found that partisan gerrymandering violated the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment (as well as the 1st Amendment and Article 1 of the Constitution). But the Supreme Court, in a 2019 opinion by Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr., reversed this decision. The 5-4 majority held that federal courts “cannot entertain a claim” and suggested that the plaintiffs “must find their resolution elsewhere.”

But this was just wrong. Gerrymandering is nothing more than a method for rigging elections. The central precept of a republican government, as the Supreme Court itself once observed, is “that the voters should choose their repre-

sentatives, not the other way around.” However, partisan gerrymandering infamously creates a system for representatives to effectively choose their voters. As a result, each voter does not have the same opportunity to influence the outcome of an election, which is antithetical to equal protection.

When the court first ruled on partisan gerrymandering, holding that federal courts could hear challenges to it, Justice Lewis Powell observed that “the boundaries of the voting districts have been distorted deliberately” to deprive voters of “an equal opportunity to participate in the State’s legislative processes.” Some voters will benefit and will have more influence in choosing representatives. For others this will be more difficult as their votes are diluted. That is inconsistent with democracy.

Even though districting is usually done at the beginning of each decade, right after the U.S. census, and even though Texas’ congressional districts were drawn just a few years ago, Trump and Texas Gov. Greg Abbott are trying to engage in redistricting for the sole goal of manipulating the composition of Congress. Trump, knowing the Supreme Court’s decision means that federal courts can’t stop it, has strongly urged the state to redraw its districts now to effectively create five more safe seats for Republican representatives.

Not surprisingly, states with Democratic governors and legisla-

tures are now looking for ways to respond, including redrawing districts that create Democratic seats in Congress. But some of these states, notably California and New York, already adopted the desirable and seemingly bipartisan approach of having independent commissions draw their districts to eliminate the plague of gerrymandering. The question is whether they can and should also change this practice now to combat what Texas is trying to do.

There are many ways to end partisan gerrymandering. Congress could pass a law requiring that all states use independent commissions to draw the congressional districts. The Supreme Court could reconsider and overrule *Rucho vs. Common Cause* and go back to holding, as the law used to be, that federal courts can invalidate partisan gerrymandering. State courts can find partisan gerrymandering violates state constitutions.

But none of this is going to happen now, and there is nothing to stop Texas from its efforts to carve out five more Republican districts. States controlled by Democrats need to respond; unilateral disarmament never makes sense. The loser is American democracy. And the Supreme Court is to blame.

**ERWIN CHEMEKINSKY**, dean of the UC Berkeley Law School, is an Opinion Voices contributing writer.

## LETTERS



**PARADERS** and floats make their way along the route at the Los Angeles Pride Parade on June 8. CARLIN STIEHL Los Angeles Times

### No one can steal Los Angeles’ joy

Re “Emotional aftermaths of local traumas,” Aug. 3

I can only imagine the ongoing pain of those who lost a home in Los Angeles’ fires or contact with a loved one to the Immigration and Customs Enforcement raids. As deputy managing editor Shelby Grad writes, there can be no escape from that grief.

But I want to share that a scenario of resilience, unity and, above all, pure, unbridled joy spread across the outdoor plaza at downtown L.A.’s Music Center on Aug. 1 for the organization’s free disco night. As City Hall towered across the street and a sparkling mirror ball spun, a couple thousand of us — all ages, shapes, sizes and ethnicities — pumped and gyrated to ’70s favorites including “YMCA,” a song embraced by the LGBTQ+ community that President

Trump so oddly seems to like, and Gloria Gaynor’s victorious “I Will Survive.”

No one has been able to deport all the joy from our beloved city. No person or thing ever will.

**ZAN DUBIN**  
Santa Monica

*This writer is a former Los Angeles Times staffer.*

✶

Re “A rock opera’s staying power,” July 30

It hasn’t been an easy year for Los Angeles. Yet sitting at the Hollywood Bowl recently, the temperature perfect, no biting insects to bother me, the Hollywood sign peeking through, surrounded by people of every race and walk of life gathered to watch a performance of “Jesus Christ Superstar” led by an otherworldly talented, multiracial, largely queer cast, reminded me why we so often say “only in Los Angeles” and why my hometown is the greatest city on Earth.

**ALEXIS RODRIGUEZ**  
North Hollywood

### What about the ‘spineless’ GOP?

Re “Kamala Harris won’t cure what ails the Democratic Party,” Opinion Voices, Aug. 6

I am so tired of hearing people talk about the ailing, aimless Democratic Party. What about the ailing, spineless Republican Party? Without its complete capitulation and fealty to President Trump, this country wouldn’t be in the sorry state it’s in.

The Democrats are fighting back with everything they have at their disposal, but when a large portion of the country no longer believes in truth, science, the law or common decency, it’s almost impossible for them to get their message out. The very people that Trump’s policies are hurting the most don’t even recognize it.

What ails the Democrats is that they care about decency, the law, the common man, fairness and all of the things our country used to stand for. What do Re-

publicans in power care about? Their wallets and, as far as I can tell, absolutely nothing else. Certainly not clean water and air, vaccines, science, legality, helping the less fortunate — the list goes on and on.

Democrats are far from perfect, but how do members of the GOP sleep at night?

**TRACEY POMERANCE-POIRIER**  
Chatsworth

### That bear didn’t need to be shot

Re “Sierra Madre sees a surge in home break-ins by bears,” Aug. 6

I sometimes reread pieces in the Opinion section to be sure I’ve understood all the nuances or to grapple with a particular perspective on an issue, including my own. Until today, I don’t think I’ve ever read a news item twice. In fact, I was in such disbelief that I had to read it three times.

Authorities shot and

killed a bear that had been tranquilized? The bear was not a threat to anyone while tranquilized.

Yet, instead of trucking her farther into the wilds and releasing her, they found it necessary to kill her? To shoot a contained animal is an act of cruelty. If there were a legitimate reason to euthanize the bear, there are humane ways to put an animal down painlessly.

It goes without saying that no one wants a bear breaking into their home, but this ill-advised attempt at a solution is an unnecessary act of barbarism, a 2025 version of the ending of the 1957 film “Old Yeller.” Except that shooting that dog was an act of love. Shooting this bear was an act of brutality.

**TERESA DeCRESCENZO**  
Studio City

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# Rescued to rescuer: Sydney helps fire evacuees heal

[**Evacuees**, from A1] Angeles' long-standing no-kill refuge for shepherds. That day, Sydney rescued me, and I took him home to Altadena.

Sydney was aloof, scared, always turning away. He surveyed my house and settled into a small, three-sided doorway in a dark hallway. I was pretty sure he'd been caged his first few years.

Within a month, Sydney escaped four more times. Three times he was recovered by good Samaritans. His final attempt could have killed us both. As I careened after him in my car up Maiden Lane, his abrupt fixation on a squirrel gave me a few precious seconds to jump out, grab him by the neck, skin both my knees and barely escape the rush hour traffic on Altadena Drive.

If Sydney were a human, he might be considered a bit on the spectrum. He's stealthy, awkward around others and profoundly unaware of his beauty and power. From the moment we met, I recognized he had a special gift. In the aftermath of the Eaton fire, in an odd way, he would discover it too.



**FIRE EVACUEE** Carrie Henderson was met with a daily chorus of, “Can I hug your dog?”

On Jan. 7, Sydney and I, along with three women and four dogs from the neighborhood, found ourselves frantically driving south to Pasadena's iconic, grand hotel — the Langham Huntington — to escape the fast-moving fireball. There were hundreds in line. The front desk managed to find a room. The last room.

Exhausted, but grateful and with only the clothes on our backs, the nine of us crammed into Room 401 for the night. Syd and I chose the tiny vestibule so he could sleep in the small, dark closet, away from the crowd. The rest were glued to the big-screen TV and watched the orange fire line spread fast and furious throughout the night.

Early the next morning, Syd and I ran through the bustling lobby filled with pretty people, giant floral arrangements and dozens of fire victims. Sydney's striking presence caused a stir, but he continued next to me, then out the sliding door.

Two young valets wearing smart suits and tweed caps ran over. They'd been searching for Syd after spotting him the night before. Sydney weighs 75 pounds, with shaggy locks and has large ears that make his already handsome face even more expressive.

“What is that dog?” they asked.

“A German-Pyrenees mix. Check out the giant furry feet and

you'll get it.”

Sydney and I were heading out to see whether our house had survived. I promised we'd be back soon.

The streets were crowded with first responders, but we slowly made our way north until I could see our corner, our street, our house. I put on an N95 mask and gloves and entered through a broken front door. The roof was damaged, soot covered the floors and everything smelled of smoke, but the house was still there.

The winds picked up, signaling more destruction, so we quickly gathered dog food, meds, a few clothes, jacket and an overnight bag. Syd grabbed Lambchop, his favorite toy, and we high-tailed back to the hotel.

At the Langham, the same two valets, Rhandall and John, found Sydney and me. On their haunches, they scratched and loved up Syd. We swapped stories and I told them how Syd and I found each other. Syd, ever the introvert, could handle only a few minutes, then pulled me to move on.

By now, Peggy and her two goldens had left for Palm Springs and Sally was able to move back home. Agatha had lost her house; she and her dogs would move in with friends.

Our cramped room of nine turned into just Sydney and me, so

we moved to Room 411, a cozy space with four big picture windows. On cue, Sydney began looking up into the trees for squirrels. I walked into the black-and-white marble bathroom and noticed, next to the tub, two silver bowls and a cushy, hot pink dog bed. I found Maria, the fourth-floor housekeeper. She'd fallen for Sydney and wanted him to be comfortable. We hugged and she became part of our hotel family.

That evening, Syd and I took the elevator down to the famous tea room. Syd, unaccustomed to elevators, let alone crowded ones, had to be pulled in, then splat like a cartoon character on the floor each time there was a shift down. His act delivered laughs and conversation starters with several guests as we headed for dinner.

It was packed. A mix of chic internationals, tourists, a group of young, trendy up-and-comers, and the rest of us wearing yesterday's attire. Sydney plopped down in the middle of the room, unconsciously posing, as if he were Cary Grant. Like a magnet, he drew all kinds of interesting people who wanted to meet him and hear what it was like to be us.

Jess, the bartender who makes mixing drinks look like art, made me the perfect Arnold Palmer, the first of many, and served up a bowl of water for Sydney.

Syd pressed his cold nose on

my face at 6 a.m. every day, shaking his tushy, desperate for a walk and to see more than just me. We picked a different street or path each morning. He discovered a new world of smells, critters, and people who would, inevitably, stop and ask, “Wow, what is that dog?”

We met many standouts: Eric and Patrice from Sacramento, Nicole from Santa Monica, Miguel from Pasadena, among them. They all wanted to meet Sydney, and I was the beneficiary.

Sydney began to look for his valet cohorts who were usually speeding like racehorses to fetch cars for the long line of guests. Rhandall and John always took a few minutes to grab and tousele Syd.

Back inside, we'd hang around the coffee cart near the front desk, a makeshift meeting place for swapping fire stories. There were lots of us coming and going — all ages, occupations and circumstances, united by trauma and confusion.

As time went on, the once-shy Syd began awkwardly licking and kissing the hands and faces of people gathered, as if moving down an assembly line. I worried it was off-putting but, within seconds, people loved it. Syd was developing this remarkable gift of sensing people's needs and giving back to them.

One afternoon, a doctor sprinted past us. He was the first speaker at a convention and was late. He yelled, “Oh my God, what's his name?” I yelled back,

“Sydney!” after Pollack and Poitier. (I'm in the entertainment industry.) Near the end of the long corridor, he said, “What the hell,” ran back, wrapped his arms around Sydney.

This scene happened over and over again. A daily chorus of, “Can I hug your dog? What is he? Where did you get him?” Throughout our long stay, people approached or chased this big dog without fear. Singles, families who lost homes, kids whose schools burned down.

Pretty soon, Syd, with his funny feet, hockey stick legs, thick swishy tail and ballerina-like moves, pranced down hallways and welcomed outsiders into his new neighborhood. The dog who always shied away seemed to understand we all needed contact, and so did he.

He quickly learned the geography of the entire hotel and majestic outdoor gardens. I took his lead. We met nurses, an upscale bridal party, a myriad of fire attorneys, watched a 5-year-old's birthday celebration and talked with a couple from Romania.

He dragged me to the coffee shop to see Isabelle and Wilson. At night, to the lounge to find Jess, Ernesto and Grace.

One evening, while we drove back to the hotel from somewhere, he poked his head out the window, and I heard this loud, painful cry of excitement when Sydney saw Rhandall and John in the circle drive. When they approached, this time Sydney raced back and forth in the back seat, jumped out with Lambchop, and leaned into them.

After a little more than two months, we were finally cleared to move back home, and Sydney and Lambchop spent their 62nd night on that hot pink bed on the marble bathroom floor. The next morning, we packed our things and took one last ride down the elevator. Sydney was a pro by then. There were bittersweet goodbyes.

When we got home, Sydney ran out the back door, raced through the grass and around the jacaranda tree, hoping for squirrels.

Now, months later, I marvel at how, during our stay at the Langham, Sydney bloomed. Every day, new people came, some people left, but the constant was Syd, his presence, his waggle, his ability to give unexpected joy. A new Sydney had emerged. I can't help but wonder whether he dreams of being back there.

Henderson is a special correspondent.

# Few or no penalties imposed in some farmworker deaths

[**Farmworkers**, from A1] worker who carried legislation last year that would have made it easier for farmworkers to receive workers' compensation if they were stricken by heat illness on the job. The measure was vetoed by Gov. Gavin Newsom. “It is the kind of thing that should be keeping legislators up at night. People are dying.”

Last month, the California state auditor blasted the California Department of Occupational Health and Safety, finding, among other problems, that the agency's inspectors failed to take proper action when workers suffered heat illness on the job. The audit also found that the agency was understaffed, and many of its procedures out of date.

In addition, a Times review of several recent heat deaths on California farms found cases where Cal/OSHA issued few or no penalties, even when workers died. In May of 2023, for example, a worker harvesting corn near Brawley fell behind his colleagues and then complained of stomach pain and began convulsing. He was rushed to the hospital, where he died of heat stroke, organ failure and “underlying medical issues.” Cal/OSHA closed its investigation with no penalties, according to records.

In a statement, Cal/OSHA Deputy Director of Communications Daniel Lopez said officials “acknowledge the state auditor's findings and recommendations” and were working to make improvements. The statement also said Cal/OSHA has recently created an Agricultural Enforcement Task Force to improve working conditions for farmworkers.

The enforcement lapses come at a time when farmworkers — many of whom lack legal status and fear deportation — are already hesitant to voice complaints about working conditions,



**ENFORCEMENT** lapses in the law come when workers are already hesitant to complain, fearing deportation.

fearful that employers could retaliate by reporting them to immigration authorities. It is estimated that more than half of California's approximately 350,000 farmworkers are undocumented.

Last week, as the hottest temperatures of the summer descend just as harvest season hits its peak — and at a time when the Trump administration has stepped up immigration raids across California — some say farm laborers face more risks than ever.

“Over and over again, we have seen farmworkers go without the heat safety protections they are legally entitled to,” said Teresa Romero, president of the United Farm Workers union. The state's heat illness prevention enforcement system

“isn't working.”

California's landmark heat laws were put in place in August of 2005, with then-Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger announcing new measures while standing with the family of a farm laborer, Constatino Cruz, who had died of heatstroke.

Cruz was the fourth farmworker to die in that brutal summer 20 years ago, in which heat deaths also claimed a man picking bell peppers in Arvin, a melon picker in Fresno County and a grape picker in Kern County. All had been laboring in the fields when temperatures were above 100 degrees.

The rules, which were the first of their kind in the country, require bosses to provide outdoor workers with fresh

water, access to shade when the temperatures climb, and breaks to cool off whenever workers request them. Employers are also required to have a heat illness prevention plan and train supervisors to recognize the signs of heat stroke and seek medical help.

But the law was far from a panacea. In 2009, the American Civil Liberties Union and the United Farm Workers union sued Cal/OSHA, saying the statute was too weak and the agency's enforcement was “woefully inadequate.”

The suit said 11 farmworkers had died since the law went into effect.

Three years later, the nonprofit law firm Public Counsel filed another suit, alleging that the state's fail-

ure to enforce the problems had persisted, and that farmworkers were continuing to die.

In 2015, the state settled both lawsuits, agreeing to focus on enforcement of heat safety violations, as well as making complaints more accessible.

Since the law was enacted, climate change has pounded the state with more frequent and intense heat waves, with little relief even at night. And in recent years, the enforcement problems have continued.

A 2022 study by the UC Merced Community and Labor Center found that many farmworkers were still laboring without the protections. Of more than 1,200 workers surveyed, 43% reported that their employers

had not provided a heat illness prevention plan and 15% said they had not received heat illness prevention training.

Last year, a Times investigation found that Cal/OSHA inspections had dropped by 30% from 2017 to 2023, and the number of violations fell by more than 40%.

Assemblywoman Liz Ortega (D-San Leandro) said last year that there were “dangerous and illegal” working conditions on many California farms. “To say I'm infuriated is an understatement,” she said. “I don't want to hear any more excuses. It's excuse after excuse, year after year.”

This year, Assemblywoman Dawn Addis (D-Morro Bay) introduced another proposed law, similar to the one Newsom vetoed last year, making it easier for farmworkers to receive workers' compensation. The bill, which faced opposition from farm interests, was approved by the Assembly, but held over at the end of the legislative session.

As the heat wave settled over California last week, workers in the watermelon field near Knights Landing said they were coming in to work earlier — at 6 a.m. — and leaving earlier, to stay ahead of the heat.

As the sun beat down, water jugs were stationed every few yards and tarps providing shade coverage were stationed around the perimeter of the rows of crops.

Chavez, the boss, said he had not seen any of his workers suffering from heat stress recently. “Not this year, thank God,” he said.

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



SHARON NICHOLLS, left, holds a letter asking Home Depot to protect day laborers at its Pasadena store.

Voices STEVE LOPEZ COLUMNIST

# ‘Silence is violence’: Citizen brigade stands up to ICE sweeps

‘You can’t not be an activist’ in the face of continued raids on working immigrants. ‘If you’re an American, it’s the only option.’

“Thank you so much for showing up this morning,” Sharon Nicholls said into a megaphone at 8 a.m. Wednesday outside a Home Depot in Pasadena.

As of Friday afternoon, no federal agents had raided the store on East Walnut Street. But the citizen brigade that stands watch outside and patrols the parking lot in search of ICE agents has not let down its guard — especially not after raids at three other Home Depots in recent days

despite federal court rulings limiting sweeps. On Friday, a Home Depot in Van Nuys was raided twice before noon.

About two dozen people gathered Wednesday near the tent that serves as headquarters of the East Pasadena Community Defense Center. Another dozen or so would be arriving over the next half hour, some carrying signs.

“Silence is Violence”

“Migrants Don’t Party With Epstein”

Cynthia Lunine, 70, carried a large sign that read “Break His Dark Spell” and included a sinister image of President Trump. She said she was new to political activism, but added: “You can’t not be an activist. If you’re an American, it’s the only option. The immigration issue is absolutely inhumane, it’s un-Christian, and it’s intolerable.”

There are local supporters, for sure, of Trump’s immigration crackdown. Activists told me there aren’t many days in which they don’t field shouted profanities or pro-Trump

[See Lopez, B5]

Voices GUSTAVO ARELLANO COLUMNIST

# A guardian of L.A. County’s past

Sheriff’s Department staff historian makes sure the agency’s rich lore isn’t forgotten.

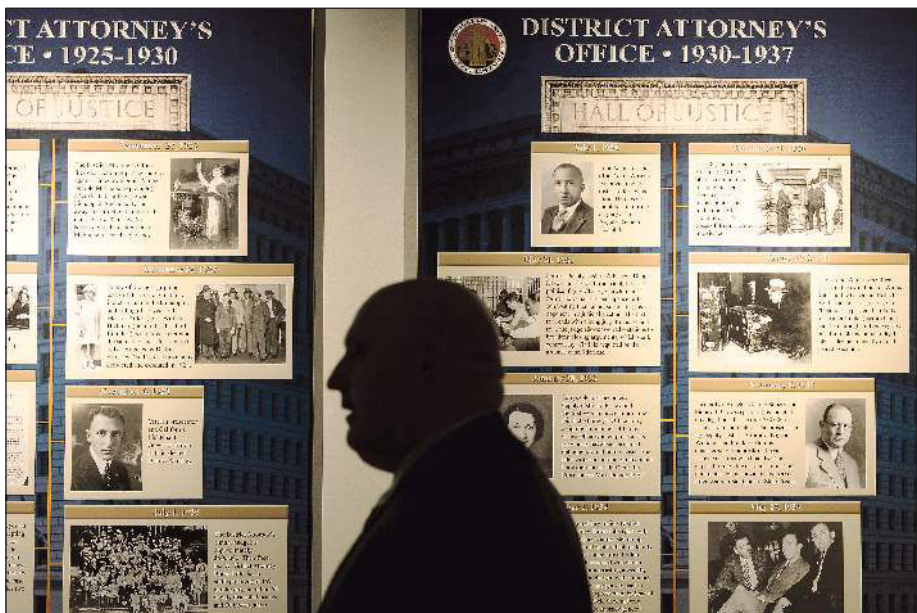
When an explosion killed three L.A. County sheriff’s deputies last month, Mike Fratantoni thought about 1857.

A horse thief named Juan Flores broke out of San Quentin State Prison, joined a posse that called itself Las Manillas — the handcuffs — and headed south toward Southern California. They robbed stores along the way and murdered a German shopkeeper in San Juan Capistrano. Los Angeles County Sheriff James R. Barton was warned about them but ignored the danger. He and his men were ambushed. Four were killed — Barton, Deputy Charles Daly and constables Charles Baker and William Little. The spot, near the interchange where State Route 133 and the 405 Freeway meet in Irvine, is now called Barton Mound.

Orange County was still a part of L.A. County then, the population was just over 11,000, California was a newly minted state, and the Mexican period was giving way to the Wild West.

“They all died alone with no help coming,” said

[See Arellano, B6]



MIKE FRATANTONI, Sheriff’s Department historian, with an exhibit about the district attorney’s office, top. Above is a collection of old prison shanks.

# Newsom’s push to cut fossil fuels gets reality check

Governor eases up on industry as state faces loss of two refineries over the next year.

By TARYN LUNA

SACRAMENTO — Three years ago, a series of political advertisements in Florida kicked off a war between Gov. Gavin Newsom and oil companies over blame for California’s highest-in-the-nation gas prices.

In a jab at Republican Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, Newsom ran ads contrasting Florida’s conservative policies with California’s liberal stances on abortion, education and LGBTQ+ rights.

The Western States Petroleum Assn., a trade group that represents the industry, responded with a warning for Floridians about the cost of gas and electricity in Newsom’s Golden State.

“Gavin Newsom is banning gas cars and shutting down California oil produc-

tion,” the association’s ad stated. “California can’t afford Gavin Newsom’s ambition. Can Florida?”

It turns out, the price of California’s battle with oil — both politically and at the pump — may be too much for the governor and the state to bear.

Now with two oil refineries expected to shut down over the next year, the Democratic governor has halted his fight with the industry he accused of price gouging and targeted in two special legislative sessions.

A Phillips 66 refinery in Wilmington is slated to close by the end of the year and a Valero facility in Benicia announced plans to shut down in April. The closures could reduce California’s in-state oil refining capacity by 20%, setting off alarm bells for the Newsom administration.

Having fewer California refineries would increase reliance on foreign oil and drive up gasoline prices once again — a financial jolt for consumers that the governor wants to avoid.

Instead of lambasting the industry, Newsom is now directing his administration and asking lawmakers to try to help refineries stay open.

“My optimism now is that this is a pivot,” said Catherine

[See Gasoline, B2]

Capitol Journal  
George Skelton’s column does not appear today.

# Law firm in L.A. homeless case bills city \$1.8 million

By ANDREW KHOURI AND DAVID ZAHNISER

A high-profile law firm representing the city of Los Angeles in a sweeping homelessness case submitted a \$1.8-million invoice for two weeks of work in May, according to records reviewed by The Times.

The invoice from Gibson Dunn & Crutcher comes as the city is already under serious financial pressure, caused in part by rapidly growing legal payouts.

With at least 15 of Gibson Dunn’s lawyers billing at nearly \$1,300 per hour, the price tag so far equates to just under \$140,000 per day over a 13-day period.

Gibson Dunn, while representing the city of Grants Pass, Ore., recently secured a landmark ruling from the U.S. Supreme Court that upheld laws barring homeless encampments in public spaces.

Los Angeles officials re-

tained the law firm in May, roughly a week before a seven-day evidentiary hearing to determine whether control over the city’s homelessness programs should be taken away from Mayor Karen Bass and the City Council and turned over to a third-party receiver.

A month later, U.S. District Judge David O. Carter issued a scathing ruling, saying the city failed to adhere to the terms of a three-year-old settlement agreement with the L.A. Alliance for Human Rights, which calls for the creation of 12,915 homeless beds or other housing opportunities by June 2027.

Still, Carter also concluded that “this is not the time” to hand control of the city’s roughly \$1 billion in homelessness programs to a third party.

Matthew Umhofer, an attorney representing the Alliance, said the city paid big money to Gibson Dunn in a

[See Invoice, B4]

# Ex-officer is arrested; may be tied to kidnap and robbery cases

By LIBOR JANY AND RICHARD WINTON

A former Los Angeles police officer has been arrested on suspicion of kidnapping for ransom and is being investigated in connection with other alleged crimes in San Fernando Valley neighborhoods that he used to patrol, according to department sources and jail records.

Eric Halem, 37, was arrested Thursday afternoon by members of the LAPD’s Robbery-Homicide Division and is being held without bail, according to online jail records and the LAPD.

If the L.A. County district attorney’s office files charges, he is set to be ar-

rrested on Monday. Attempts to reach an attorney for him were unsuccessful on Friday afternoon.

Details about the alleged kidnapping are murky, but several department sources — who requested anonymity to discuss the open case — said Halem is also being investigated in connection with home invasions that occurred in the West Valley Division, where he worked until several years ago.

After his arrest, LAPD investigators obtained warrants for the search of his home and recovery of several firearms he owned, the sources said.

In an unattributed statement sent Friday afternoon in response to questions

[See Ex-LAPD, B5]

# Newsom eases up on refiners as closures loom

[**Gasoline**, from B1]  
ine Reheis-Boyd, president and chief executive of the association. “This is a turn.”

## The turn

In April, Newsom sent a letter to Siva Gunda, the vice chair of the California Energy Commission, requesting that he “redouble the state’s efforts to work closely with refiners” to ensure access to reliable transportation fuels and “that refiners continue to see the value in serving the California market” even as the state transitions away from fossil fuels.

Newsom included a request for Gunda to recommend changes by July 1 to the state’s approach to maintain adequate oil supply. The letter was sent days after Valero notified the Energy Commission of its intent to close the Benicia refinery.

Gunda responded in late June with a warning that the state “faces the prospect of continued reduction in in-state petroleum refining capacity that outpaces demand decline for petroleum-based fuels” and offered industry-friendly suggestions to boost supply.

In short, California’s efforts to reduce consumption of gasoline have gotten ahead of consumer demand for zero-emission vehicles. Gunda said the state needs to increase investor confidence in refineries to enable them to maintain operations and meet demand.

Newsom has downplayed the change in approach.

“It’s completely consistent,” he said at a recent news conference. He’s also not naive, he said.

“We are all the beneficiaries of oil and gas,” he said.

“So it’s always been about finding a just transition of pragmatism in terms of that process.”

His comments this summer have marked a noticeable change in tone from a Democratic governor whose climate change advocacy became synonymous with attacking the oil industry.

Although now in limbo due to actions taken by the Trump administration, Newsom set a goal for 100%



CAROLYN COLE Los Angeles Times

**THE PHILLIPS 66** refinery in Wilmington, above, and a Valero facility in Benecia, Calif., are set to be closed down over the next year.

of in-state sales of new passenger cars and trucks to be zero-emission by 2035.

In 2022, Newsom also pushed legislation at the statehouse that banned new oil wells within 3,200 feet of homes and schools.

In a special session months later, Newsom urged lawmakers to place monetary penalties on excessive oil company profits. Newsom accused the oil industry of intentionally driving up the cost of gasoline as retribution for the state’s policies to phase out dependence on fossil fuels in an effort to curb climate change.

Lawmakers balked and Newsom backed off his initial request for them to pass an oil profits penalty. In-

stead, lawmakers gave state regulators more authority to investigate gasoline price surges and potentially place a cap on profits and penalize oil companies through a public hearing process.

The governor called a special session redux in 2024 after Democrats pushed back on his request to approve new requirements on oil refineries in the final days of the regular legislative session. Lawmakers ultimately approved a state law that could lower gasoline price spikes by giving regulators the authority to require that California oil refiners store more inventory.

Reheis-Boyd said the change reflects that the governor is realizing that reducing supply without reducing

demand only increases costs.

The “truckloads of data” required from the industry through the special sessions also showed that refineries weren’t gouging customers, she said, and gave state officials insight into why refineries struggle to maintain their operations in California.

“When Valero announced they were leaving California, the next day, their stock price went up. And that just says everything you need to know, right?” Reheis-Boyd said. “You have to send a market signal that says, ‘We’re open for business here. We need you. We want to collaborate with you as we all plan for this lower-carbon economy in the future, but

that pace and skill has got to match up.’ ”

## What’s to come

When California lawmakers return to the state Capitol next week to begin the monthlong slog until they adjourn for the year, industry-friendly bills await them.

Among the considerations is Newsom’s proposal to make it easier to drill new wells in oil fields in Kern County. His plan also would streamline new wells in existing oil fields across the state if companies permanently plug two old wells.

Later this week, the Energy Commission is expected to consider pausing a possible cap on oil industry profits and suspending potential new state oversight of

the timing of refinery maintenance. The state is also reportedly attempting to intervene to find a buyer for the Valero plant in Benicia.

While the oil industry is hopeful, environmentalists are dismayed.

California is at a crucial inflection point in its transition to clean energy, said Mary Creasman, chief executive of California Environmental Voters. With federal climate rollbacks, the world is watching the state.

“Now is not the time to retreat,” she said. “Now is the time to double down and innovate the way through this. That’s what this moment calls for. That’s the leadership we need nationally and the leadership we need globally.”



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CITY & STATE



Photographs by ALLEN J. SCHABEN Los Angeles Times

# More than medalists

Lifeguards John Livingston, right, and Justin Cattano of Delray Beach, Fla., celebrate taking first place in the men’s open double row at the 2025 USLA National Lifeguard Championships at Huntington State Beach on Friday. The team, shown above crashing through a large breaking wave, are four-time regional and national champions.



# Aliases, ‘dummy books’ used to steal rare Chinese texts, feds say

By KATERINA PORTELA

A Bay Area man has been charged with stealing rare Chinese manuscripts valued at \$216,000 from the UCLA library in an alleged scheme involving aliases and fake replacement books.

Jeffrey Ying of Fremont is accused of using three fake names to check out the valuable antique manuscripts from UCLA in a possible five-year string of robberies, with some of the stolen books dating back to the 13th century, according to investigators.

Ying, arrested Wednesday before an alleged attempt to flee to China, was charged by the U.S. attorney’s office with theft of major artwork, a felony punishable by up to 10 years in federal prison, the U.S. attorney’s office in Los Angeles said Thursday.

According to an FBI affidavit, 38-year-old Ying rented manuscripts in groups, abusing a new system at UCLA that allowed users to request library cards and rent books without showing an official ID. He would then return “dummy books” in place of the actual manuscripts.

The “dummy books” were often blank or low-value manuscripts with computer-paper-printed labels and asset tags to mimic those of the actual books.

Starting in 2020, Ying is accused of requesting books from the Southern Regional Library Facility (SRL), a remote UCLA library storage space meant to house rare or delicate books. In response to his request, a box containing manuscripts would be transported to a reserved reading room at the Charles E. Young Research Library of UCLA. Ying would review

and replace the manuscripts with his “dummies,” taking the originals with him as he left, according to an FBI affidavit.

Library staff told The Times that the official policy is to have an attendant present in the reading room at all times as someone reads special collections books.

When the material was returned to the library, the university had no policy requiring a thorough review of the items to ensure they were not replaced with dummy manuscripts, according to officials.

The director of UCLA Library Special Collections received notice from the head of the university’s East Asian Library that three rare Chinese books were missing after being last checked out by someone named “Alan Fujimori.”

According to the FBI affidavit, security camera anal-

ysis from library staff revealed that Fujimori, Austin Chen, and Jason Wang, who had all checked out valuable manuscripts over the years, were all aliases for one person — Ying.

Through a travel record investigation, FBI officials said they discovered that Ying traveled back and forth from China within several days of the alleged robberies, presumably to sell or transport the books.

However, as of yet, the FBI said it has not confirmed whether Ying sold or traded any of the manuscripts. The FBI affidavit also lists every book stolen by Ying as “never returned,” which may mean that authorities have not found them.

While the official number of stolen books is unconfirmed, affidavit testimony suggests at least 10 are missing, each valued at \$274 to

\$70,000.

Over the course of October to December of last year, federal investigation details in the FBI affidavit showed that Ying allegedly checked out six books under the alias “Jason Wang.” On Aug. 5 of this year, Ying requested eight more books as “Austin Chen,” according to the affidavit.

The next day, Ying planned to board a previously booked flight to China. UCLA police were already tipped off about suspicious behavior — by the time Ying arrived to pick up his eight books before his flight, authorities were called and promptly arrested him.

While the arrest and affidavit records primarily focused on the robberies of the last year, they also allege that in 2020, Ying, under the name Alan Fujimori, stole two UCLA manuscripts from the 13th and 16th cen-

turies valued at a combined \$132,386.

His record could go back even further. The FBI affidavit mentions that the alias “Alan Fujimori” is associated with a known book thief who was on the run after similar thefts at the UC Berkeley library.

At his arrest, Ying was found with a card for Hotel Angeleno, located three miles away from the UCLA library, according to an FBI and UCLA police investigation detailed in the affidavit.

The document also detailed that later on the day of the arrest, officers and detectives searched Ying’s room at Hotel Angeleno with a search warrant. They discovered blank manuscripts, printed tags and fraudulent IDs that matched past aliases.

Ying remains in custody because of the risk of him leaving the country.

# Assembly measure seeks to safeguard coverage for HIV prevention

By TYRONE BEASON

State lawmakers are considering a bill meant to protect access to HIV prevention drugs for insured Californians as threats from the federal government continue.

Assembly Bill 554 would require health plans and insurers to cover all antiretroviral drugs used for PrEP and PEP regimens. The drugs just have to be approved by the Food and Drug Administration, and would not require prior authorization. The bill would also prevent health plans from forcing patients to first try a less expensive drug before choosing a more expensive, specialty option.

The bill requires insurance providers to cover these drugs without cost-sharing with patients, and it limits the ability of insurers and employers to review treatments to determine medical necessity. To streamline reimbursements and expand the range of PrEP medications doctors can pick for their patients, the legislation allows pro-

viders to directly bill insured patients’ pharmaceutical benefit plans.

LGBTQ+ public health advocates worry that the Trump administration’s recent attempt to slash \$1.5 billion in HIV prevention funding from the federal budget — along with its decisions to stop offering suicide-prevention counseling for LGBTQ+ individuals through the national 988 lifeline and to restrict gender-affirming care for transgender Americans — amounts to an assault on the queer community.

The state bill would act “as a shield against this administration’s cruelty,” said rival Assemblymember Mark González (D-Los Angeles), who co-sponsored AB 554 with Assemblymember Matt Haney (D-San Francisco).

A recent cause for alarm among LGBTQ+ health advocates, first reported in the Wall Street Journal, is news that Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. plans to replace the entire U.S. Preventive Services Task Force because its 16 appointed members

are too “woke,” according to unnamed individuals cited by the Journal.

At a news conference Aug. 4, Kennedy confirmed that he is reviewing the makeup of the panel, adding that he hasn’t made a final decision.

The bill was introduced earlier in the year out of fear that Kennedy’s skepticism about vaccines might spill over into HIV/PrEP drug coverage and because of worries that President Trump would dismantle the task force, González said.

The task force wields immense influence, making recommendations about which cancer screenings, tests for chronic diseases and preventive medications are beneficial for Americans and therefore should be covered by insurers — including drugs for HIV/AIDS prevention.

Drugs prescribed in a PrEP regimen — short for pre-exposure prophylaxis — block the virus that causes AIDS from multiplying in a person’s body. They can be taken in either pill or injection form on an ongoing basis. PEP refers to

post-exposure prophylaxis and involves taking medication within 72 hours of potential exposure and for a short period of time, in order to prevent infection and transmission of the virus. Both regimens are recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as effective ways to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS when used correctly.

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force was created in 1984 by congressional authorization to issue evidence-based advice to physicians on which screenings and preventive medicines are worth considering for their healthy patients. The panel’s recommendations are closely watched by professional societies when adopting guidelines for their clinician members. In many cases, when insurers are on the fence about whether to cover a given screening or diagnostic test, they’ll turn to the panel’s recommendations.

The panel, made up of doctors, nurses, health psychologists, epidemiologists and statisticians who are experts in primary care and

preventive medicine and who serve four-year terms on a voluntary basis, is meant to be free from conflicts of interest and outside influences.

Some of its past recommendations, however, such as its advice on prostate cancer screenings, have been met with criticism.

When it comes to HIV prevention, the U.S. Supreme Court appeared to back up the task force with its July 11 ruling in Kennedy vs. Braidwood Management, which upheld a key mandate in the Affordable Care Act requiring insurers to cover preventive care, including for HIV.

However, in the same ruling, the court also declared that the secretary of Health and Human Services has the power to review decisions made by the task force, and to remove members at his or her discretion.

Kennedy abruptly postponed the task force’s July meeting, sparking concern among public health advocates and Democratic leaders.

“The task force has done very little over the past five

years,” Kennedy said at Monday’s news conference. “We want to make sure that it is performing, that it is approving interventions that are actually going to prevent the health decline of the American public.”

González said he worries that the Supreme Court gave the administration a new way to meddle in the healthcare decisions of LGBTQ+ people.

“The Braidwood decision was both a relief and a wake-up call,” González said. “While it upheld the Preventive Services Task Force’s existing recommendations — keeping protections for PrEP, cancer screenings, and vaccines intact — it handed unprecedented authority to RFK Jr. to reshape that very task force and place existing protections under direct threat once again.”

González described AB 554 as “a measure to protect LGBTQ+ Californians and ensure we never return to the neglect and devastation of the HIV/AIDS crisis.” The state Senate Appropriations Committee is expected to vote on whether to advance the bill on Aug. 29.

# Event in Pasadena targets Trump’s climate policies

By MARCOS MAGAÑA

Los Angeles-area elected officials, advocacy groups and community members convened in Pasadena for what was billed as a “People’s Hearing on Extreme Weather.”

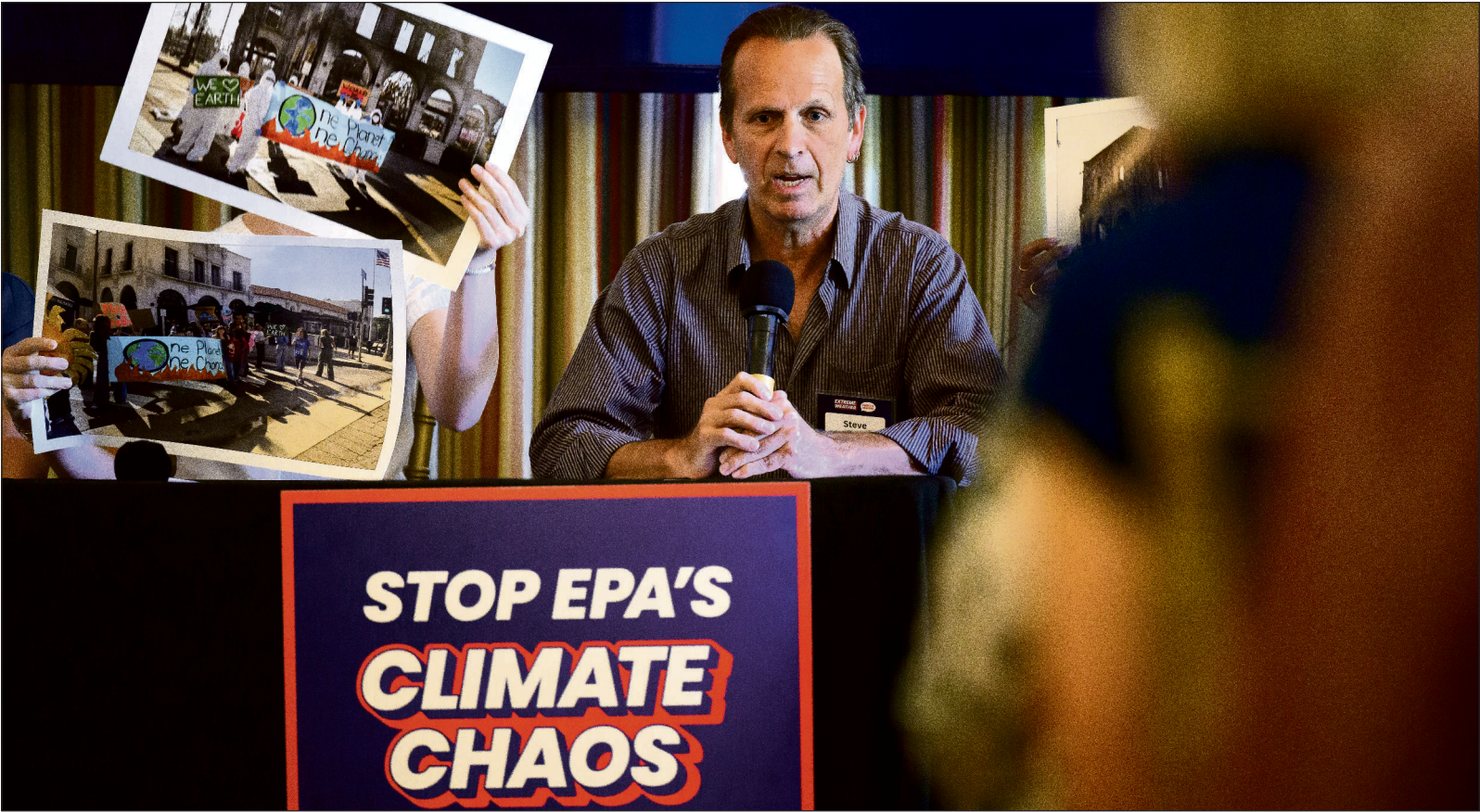
Organized by the Climate Action Campaign and its member environmental activist groups, the event Saturday drew testimony from wildfire survivors and health officials. They criticized the Trump administration and are seeking to put pressure on California to safeguard climate change programs.

Many speakers cited recent U.S. Environmental Protection Agency decisions they claim have weakened climate protection, including the announced intent to roll back the agency’s 2009 finding that greenhouse gases endanger public health.

U.S. Sen. Alex Padilla, in a prerecorded video, contended that climate change is taking a toll in Los Angeles-area communities, including poor air quality and the devastation brought by wildfires, which a recent study suggests were more deadly than previously reported. “If they can’t even admit that climate change is real,” Padilla asked, “then how can they protect us from it?”

U.S. Reps. Judy Chu (D-Monterey Park) and Laura Friedman (D-Glendale) underscored the urgency for action. “This is the human cost of climate change,” Chu said, pointing to displacement, financial insecurity, illness and deaths. Friedman called the recent EPA actions “part of this administration’s attack on all science.”

The heart of the gathering within Pasadena’s historic Maxwell House was testimony from residents, including survivors of the Eaton and Palisades fires, and community leaders, who sat in front of signs with



WILLIAM LIANG For The Times

STEVE ENGELMANN, a high school environmental science teacher, speaks during the event Saturday at Maxwell House in Pasadena.

such slogans as “people over polluters” and “stop EPA’s climate chaos.” The event had political overtones, and many of the two dozen speakers came with prepared speeches.

“These disasters aren’t rare anymore. They’re becoming constant,” said Pasadena resident Rosanna Valverde, whose home was damaged in the Eaton fire. “Instead of helping families prepare for what’s clearly already happening, [the current administration is] making it worse.”

Fellow Eaton fire survivor Sam Stracich described climate disaster as “not only the abnormally intense and frequent fires ... but the long and stressful aftermath,” adding that denying climate change “puts more people’s health, homes and futures at risk.”

Dennis Higgins re-

counted returning to his home in Pacific Palisades to find “just rubble.” Referring to the Trump administration’s plan to revisit federal findings from 2009 that declared greenhouse gases a threat to public health, Higgins warned that homes rebuilt in the area would “burn again if we don’t get these protections.”

A student from Palisades High School said she believed that policy failures compounded the wildfire’s destruction. “It wasn’t just the fire that destroyed my neighborhood,” said Sophie Smeeton, a rising senior. “It was the systematic denial of risk, the dissolution of safeguards and the refusal to treat the climate crisis with urgency.”

Chris Chavez, deputy policy director at the Coalition for Clean Air, said air pollution used to be his pri-

mary concern.

“I know what it’s like to wake up in the middle of the night being unable to breathe due to asthma. I also know what it’s like to wake up in the middle of the night, being confronted with an approaching wildfire,” Chavez said. “Many Californians can speak about both of those experiences.”

Dr. Alfred Glover, a podiatrist in Los Angeles, described patients with cardiovascular disease and respiratory illnesses as “suffering with the consequences of climate.” He said the mounting health effects are “really, really destroying our community.”

Marine biologist Barbara Gentile described the effects that fires and extreme weather have had on ocean ecosystems, such as toxic algae blooms and chemical pollution. The ocean “can’t

testify for itself,” she said. “If we don’t speak for the ocean, who will?”

Panelists repeatedly criticized recent federal rollbacks, including cuts to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration research.

“As a citizen, as a resident, as a physician, why do I

feel nation-less at this time?” asked Dr. Jerry Abraham, a hearing board member for the South Coast Air Quality Management District. “No federal government to protect us?”

“I don’t think anybody could hear these stories without being moved,” Chu said.

## City gets \$1.8-million bill for 2 weeks’ work on homelessness case

[Invoice, from B1] failed attempt to wriggle out of its legal obligations.

“The city should be spending this money on complying with the agreement, and/or providing services to the people who need them,” he said. “Instead, they are paying a law firm to fight tooth and nail against obligations that are clear in the settlement agreement — and that a judge has affirmed they are in violation of.”

The invoice, which The Times obtained from the city attorney’s office, lists a billing period of May 19-31, covering a week of preparations for the high-stakes federal hearing, as well as four of the seven trial days — each of which typically lasted eight or more hours.

Theane Evangelis, head of the Gibson Dunn team representing the city, referred questions about the invoice to the city attorney’s office.

Karen Richardson, a spokesperson for City Atty. Hydee Feldstein Soto, said in a statement that Gibson Dunn “did an outstanding job of stepping into a crucial matter that had been in litigation for nearly 5 years before they were hired,” compressing “what would normally be years worth of work into a very short time period.”

“We are grateful for their service and are in the process of reviewing the expenditures ... to ensure that we go back to Council with a complete picture of what was done and charged,” she said in a statement.

The city retained Gibson Dunn just as council members were signing off on hundreds of employee layoffs, part of a larger strategy for closing a nearly \$1-billion budget shortfall. The first batch of layoff notices was scheduled to go out last week.

The City Council initially appropriated \$900,000 for Gibson Dunn, for a period not exceeding three years, according to the firm’s contract. Going over \$900,000 required prior written approval from the city attorney, according to the contract.

The law firm quickly surpassed that threshold, eventually billing double the specified amount.

During the seven-day hearing, Gibson Dunn took a highly aggressive posture, voicing numerous objections to questions from attorneys representing the Alliance, as well as two organizations that intervened in the case.

Councilmember Bob Blumenfield, who serves on the council’s homelessness committee, said the city attorney’s office did not advise

him that Gibson Dunn’s legal costs had reached \$1.8 million in such a short period.

Blumenfield, who represents part of the San Fernando Valley, said he is “not happy” but is reserving further comment until he receives more specifics.

Three months ago, Blumenfield was co-author of a motion with Councilmember Tim McOsker seeking regular updates on the Alliance litigation — both from Gibson Dunn and the city attorney’s office.

McOsker, who serves on the budget committee and spent several years running the city attorney’s office, also did not receive notification of the Gibson Dunn \$1.8-million invoice from the city’s legal team, according to Sophie Gilchrist, his spokesperson.

Gilchrist said her boss had asked for regular updates to “prevent any surprises in billing” related to the Alliance case.

“That’s why the council member is requesting that this matter be brought to City Council immediately, so the city attorney can provide a full accounting and discuss all invoices related to the case,” she said.

Gibson Dunn has filed a notice of the city’s intent to appeal at least portions of Carter’s ruling, which ordered a third-party monitor to review and verify the data being produced by the city on its housing and encampment goals.

Carter signaled that he probably would order the city to pay the legal fees of the Alliance and homeless advocacy groups that have intervened in the case.

So far, the Alliance has sought \$1.3 million from the city to cover its legal expenses incurred since April 2024.

In a statement to The Times last week, Evangelis, the Gibson Dunn lawyer, cited the judge’s “suggestion that the Alliance may recover attorneys’ fees” as one reason for the appeal.

“The City believes that its resources should be spent providing services to those in need, not redirected to the Alliance’s lawyers — particularly when the district court has rejected most of their arguments,” she said.

Two other parties that have intervened in the case — Los Angeles Catholic Worker and the Los Angeles Community Action Network, both advocates for homeless Angelenos — are seeking \$201,000 from the city.

That money would cover legal costs incurred by the groups as a result of the city’s violation of the Alliance settlement agreement.

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JUMBLE

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

CIHKT  
YMRMU  
GMTNAE  
TOSOHM

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Print answer here:

Jumbles: ELITE DITTO THROWN NIMBLE  
Answer: An instrument's different pitches are written down using lines and symbols to — DENOTE THEM

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LEGAL NOTICES 1300

Name Change

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR A CHANGE OF NAME  
CASE NO. 25STCP01317

Petitioner or Attorney (name, state, bar, and address):  
Lunceford Wesley  
150 S. Commonwealth Ave. Los Angeles, CA 90004

TO ALL PERSONS INTERESTED:  
Petitioner Lunceford Wesley filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:  
Present Name Lunceford Wesley  
Proposed Name Lonnie Wesley

THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted.

Name Change

Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.

NOTICE OF HEARING  
DATE: 09/12/2025  
TIME: 8:30am  
DEPT: 45  
ROOM: 529

The address of the court is: SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA County of Los Angeles 111 N. Hill St. Los Angeles, CA 90012

A copy of this Order to Show Cause shall be published at least once each week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county. Dated: 04/10/2025  
J. Romero  
Deputy Clerk  
Published in the Los Angeles Times 08/04/25, 08/11/25, 08/18/25, 08/25/25

EMPLOYMENT 1500

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Los Angeles Times

SUMMONS (CITACION JUDICIAL)

Case Number (Numero del Caso): 24STCV31197

NOTICE TO DEFENDANT: (AVISO AL DEMANDADO):  
CHRISTA A. WALKER, an individual; and DOES 1 through 20, inclusive

YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF: (LO ESTA DEMANDANDO EL DEMANDANTE):  
LAD-P, LLC dba PORSCHE DOWNTOWN LA, a California Limited Liability Company

NOTICE! You have been sued. The court may decide against you without your being heard unless you respond within 30 days. Read the information below.

You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons and legal papers are served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the plaintiff. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more information at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages, money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court.

There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may want to call an attorney referral service. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal services from a nonprofit legal services program. You can locate these nonprofit groups at the California Legal Services Web Site (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), or by contacting your local court or county bar association. NOTE: The court has a statutory lien for waived fees and costs on any settlement or arbitration award of \$10,000 or more in a civil case. The court's lien must be paid before the court will dismiss the case.

IAVISO! Lo han demandado. Si no responde dentro de 30 días, la corte puede decidir en su contra sin escuchar su versión. Lea la información a continuación.

Tiene 30 DIAS DE CALENDARIO despues de que le entreguen esta citacion y papeles legales para presentar una respuesta por escrito en esta corte y hacer que se entregue una copia al demandante. Una carta o una llamada telefonica no lo protegen. Su respuesta por escrito tiene que estar en formato legal correcto si desea que procesen su caso en la corte. Es posible que haya un formulario que usted pueda usar para su respuesta. Puede encontrar estos formularios de la corte y mas informacion en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (www.sucorte.ca.gov), en la biblioteca de leyes de su condado o en la corte que le quede mas cerca. Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentacion, pida al secretario de la corte que le de un formulario de exencion de pago de cuotas. Si no presenta su respuesta a la corte, le podra perder el caso por incumplimiento y la corte le podra quitar su sueldo, dinero y bienes sin mas advertencia.

The name and address of the court is: (El nombre y direccion de la corte es):  
Stanley Mosk Courthouse  
111 North Hill Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

The name, address, and telephone number of plaintiff's attorney, or plaintiff without an attorney, is: (El nombre, la direccion y el numero de telefono del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abogado, es):  
Emmett Gilman  
One Embarcadero Center, Suite 2100  
San Francisco, CA 94111  
(415) 653-0153

Date: (Fecha) 11/25/2024

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# Patrolling a parking lot to defend laborers

[Lopez, from B1] cheers from Home Depot shoppers.

But the administration's blather about a focus on violent offenders led to huge demonstrations in Greater Los Angeles beginning in June, and the cause continues to draw people into the streets. Not all day laborers are undocumented, one Pasadena protester told me, and the taxpayer-funded use of federal forces to arrest people looking for work is offensive.

Dayena Campbell, 35, is a volunteer at Community Defense Corner operations in other parts of Pasadena, a movement that followed high-profile raids and was covered in the Colorado Boulevard newspaper and, later, in the New York Times. A full-time student who works in sales, Campbell was also cruising the parking lot at the Home Depot on the east side of Pasadena in search of federal agents.

She thought this Home Depot needed its own Community Defense Corner, so she started one about a month ago. She and her cohort have more than once spotted agents in the area and alerted day laborers. About half have scattered, she said, and half have held firm despite the risk.

When I asked what motivated Campbell, she said: "Inhumane, illegal kidnappings. Lack of due process. Actions taken without anyone being held accountable. Seeing people's lives ripped apart. Seeing families being destroyed in the blink of an eye."

Anywhere from a handful to a dozen volunteers show up daily to hand out literature, patrol the parking lot and check in on day laborers, sometimes bringing them food. Once a week, Nicholls helps organize a rally that includes a march through the parking lot and into the store, where the protesters present a letter asking Home Depot management to "say no to ICE in their parking lot and in their store."

Nicholls is an LAUSD teacher-librarian, and when she asks for support each week, working and retired teachers answer the call.

"I'm yelling my lungs out," said retired teacher Mary Rose O'Leary, who joined in the chants of "ICE out of Home Depot" and "No hate, no fear, immigrants are welcome here."

"Immigrants are what make this city what it is ... and the path to legal immigration is closed to everybody who doesn't have what, \$5 million or something?" O'Leary said, adding that she was motivated by "the Christian ideal of welcoming the stranger."

Retired teacher Dan Murphy speaks Spanish and regularly checks in with day laborers.

"One guy said to me, 'We're just here to work.' Some of the guys were like, 'We're not criminals ... we're just here ... to make money and get by,'" Murphy said. He called the raids a flexing of "the violent arm of what autocracy can bring," and he resents Trump's focus on Southern California.

"I take it personally. I'm white, but these are my



Photographs by GENARO MOLINA Los Angeles Times

**VOLUNTEERS** show up daily in Pasadena to hand out literature, patrol the parking lot and check on laborers, sometimes bringing food.



**TEACHER-LIBRARIAN** Mary Rose O'Leary put her feelings into words.



**ONCE A WEEK**, protesters march through the parking lot and into the store.

people. California is my people. And it bothers me what might happen in this country if people don't

stand firm. ... I just said, 'I gotta do something.' I'm doing this now so I don't hate myself later."

Nicholls told me she was an activist many years ago, and then turned her focus to work and raising a family.

But the combination of wildfires, the cleanup and rebuilding, and the raids brought her out of activism retirement.

"The first people to come out after the firefighters — the second-responders — were day laborers cleaning the streets," Nicholls said. "You'd see them in orange shirts all over the city, cleaning up."

The East Pasadena Home Depot is "an important store," because it's a supply center for the rebuilding of Altadena, "and we're going out there to show our love and solidarity for our neighbors," Nicholls said. To strike the fear of deportation in the hearts of workers, she said, is "inhumane, and to me, it's morally wrong."

Nicholls had a quick response when I asked what she thinks of those who say illegal is illegal, so what's left to discuss?

"That blocks the complexity of the conversation," she said, and doesn't take into account the hunger and violence that drive migration. Her husband, she said, left El Salvador 35 years ago during a war funded in part by the U.S.

They have family members with legal status and some who are undocumented and afraid to leave their homes, Nicholls said. I mentioned that I had written about Pasadena Mayor Victor Gordo, who was undocumented as a child, and has kept his passport handy since the raids began. In that column, I quoted Gordo's friend, immigrant rights leader Pablo Alvarado, director of the National Day Laborer Organizing Network.

"Full disclosure," Nicholls said, "[Alvarado] is my husband."

It was news to me. When the raids began, Nicholls said, she told her husband, "I have the summer off, sweetie, but I want to help, and I'm going to call my friends."

On Wednesday, after Nicholls welcomed demonstrators, Alvarado showed up for a pep talk.

"I have lived in this country since 1990 ... and I love it as much as I love the small village where I came from in El Salvador," Alvarado said. "Some people may say that we are going into fascism, into authoritarianism, and I would say that we are already there."

He offered details of a raid that morning at a Home Depot in Westlake and said the question is not whether the Pasadena store will be raided, but when. This country readily accepts the labor of immigrants but it does not respect their humanity, Alvarado said.

"When humble people are attacked," he said, "we are here to bear witness."

Nicholls led demonstrators through the parking lot and into the store, where she read aloud the letter asking Home Depot to take a stand against raids.

Outside, where it was hot and steamy by mid-morning, several sun-blasted day laborers said they appreciated the support. But they were still fearful, and desperate for work.

Jorge, just shy of 70, practically begged me to take his phone number.

Whatever work I might have, he said, please call.

steve.lopez@latimes.com

# Ex-officer could be tied to kidnapping, home invasions

[Ex-LAPD, from B1] from The Times, the LAPD confirmed Halem's arrest but said it was "not related to the Departments investigation into residential burglaries in the west valley."

"This matter remains under investigation, and we will not be providing further details at this time," the statement said.

The West Valley includes Encino, an affluent area that has been on edge after a series of home break-ins, including one that caused the deaths of "American Idol" music supervisor Robin Kaye and her rock musician husband, Tom DeLuca. That case rekindled concerns about safety in the area and led the LAPD to step up patrols. A suspect with a history of mental illness has been charged with the couple's murders.

Halem opted to join the department's reserve officer program in 2022, where he remained until this March, after he was charged with insurance fraud in February.

During his LAPD career, he made a name for himself with side businesses as a security consultant and by renting out luxury cars to music artists and celebrities.

In 2019, he was hired to provide security for Randall Emmett, an action movie producer. Emmett was the subject of a 2022 Times investigation and subsequent Hulu documentary that surfaced allegations of abuse against women and assistants as well as mistreatment of assistants and business partners. Emmett has denied the allegations.

Around the same time, Halem landed small roles in TV shows including "Vanderpump Rules" and "Midnight in the Switchgrass."

Earlier this year he and his brother were charged with insurance fraud over what prosecutors alleged was an elaborate insurance fraud scheme related to a Bentley crash in January 2023. Court records show that LAPD internal affairs investigators were looking



MEL MELCON Los Angeles Times

**AN OFFICER** stands at the entrance to LAPD headquarters in downtown L.A.

into similar allegations against Halem near the end of his department career.

Halem pleaded not guilty to two felony counts of insurance fraud on Friday.

His brother Jacob Halem, 32, also pleaded not guilty to a count of insurance

fraud.

Eric Halem ran several car rental companies, Kaypr and Drive LA, which boasted a fleet of rare, luxury vehicles, including a 2020 Bentley Continental GT and a neon green Lamborghini Urus.

Prosecutors allege Halem told his insurance company that his brother had borrowed the Bentley and crashed it on Jan. 5, 2023.

But a police investigation revealed that the Bentley had been rented by a Drive

LA client who wrecked it three days prior. After the rental driver's insurance claim was denied because of a lack of proper coverage, Eric Halem filed a fraudulent claim for more than \$200,000 with his insurance company on his personal policy, misrepresenting details of the accident, authorities allege.

Halem was stripped of his reserve police powers in March after the criminal case against him was announced.

The LAPD reserve program that Halem was part of dates to World War II, and today the reserves number in the 300s. Its membership over the years has included not only onetime cops but also ER doctors and a former City Council member. Reserve officers are qualified to carry guns, make arrests, take reports — basically, able to execute most traditional police duties, but they aren't paid.

A department roster shows that he joined the force in February 2009.

Today in Southern California

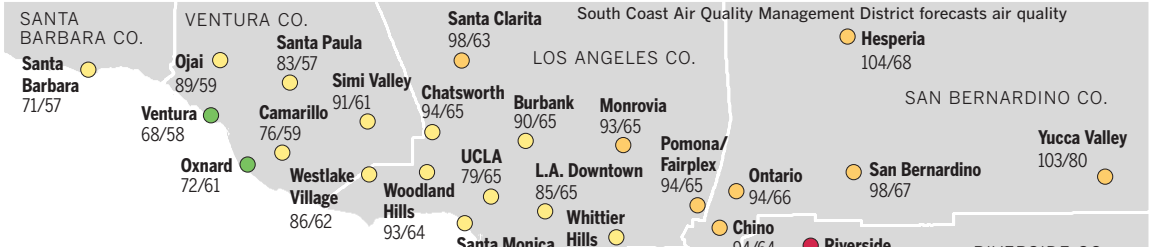
**Warm to hot with more sunshine:** High pressure aloft will strengthen over California, resulting in a continuation of warm readings in the city and hot readings in the valleys through Tuesday. Late-night and morning low clouds along the coast will clear by midday each day. An upper trough moving into Northern California mid- to late week will promote onshore flow and a cooling trend across the Southland.

5-day forecasts

High/low temperatures are average forecasts for entire zone.

|           | L.A. Basin            | Valleys                | Beaches                | Mountains               | Deserts                 |
|-----------|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Today     | 85/65<br>Clearing     | 94/65<br>Hazy and warm | 75/65<br>Clearing      | 85/53<br>Sunny and warm | 114/84<br>Sunny and hot |
| Tuesday   | Clearing<br>82/66     | Hazy sunshine<br>91/63 | Clearing<br>74/65      | Sunny<br>85/55          | Sunny; hot<br>113/82    |
| Wednesday | Mostly sunny<br>81/65 | Sunny<br>90/63         | Humid<br>73/64         | Sunny<br>82/54          | Sunny; warm<br>110/82   |
| Thursday  | Mostly sunny<br>80/64 | Sunny<br>88/62         | Turning sunny<br>74/62 | Sunny<br>79/51          | Sunny; warm<br>110/80   |
| Friday    | Mostly sunny<br>81/64 | Sunny<br>86/63         | Turning sunny<br>73/63 | Sunny<br>76/46          | Sunny<br>105/80         |

Air quality



Surf and sea

**POINT CONCEPTION TO MEXICO**  
**Inner waters:** East-southeast winds becoming west at 5-10 knots. Swell west-northwest at 2 feet and south-southwest at 2-3 feet. Wind waves a foot.

**Surf zone:** The risk for rip currents will be moderate at Santa Barbara County beaches and high at all other county beaches.

| County        | Height | Period | Direction | Temp |
|---------------|--------|--------|-----------|------|
| Santa Barbara | 2-4'   | 12 sec | W         | 64   |
| Ventura       | 3-5'   | 11 sec | W         | 66   |
| Los Angeles   | 3-5'   | 11 sec | W         | 68   |
| Orange        | 3-5'   | 10 sec | W         | 70   |
| San Diego     | 3-5'   | 12 sec | WSW       | 69   |

Tides

L.A. Outer Harbor, in feet.

|       |                  |                  |                |                   |
|-------|------------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Today | 11:42a<br>11:15p | 4.9 Hi<br>5.6 Hi | 5:21a<br>5:15p | -0.4 Lo<br>1.5 Lo |
| Tue.  | 12:15p<br>-----  | 5.1 Hi<br>Hi     | 5:51a<br>6:09p | 0.0 Lo<br>1.4 Lo  |

UV index

Minutes to burn for sensitive people

|                 |                   |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| Las Vegas, 25   | Phoenix, 10       |
| Los Angeles, 25 | San Francisco, 45 |

California cities\*

| City             | Sun.* |    |       | Today |     |     |
|------------------|-------|----|-------|-------|-----|-----|
|                  | Hi    | Lo | Prcp. | Hi    | Lo  | Hi  |
| Anaheim          | 87    | 64 | --    | 84    | 66  | 83  |
| Avalon/Catalina  | 81    | 62 | --    | 77    | 62  | 76  |
| Bakersfield      | 106   | 76 | --    | 104   | 75  | 104 |
| Barstow          | 112   | 84 | --    | 111   | 83  | 112 |
| Big Bear Lake    | 82    | 54 | --    | 85    | 53  | 85  |
| Bishop           | 104   | 58 | --    | 105   | 59  | 105 |
| Burbank          | 90    | 65 | --    | 90    | 65  | 88  |
| Cambridge        | 73    | 60 | --    | 76    | 59  | 76  |
| Chatsworth       | 94    | 64 | --    | 94    | 65  | 91  |
| Chino            | 95    | 63 | --    | 94    | 64  | 95  |
| Compton          | 80    | 64 | --    | 81    | 65  | 82  |
| Dana Point       | 73    | 66 | --    | 74    | 66  | 74  |
| Death Valley     | 120   | 91 | --    | 121   | 101 | 121 |
| Del Mar          | 76    | 66 | --    | 72    | 65  | 73  |
| Escondido        | 91    | 61 | --    | 86    | 60  | 84  |
| Eureka           | 63    | 52 | Tr    | 63    | 52  | 63  |
| Fallbrook        | 83    | 61 | Tr    | 85    | 60  | 83  |
| Fresno           | 106   | 72 | --    | 106   | 72  | 104 |
| Fullerton        | 85    | 64 | --    | 83    | 66  | 82  |
| Hemet            | 101   | 64 | --    | 99    | 63  | 99  |
| Hesperia         | 100   | 71 | --    | 101   | 70  | 98  |
| Huntington Beach | 76    | 65 | --    | 74    | 67  | 76  |
| Idyllwild        | 91    | 74 | --    | 89    | 73  | 89  |
| Irvine           | 81    | 65 | --    | 80    | 66  | 81  |

Sun and moon

Today's rise/set

|      | Los Angeles Co. | Orange Co.  | Ventura Co. |
|------|-----------------|-------------|-------------|
| Sun  | 6:12a/7:44p     | 6:11a/7:43p | 6:16a/7:49p |
| Moon | 9:18p/8:39a     | 9:16p/8:37a | 9:22p/8:43a |



Almanac

Sunday Downtown readings

| Temperature         | Los Angeles | Fullerton | Ventura* |
|---------------------|-------------|-----------|----------|
| High/low            | 86/63       | 84/65     | 68/57    |
| Normal high/low     | 84/65       | 86/66     | 76/59    |
| High/low a year ago | 91/64       | 92/65     | 70/57    |
| Record high/date    | 99/1882     | 100/2012  | 90/1971  |
| Record low/date     | 54/1897     | 58/2010   | 49/1950  |

| Precipitation                | Los Angeles | Fullerton | Ventura* |
|------------------------------|-------------|-----------|----------|
| 24-hour total (as of 2 p.m.) | 0.00        | 0.00      | 0.00     |
| Season total (since Oct. 1)  | 796         | 3.93      | 6.50     |
| Last season (Oct. 1 to date) | 22.15       | 16.59     | 24.79    |
| Season norm (Oct. 1 to date) | 14.15       | 11.74     | 16.01    |
| Humidity (high/low)          | 90/68       | 90/44     | 96/75    |

| City              | Sun.* |    |       | Today |    | Tue. |    |
|-------------------|-------|----|-------|-------|----|------|----|
|                   | Hi    | Lo | Prcp. | Hi    | Lo |      |    |
| San Diego         | 76    | 67 | --    | 75    | 66 | 74   | 66 |
| San Francisco     | 72    | 56 | --    | 72    | 58 | 72   | 59 |
| San Gabriel       | 88    | 64 | --    | 88    | 65 | 87   | 65 |
| San Jose          | 87    | 68 | --    | 85    | 60 | 84   | 61 |
| San Luis Obispo   | 75    | 55 | --    | 75    | 54 | 73   | 57 |
| Santa Ana         | 78    | 66 | --    | 78    | 67 | 78   | 66 |
| Santa Barbara     | 69    | 55 | --    | 71    | 57 | 69   | 56 |
| Santa Clara       | 98    | 64 | --    | 98    | 63 | 95   | 61 |
| Santa Monica Pier | 74    | 63 | --    | 75    | 65 | 74   | 65 |
| Santa Paula       | 80    | 59 | --    | 83    | 57 | 83   | 56 |
| Santa Rosa        | 87    | 52 | --    | 84    | 53 | 79   | 55 |
| Simi Valley       | 86    | 60 | --    | 91    | 61 | 88   | 59 |
| Tahoe Valley      | 85    | 44 | --    | 87    | 47 | 86   | 48 |
| Temecula          | 88    | 61 | --    | 91    | 61 | 90   | 59 |
| Thousand Oaks     | 81    | 60 | --    | 84    | 60 | 82   | 60 |
| Torrance          | 75    | 65 | --    | 76    | 66 | 76   | 66 |
| UCLA              | 77    | 64 | --    | 79    | 65 | 77   | 65 |
| Van Nuys          | 94    | 64 | --    | 94    | 66 | 91   | 64 |
| Ventura           | 65    | 57 | Tr    | 68    | 58 | 67   | 59 |
| Whittier Hills    | 87    | 64 | --    | 86    | 66 | 85   | 66 |
| Woodland Hills    | 97    | 63 | --    | 93    | 64 | 87   | 64 |
| Wrightwood        | 87    | 73 | --    | 87    | 72 | 85   | 66 |
| Yorba Linda       | 89    | 62 | --    | 88    | 64 | 88   | 63 |
| Yosemite Valley   | 91    | 62 | --    | 95    | 62 | 92   | 58 |

A walk through the archives with the sheriff's historian

[Arellano, from B1]  
Fratantoni, the Sheriff's Department's staff historian. "Today, you know your partner is coming to help you. People say the job's dangerous now — it's never not been dangerous."  
So as Sheriff Robert Luna prepared to hold a news conference hours after the accident at a department training facility in East L.A. took the lives of Dets. Joshua Kelley-Eklund, Victor Lemus and William Osborn, Fratantoni sent over notes about what happened to Barton and his men. That's how Luna was able to tell the public that it was the department's deadliest day in over 160 years, a line quickly repeated by media across the country.  
Fratantoni describes himself as the "default button" whenever someone has a question about the Sheriff's Department's past, whether it's a colleague or the public, whether it's about the positive or the scandalous. He can tell you why female deputies stopped wearing caps (blame the popularity of beehive hairdos in the 1960s) and reveal why longtime Sheriff Eugene Biscailuz was a pioneer in trying to rehabilitate addicts (his father was an alcoholic).  
It's a job the Long Island native has officially held for a decade. He assumed the position with the blessing of then-Sheriff Jim McDonnell to tap into a passion Fratantoni had dabbled in on his own almost from the moment he joined the department in 1999.  
"You can't talk about L.A. County history without us," Fratantoni said when we met at the Hall of Justice. Outside, the flags remained at half-staff in honor of the dead detectives. He was taking me on a tour of the building's basement museum, which showcased the histories of the L.A. County Sheriff's Department, district attorney's office and coroner. "We've been there from Day 1. We were here before the Board of Supervisors. We were here before LAPD.



LUKE JOHNSON Los Angeles Times

"YOU CAN'T talk about L.A. County history without" the Sheriff's Department, Mike Fratantoni says.

We've never closed. We've survived it all."  
"We check with Mike on everything," Luna told me in a phone interview. Last year, the sheriff joined Fratantoni and other current and retired Sheriff's Department members for the dedication of a plaque to commemorate the 1857 Barton Mound massacre. "You get 10 minutes with him, and wow."  
I was able to get two hours.  
Fratantoni is burly but soft-spoken, a trace of a New York accent lingering in his by-the-books cadence. All around us were books, poster boards and newspaper headlines of criminals that Angelenos still remember and those long forgotten, people such as Winnie Ruth Judd, who murdered two friends in Phoenix in 1931 then traveled to Los Angeles by train with their bodies in trunks.  
We passed through a row of original L.A. County jail cells that were brought down piece by piece from their original location on the 10th floor of the Hall of Jus-

tice. He pointed out a display case of makeshift weapons, tattoo needles and fake IDs created by inmates over the department's 175 years. I stared too long at a black jacket and AC/DC hat worn by the Night Stalker — serial killer Richard Ramirez.  
The museum receives free rent from L.A. County but is otherwise funded and maintained by the Sheriff's Relief Foundation and the dollar a month pulled from the paychecks of Sheriff's Department employees who sign up to support — "We don't want to be a burden," Fratantoni explained. It's not open to the general public, but he frequently hosts deputies, prosecutors, law students and even school field trips.  
"The kids come and love this one for some reason," he said with a chuckle as we passed a narcotics display. "Not my favorite one."  
Fratantoni never rushed me and turned every question I had into a short story that never felt like a lecture. He frequently apologized for random artifacts strewn

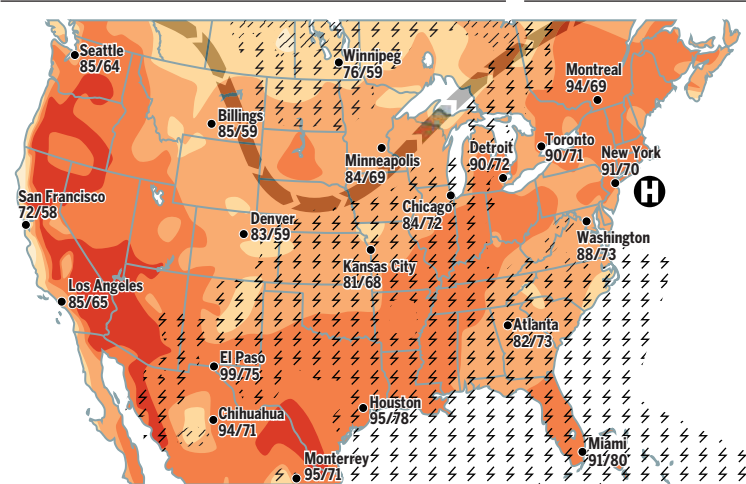
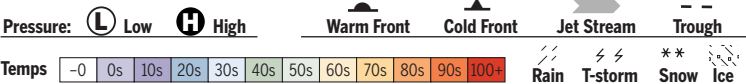
around — plaques, movie posters, a biography of mobster Mickey Cohen — or displays not lit to his liking. "Am I putting you to sleep yet?" he joked at one point.  
The 45-year-old is more than a curator or nerdy archivist. Luna, like his predecessors Alex Villanueva and McDonnell, has entrusted Fratantoni to not just help preserve the department's history but also imprint its importance on the men and women who are its present and future.  
"I have always been a fan of history," said Luna, who has organized lunchtime lectures about the department and civil rights. For Black History Month in February, Fratantoni spoke about the troubles faced by deputies William Abbott and John Brady, who in 1954 became the department's first integrated patrol unit.  
The recriminations against Abbott, who was Black, and Brady didn't come from within but rather the residents in West Hollywood they served. "I believe it's important to teach our deputies where we've been

and some of the challenges we've faced. You can't help but to want to listen to his stories," Luna said of Fratantoni.  
"Mike is just phenomenal," said Deputy Graciela Medrano, a 25-year veteran who was also at the museum the day I visited. A black ribbon stretched across her badge — a sign of mourning, law enforcement style. "I'll ask him about cases that happened when I was just starting, and he immediately knows what I'm talking about. He makes us all appreciate our department more."  
Every year, Fratantoni speaks to the latest class of recruits about the department's history. "They know it's been around but nothing else. So I share photos, I tell stories. And I tell them, 'You're getting a torch passed to you, and you're going to run the next leg.' You can see their reactions — our history gives them a sense of purpose."  
He'll also attend community events with other deputies in vintage uniforms or old department cars.

"Someone will see it and say, 'That's my granddad's car' and smile. We can have conversations with the public we otherwise wouldn't be able to."  
Fratantoni was supposed to focus this year on the department's 175th anniversary. Another goal was to seek out an interview with Shirley MacLaine, one of the last surviving queens of the Sheriff's Championship Rodeo, an annual event that used to fill up the Memorial Coliseum and attract Hollywood A-listers.  
But 2025 got in the way. We spoke a week before the burials of Osborn and Kelley-Eklund (the services for Lemus have yet to be announced). Fratantoni also sits on the committee charged with putting names on the Los Angeles County Peace Officers' Memorial.  
"I don't like doing it, and I hope I don't have to fill out paperwork for it ever again, but if that's what I have to do, I'm honored to be a part of it," he said. "I hold it close to my heart."  
Even the work commemorating what happened during the Barton Mound massacre remains unfinished. The victims were buried at the old City Cemetery downtown but were moved to Rosedale Cemetery in Mid-City in 1914. No one bothered to mark their new graves, which were lost until researchers discovered them a few years ago. Fratantoni and others are fundraising for new tombstones for their slain predecessors.  
He mentioned Daly's story: Born in Ireland. Came to California for the Gold Rush. Became a blacksmith — he put the shoes on the horses that Barton and his constables were going to use to pursue Las Manillas. A strong, able man whom Barton deputized so he could join them on the day they would all die.  
"It's sad to see people who lost their life be forgotten," Fratantoni said. "That's just..."  
The historian tasked with talking shook his head in silence.

Today in North America

**Little to no rainfall in the Northeast:** A stubborn area of high pressure extending from New England into the Ohio Valley will continue a dry and warm-to-hot trend across much of the Northeast through Tuesday. The area has not received significant rainfall since July 31.



U.S. cities

SUNDAY'S EXTREMES AS OF 2 P.M. FOR THE 48 CONTIGUOUS STATES

High 111 in Needles, Calif.

Low 32 in West Yellowstone, Mont.

| City               | Sunday |    |       | Today |    |     | City                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Sunday* |    |       | Today |    |     |
|--------------------|--------|----|-------|-------|----|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|----|-------|-------|----|-----|
|                    | Hi     | Lo | Prcp. | Hi    | Lo | Sky |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Hi      | Lo | Prcp. | Hi    | Lo | Sky |
| Albany             | 89     | 62 | --    | 91    | 64 | Su  | Seattle                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 86      | 61 | --    | 85    | 64 | Su  |
| Albuquerque        | 93     | 76 | --    | 94    | 67 | Su  | Tampa                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 89      | 77 | .06   | 90    | 78 | Ts  |
| Anchorage          | 68     | 55 | .02   | 65    | 50 | Su  | Tucson                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 100     | 81 | .05   | 103   | 80 | Cy  |
| Aspen              | 76     | 58 | --    | 79    | 46 | Cy  | Tulsa                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 96      | 80 | .04   | 92    | 74 | Ts  |
| Atlanta            | 83     | 73 | Tr    | 82    | 73 | Ts  | Washington, D.C.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 86      | 64 | --    | 88    | 73 | Su  |
| Austin             | 98     | 73 | --    | 97    | 75 | Su  | Wichita                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 89      | 68 | .09   | 84    | 68 | Ts  |
| Baltimore          | 85     | 57 | --    | 86    | 70 | Su  | World                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |         |    |       |       |    |     |
| Boise              | 94     | 59 | --    | 98    | 68 | Su  | Acapulco                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 89      | 77 | .06   | 91    | 76 | Pc  |
| Boston             | 84     | 64 | --    | 91    | 72 | Su  | Amsterdam                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 75      | 57 | --    | 81    | 63 | Pc  |
| Buffalo            | 91     | 68 | --    | 91    | 73 | Su  | Athens                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 95      | 82 | --    | 96    | 81 | Hr  |
| Burlington, Vt.    | 93     | 66 | --    | 96    | 67 | Su  | Bangkok                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 97      | 84 | .22   | 95    | 80 | Rz  |
| Charleston, S.C.   | 80     | 74 | 1.67  | 81    | 75 | Ts  | Barcelona                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 88      | 75 | --    | 91    | 76 | Su  |
| Charlotte          | 85     | 68 | .06   | 81    | 71 | Ts  | Berlin                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 78      | 63 | --    | 78    | 56 | Su  |
| Chicago            | 89     | 77 | .07   | 84    | 72 | Ts  | Cabo San Lucas                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 90      | 75 | .10   | 91    | 76 | Ts  |
| Cincinnati         | 89     | 71 | .01   | 90    | 72 | Su  | Cairo                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 100     | 81 | --    | 103   | 80 | Hr  |
| Cleveland          | 88     | 67 | --    | 90    | 70 | Su  | Dubai                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 108     | 93 | --    | 106   | 92 | Su  |
| Columbia, S.C.     | 82     | 73 | .59   | 79    | 72 | Ts  | Dublin                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 72      | 48 | .12   | 72    | 57 | Pc  |
| Columbus           | 90     | 66 | --    | 90    | 71 | Su  | Havana                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 90      | 75 | .07   | 91    | 73 | R   |
| Dallas/Ft.Worth    | 96     | 78 | --    | 96    | 78 | Ts  | Ho Chi Minh City                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 95      | 77 | .16   | 90    | 78 | R   |
| Denver             | 78     | 59 | .12   | 83    | 59 | Su  | Hong Kong                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 92      | 81 | .31   | 89    | 82 | Ts  |
| Detroit            | 90     | 71 | --    | 90    | 72 | Su  | Istanbul                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 88      | 77 | --    | 90    | 75 | W   |
| El Paso            | 102    | 82 | .04   | 99    | 75 | Pc  | Jerusalem                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 92      | 76 | --    | 97    | 76 | Su  |
| Eugene             | 100    | 59 | --    | 103   | 60 | Su  | Johannesburg                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 65      | 38 | --    | 67    | 41 | Su  |
| Fort Myers         | 84     | 75 | .38   | 91    | 75 | Ts  | Kuala Lumpur                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 89      | 75 | .28   | 84    | 74 | Cy  |
| Hartford           | 89     | 58 | --    | 93    | 63 | Su  | Lima                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 66      | 59 | --    | 67    | 60 | Hr  |
| Honolulu           | 86     | 75 | .05   | 89    | 77 | Sh  | London                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 81      | 55 | --    | 86    | 64 | Pc  |
| Houston            | 93     | 77 | .04   | 95    | 78 | Ts  | Madrid                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 102     | 72 | --    | 103   | 72 | Hr  |
| Indianapolis       | 90     | 72 | --    | 90    | 72 | Su  | Mecca                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 106     | 85 | --    | 106   | 86 | Pc  |
| Jacksonville, Fla. | 89     | 75 | .16   | 92    | 76 | Ts  | Mexico City                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 79      | 56 | .25   | 75    | 57 | Sh  |
| Kansas City        | 83     | 69 | .09   | 81    | 68 | Ts  | Montreal                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 93      | 75 | .02   | 94    | 69 | Su  |
| Knoxville          | 88     | 68 | Tr    | 88    | 72 | Ts  | Moscow                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 73      | 55 | --    | 68    | 57 | Sh  |
| Las Vegas          | 111    | 87 | --    | 111   | 85 | Hr  | Mumbai                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 86      | 79 | .10   | 87    | 80 | Sh  |
| Louisville         | 92     | 73 | --    | 92    | 75 | Su  | New Delhi                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 90      | 79 | --    | 93    | 81 | Cy  |
| Medford            | 107    | 60 | --    | 108   | 68 | Su  | Paris                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 82      | 54 | --    | 92    | 66 | Su  |
| Memphis            | 92     | 74 | --    | 92    | 77 | Pc  | Prague                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 81      | 61 | --    | 79    | 52 | Su  |
| Miami              | 89     | 75 | 1.00  | 91    | 80 | Ts  | Rome                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 90      | 66 | --    | 93    | 72 | Pc  |
| Milwaukee          | 80     | 67 | .701  | 84    | 69 | Ts  | Seoul                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 90      | 68 | --    | 87    | 72 | Hr  |
| Minneapolis        | 86     | 69 | --    | 84    | 69 | Hr  | Singapore                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 85      | 79 | .13   | 85    | 77 | Ts  |
| Nashville          | 92     | 72 | --    | 93    | 75 | Ts  | Taipei City                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 93      | 82 | --    | 94    | 78 | Sh  |
| New Orleans        | 89     | 79 | Tr    | 90    | 79 | Ts  | Tokyo                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 84      | 81 | .61   | 86    | 81 | Sh  |
| New York           | 89     | 69 | --    | 91    | 70 | Su  | Vancouver                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 78      | 59 | --    | 79    | 64 | Pc  |
| Norfolk            | 81     | 70 | Tr    | 81    | 71 | Pc  | Vienna                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 95      | 66 | --    | 82    | 55 | Su  |
| Oklahoma City      | 97     | 75 | --    | 93    | 71 | Ts  | Key: Su sunny; Pc partly cloudy; Cy cloudy; Fg foggy; Prcp precipitation; Dr drizzle; Hg hazy; Sh showers; Ts thunderstorms; R rain; Sn snow; Sf snow flurries; I ice; W windy; Tr trace. Notes: National outlets exclude Alaska and Hawaii. * - data estimated. Sunday's readings as of 2 p.m. |         |    |       |       |    |     |
| Omaha              | 83     | 70 | .53   | 81    | 66 | Ts  | Forecasts by AccuWeather, Inc. ©2025                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |         |    |       |       |    |     |
| Orlando            | 89     | 74 | .31   | 91    | 76 | Ts  | AccuWeather. Visit AccuWeather.com                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |         |    |       |       |    |     |
| Philadelphia       | 88     | 64 | --    | 92    | 70 | Su  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |         |    |       |       |    |     |
| Phoenix            | 110    | 91 | Tr    | 111   | 90 | Su  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |         |    |       |       |    |     |
| Pittsburgh         | 90     | 63 | --    | 90    | 70 | Su  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |         |    |       |       |    |     |
| Portland, Ore.     | 97     | 64 | --    | 98    | 68 | Su  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |         |    |       |       |    |     |
| Providence         | 84     | 62 | --    | 90    | 66 | Su  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |         |    |       |       |    |     |
| Raleigh/Durham     | 84     | 65 | --    | 84    | 72 | Ts  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |         |    |       |       |    |     |
| Reno               | 96     | 62 | --    | 100   | 68 | Su  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |         |    |       |       |    |     |
| Richmond           | 89     | 63 | --    | 85    | 71 | Su  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |         |    |       |       |    |     |
| St. Louis          | 90     | 77 | .08   | 91    | 76 | Ts  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |         |    |       |       |    |     |
| Salt Lake City     | 88     | 57 | --    | 91    | 68 | Su  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |         |    |       |       |    |     |



THE DODGERS' Shohei Ohtani strikes out against reliever Mason Fluharty with the bases loaded in the ninth inning.

# Another giveaway day in L.A.

## Dodgers relievers yield three late homers in loss to Blue Jays

BY KEVIN BAXTER

Sunday was one of those cloudless late-summer Dodger Stadium afternoons in which the flags in center field stirred lazily in the slight breeze and the air felt far hotter than the thermometer said.

The temperature was 83 degrees at the matinee's first pitch, yet many fans crowded into the top rows of the reserved and loge levels and stood atop the outfield pavilions in search of shade from an unre-

lenting sun that hovered directly overhead.

As for the Dodgers, they were just as hot as the weather until the bullpen gate swung open at the start of the eighth inning Sunday, with relievers Blake Treinen and Alex Vesia giving up three solo home runs in the span of six batters in a 5-4 loss to the Toronto Blue Jays.

The deciding run scored when second baseman Ernie Clement drove Vesia's first pitch over the wall in left field for this eighth homer of the season, ruining another

splendid outing from starter Tyler Glasnow and a big offensive day from Shohei Ohtani, who reached base four times before striking out against reliever Mason Fluharty with the bases loaded in the ninth.

Mookie Betts followed by grounding into a force out, the second time in as many innings the Dodgers left the bases loaded. The Dodgers had 10 hits and 13 walks on the afternoon but were one for 10 with runners in scoring position, stranding 16.

Even more [See Dodgers, D4]

# Iamaleava clearly the sling leader

New Bruins quarterback impresses teammates and coaches with his strong arm, decision-making and competitive drive in training camp.

BY BEN BOLCH

Try as one might to keep Nico Iamaleava under wraps, the media viewing sessions at UCLA's football training camp shorter than the lifespan of a soap bubble, several trends have emerged.

The Tennessee transfer unquestionably has a strong arm. Every pass is thrown with purpose and usually on target.

The wiry 6-foot-6, 215-pound redshirt sophomore has a quick release. When he faced heavy pressure during the only team period open to reporters Saturday afternoon, Iamaleava smartly and swiftly completed a short pass when no better options were available.

The guy can improvise. Scanning the defense for a weakness, Iamaleava scurried up the middle for a touchdown, making the right decision on what appeared to be a run-pass option play.

All of this shows exactly why his arrival might have so drastically altered the team's trajectory.

"He keeps living up to expectations every day," wide receiver Mikey Matthews said. "He's a really good leader, and he just pushes us every day as an offense."

Coach DeShaun Foster said one of the things that has impressed him about his new quarterback is his determination to win, even during competitive periods involving one-on-one battles.

"You can kind of see his juice going," Foster said, "and, you know, jawing a little bit with some of the guys on defense that he knows."

If things had gone differently, Matthews might have [See Iamaleava, D2]



NICO IAMALEAVA "pushes us every day," says one of his UCLA teammates.

### RAMS TAKEAWAYS

## Corum makes a bid for more backfield time

BY GARY KLEIN

The Rams defeated the Dallas Cowboys 31-21 in their preseason opener on Saturday at SoFi Stadium.

Here are some takeaways from the game:

**Corum shows what he can do**

With Kyren Williams carrying the ball 316 times last season, Blake Corum got only limited opportunity as a rookie.

The former Michigan star could help shoulder more of the load if the Rams want to keep Williams — their newly minted \$23-million investment — fresh for the long haul.

While it was something of a surprise when coach Sean McVay said Corum would play in the preseason opener, Corum responded by rushing for 32 yards and two touchdowns in nine carries.

"Just wanted to get him some live action," McVay said Sunday during a videoconference with reporters, adding, "Blake's been awesome. I thought he did some really good stuff. ... That by no means is anything other than a positive reflection of just some of the work we wanted [See Rams, D3]



CHARGERS CORNERBACK Eric Rogers makes an interception against the Saints before running it back for a touchdown at SoFi Stadium on Sunday.

### CHARGERS TAKEAWAYS

## Lance closing the gap in race for backup QB

BY ANTHONY DE LEON

Last season, the Chargers were one of the healthier teams in the league, but injuries have hit hard in the preseason this year — enough to cancel an upcoming joint practice with the Rams.

As a result, coach Jim Harbaugh once again turned to rookies and backups on Sunday, giving them the reins early to gauge the team's depth.

The Chargers defeated the New Orleans Saints 27-13 in a preseason game at SoFi Stadium.

Here are five takeaways from the game:

**Lance shows he can still run**

With a strong showing in the preseason opener — earning the trust and praise of the coaching staff — Trey Lance has seemingly closed the gap in what was once considered a foregone decision for the backup quarterback spot.

The growing confidence in his game showed Sunday — trusting his legs to extend plays — as he extended his second series with 13- and 17- [See Chargers, D3]

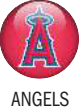


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PRO CALENDAR

|                                                                                                | MON<br>11                                           | TUE<br>12               | WED<br>13              | THU<br>14 | FRI<br>15                  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|-----------|----------------------------|
| <br>DODGERS    | Angels<br>6:30<br>SNLA                              | Angels<br>6:30<br>SNLA  | Angels<br>6:30<br>SNLA |           | SAN DIEGO<br>7<br>SNLA     |
| <br>ANGELS     | DODGERS<br>6:30<br>FDW                              | DODGERS<br>6:30<br>FDW  | DODGERS<br>6:30<br>FDW |           | at Athletics<br>7<br>FDW   |
| <br>GALAXY     | NEXT: SATURDAY AT MIAMI, 4:30 P.M., APPLE TV+       |                         |                        |           |                            |
| <br>LAFC       | NEXT: SATURDAY AT NEW ENGLAND, 4:30 P.M., APPLE TV+ |                         |                        |           |                            |
| <br>ANGEL CITY |                                                     |                         |                        |           | at Utah<br>7<br>Paramount+ |
| <br>SPARKS     |                                                     | NEW YORK<br>7<br>SpecSN |                        |           | at Dallas<br>4:30<br>ION   |

**RAMS:** Saturday vs. Chargers (preseason) at SoFi Stadium, 4 p.m., ABC  
**CHARGERS:** Saturday vs. Rams (preseason) at SoFi Stadium, 4 p.m., ABC  
Shade denotes home games. Times Pacific.

TODAY ON THE AIR

| TIME             | EVENT                                   | ON THE AIR                                     |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| BASEBALL         |                                         |                                                |
| 4 p.m.           | Minnesota at New York Yankees           | TV: MLB                                        |
| 6:30 p.m.        | Dodgers at Angels                       | TV: SNLA; FDW, KCOP-13 R: 570, 1020; 830, 1330 |
| HOCKEY           |                                         |                                                |
| 10 a.m.          | Hlinka Gretzky Cup, Slovakia vs. U.S.   | TV: NHL                                        |
| 6:30 a.m. (Tue.) | Hlinka Gretzky Cup, Sweden vs. U.S.     | TV: NHL                                        |
| SOCCER           |                                         |                                                |
| 6 p.m.           | Mexico, León vs. Monterrey              | TV: TUDN                                       |
| 8 p.m.           | Mexico, Juárez vs. Toluca               | TV: Universo, FoxD, KRCA                       |
| 8 p.m.           | Mexico, Atlético San Luis vs. Cruz Azul | TV: TUDN                                       |
| TENNIS           |                                         |                                                |
| 8 a.m.           | ATP/WTA, Cincinnati, early rounds       | TV: Tennis                                     |

SPORTS EXTRA

For coverage of late Dodgers, Angels and Sparks games, and more, see our daily digital eNewspaper. Subscribers get free access to an exclusive “Sports Extra.” View it on your phone, tablet or computer at [latimes.com/enewspaper](https://latimes.com/enewspaper).



NOAH GRAHAM NBAE via Getty Images

**AZURÁ STEVENS** drives for the Sparks during the team’s 72-59 loss to the host Valkyries on Saturday.

Valkyries beat Sparks, moving a game ahead

Burton, Zandalasini combine for 30 to boost Golden State in Western Conference.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**SAN FRANCISCO** — Veronica Burton scored 16 points, Cecilia Zandalasini scored 14 before halftime and the Golden State Valkyries moved a game ahead of the Sparks in the Western Conference with a 72-59 victory on Saturday night.

Janelle Salaun scored 11 points and grabbed eight rebounds for Golden State (15-15). Zandalasini scored 14 points in the first half on five-for-six shooting, including four for five from three-point range, and missed her only shot attempt after half-time.

Dearica Hamby scored 15 points for the Sparks (14-16), and Julie Allemand and reserve Rae Burrell each scored 10.

Golden State built a 19-14 lead after one quarter, and the Valkyries took advantage of a nine-point quarter by the Sparks for a 33-23 lead at halftime.

The Sparks started the third quarter with a 7-0 run with a pair of foul shots and a short shot by Kelsey Plum and a three-pointer by Hamby. Golden State extended its lead to 41-32 before the Sparks rallied again

WNBA STANDINGS

Through Saturday

| WESTERN CONFERENCE |    |    |      |     |
|--------------------|----|----|------|-----|
| Team               | W  | L  | Pct. | G B |
| Minnesota          | 26 | 5  | .839 | —   |
| Phoenix            | 19 | 11 | .633 | 6½  |
| Las Vegas          | 17 | 14 | .548 | 9   |
| Seattle            | 16 | 15 | .516 | 10  |
| Golden State       | 15 | 15 | .500 | 10½ |
| SPARKS             | 14 | 16 | .467 | 11½ |
| Dallas             | 8  | 23 | .258 | 18  |
| EASTERN CONFERENCE |    |    |      |     |
| Team               | W  | L  | Pct. | G B |
| New York           | 20 | 10 | .667 | —   |
| Atlanta            | 19 | 11 | .633 | 1   |
| Indiana            | 18 | 14 | .563 | 3   |
| Washington         | 13 | 17 | .433 | 7   |
| Chicago            | 8  | 23 | .258 | 12½ |
| Connecticut        | 5  | 24 | .172 | 14½ |

SATURDAY'S BOX

GOLDEN STATE 72, SPARKS 59

**SPARKS (59)** — Hamby 5-8 4-4 15, Jackson 3-10 0-0 8, Stevens 1-4 1-2 4, Allemand 4-10 0-0 10, Plum 1-9 2-2 4, Brink 2-5 0-0 5, Feagin 0-0 0-0 0, Pili 0-1 1-2 1, Burrell 3-9 3-4 10, Barker 0-0 0-0 0, Vanloo 1-5 0-0 2. Totals 20-61 11-14 59.

**GOLDEN STATE (72)** — Salaun 4-9 0-0 11, Zandalasini 5-7 0-0 14, Fagbenle 4-8 0-0 8, Burton 5-9 3-3 16, Hayes 4-10 0-2 8, Amhere 0-0 0-0 0, Charles 1-3 0-0 2, Rupert 1-6 1-2 4, Chen 0-0 0-0 0, Leite 3-7 2-3 9, Martin 0-2 0-0 0. Totals 27-61 6-10 72.

**SPARKS** 14 9 25 11— 59  
**Golden State** 19 14 23 16— 72  
3-Point Goals—SPARKS 8-34 (Jackson 2-5, Allemand 2-7, Hamby 1-1, Stevens 1-3, Brink 1-4, Burrell 1-5, Pili 0-1, Plum 0-4, Vanloo 0-4), Golden State 12-34 (Zandalasini 4-6, Burton 3-5, Salaun 3-8, Leite 1-1, Rupert 1-6, Charles 0-1, Fagbenle 0-1, Martin 0-2, Hayes 0-4), Fouled Out—None. Rebounds—SPARKS 31 (Jackson, Stevens 6), Golden State 37 (Salaun 8). Assists—SPARKS 15 (Plum 4), Golden State 20 (Hayes 6). Total Fouls—SPARKS 14, Golden State 13. A—18,064 (18,064)

to get within 43-40 but never got closer.

Golden State sealed the win by outscoring the Sparks 12-5 over the first six minutes of the fourth.

The Valkyries won the regular-season series 3-1 over the Sparks and currently hold the eighth and final playoff spot.

Hip-hop, basketball, comedy come in threes at Intuit Dome

Ice Cube brings new franchise, entertainers to showcase Big3 for the hometown crowd.

By ANTHONY DE LEON

The Big3 basketball atmosphere is one of a West Coast summer-style block party — quite literally — bursting with frenetic hip-hop energy brought straight to the hardwood.

At the center is the legendary rapper and Hollywood A-lister Ice Cube, who, between games, stands before a Big3-branded backdrop in the bowels of the Intuit Dome, greeting families and flashing Westside hand signs as cameras click.

“It takes a village; all these people have honed their skills to be the best,” Ice Cube, the league’s co-owner and founder, said of the atmosphere.

Rooted in the streetball tradition of three-on-three basketball played on neighborhood blacktops, the league rolled out its “Summer in the City” tour — a daylong showcase with eight teams vying for a \$1-million championship.

Not shy on production value, the event offers an unusually intimate setting — players mingling casually around the concourse, almost like an AAU tournament. Or comedic stars Anthony Anderson and Cedric the Entertainer serving as guest sideline reporters, greeting every fan who stops by with a quick hello.

But for the South Central-born rapper, whose league has toured the country, Saturday’s showcase in Inglewood marked the first time his hometown crowd could watch one of the Big3’s newest — and first privately owned — franchises, the LA Riot, play live.

A franchise named for L.A.’s history of tumultuous racial unrest — evoking the 1992 riots — also symbolizes a movement, rebellion and cultural takeover, just as Ice Cube envisioned.

“It was a dream come true, not too far from where I grew up,” Ice Cube said. “So to have a league like this, right at the house, is just beautiful.”

After seven years of unfiliated teams, the Big3 shifted to a city-based model to cultivate loyal fan bases



CHAPMAN BAEHLER Big3

**FORMER LAKER** Dwight Howard controls the ball for the L.A. Riot during Saturday’s match against the Boston Ball Hogs at the Intuit Dome in Inglewood.

and sell franchises to local owners. Using L.A. as the blueprint — with a \$10-million price tag — the hope is to bring long-term stability to the league.

“We’re going to these eight cities every year,” Ice Cube said. “We can plan long-term, hopefully grow the league to other cities, [who] want to get in on the act.”

Since 2017, part of that stability has been built on the backs of veteran players — athletes well past their NBA primes and no longer chasing NBA contracts. Among them is newly elected Naismith Hall of Famer Dwight Howard, alongside names such as Joe Johnson, Michael Beasley and Lance Stephenson.

Howard, a member of the 2020 Lakers championship team, made a highly anticipated return to the city where he played three seasons across three separate stints. With his signing, he has become the face of the Riot, committing to play his final season of professional basketball with the club.

“It’s our first year, we’re just getting started,” Howard said. “We’re looking forward to keeping it going. Obviously, the first year is always a little difficult — trying to get to know each other — but we’re doing a great job.”

Howard has dabbled in ownership ventures, investing \$7 million to purchase the WNBA’s Atlanta Dream — a deal that turned out to be a scam — and joining the Asian Tournament, an inter-

national league, as a co-owner and player for the Taiwan Mustangs.

In his first Big3 season, Howard has witnessed how well the league connects with its fans, a connection he believes will be key to its long-term success.

Christopher Thomas, 35, a lifelong Angeleno who brought his daughter and best friend to Saturday’s Big3 games, was rocking a No. 12 Howard Riot jersey. Thomas left the arena converted after initially scoring free tickets through his job.

“I have to admit, I never heard of the Big3,” Thomas said. “Now I’m leaving as a Riot fan, especially with my boy Dwight Howard on the team.”

For Thomas, the draw went beyond basketball. It was the atmosphere, constant energy between games and novelty the league offered. The experience was “something new, something different,” he said — the kind that will have him back in the stands when the Big3 returns to town.

Making headway in localized markets, Howard — who has played overseas several times throughout his career — says the league can also tap into those international markets with smart decisions and profitability.

“Oh, international,” Howard said. “Big3 international is what we’re looking for.”

On the globalization front, the league is planning exhibitions in Australia and Asia, which Ice Cube hopes will come to fruition soon.

For now, though, the focus remains on expanding and privatizing within the U.S., beyond L.A., Houston, Detroit and Miami. The Big3 also aims to grow beyond its current eight-team format by securing investors for four city-based teams, and then aims for further expansion down the line.

“We got some smart people who are buying teams, people who can help us grow the league,” Ice Cube said. “Not just sign a check, but to help us be innovative. Help us with sponsors. We want owners who are active.”

While expansion plans continue to be discussed behind closed doors, the league’s public focus remains on its fast, physical and unpredictable style — all of which was on full display as the action at the Intuit Dome wound down.

The Riot’s matchup against the Boston Ball Hogs came down to the wire with a playoff berth on the line. Clawing back from a 48-45 deficit, the Riot unleashed desperate four-point shots and dove for loose balls galore.

Eventually taking the lead, the Riot-friendly crowd spilled from its seats into the walkways surrounding the court, watching with bated breath as Jordan Crawford drained a walk-off three-pointer to seal a 52-48 victory.

“At the end of the day, I can only do so much to get people hyped up,” Ice Cube said of the appeal of the Big3. “The basketball has to be pure.”

Iamaleava impressive early in camp

**[Iamaleava, from D1]** teamed with Iamaleava at Tennessee. Unlike UCLA, which struggled to identify top high school talent under coach Chip Kelly, the Volunteers offered Matthews a scholarship out of Mission Viejo High. A tight connection between Iamaleava and Matthews had formed through seven-on-seven tournaments and high school games.

“We already had, like, built that connection just beforehand,” said Matthews, a transfer from California who posted career highs with 32 catches for 272 yards and one touchdown last season. “So when I knew he was coming here, it was just like a blessing, just happy to have him here and just knowing that he’s going to give me that rock whenever, and knowing that he’s going to throw that ball. So it was cool just to have him here.”

Football junkies

Matthews has an Xbox in his hotel room and a new roommate in defensive back Brett Barry — “That’s my dawg now,” Matthews said — to learn about. There are so many possibilities to keep the wide receiver busy late into the night.

His top priority is inactivity. All he wants to do when his final meeting of the day ends around 9:30 p.m. is see how quickly he can get into bed before waking up for the next meeting.

“Once I’m done with meetings,” Matthews said, “I’m brushing my teeth and going right to sleep. I’m tired.”

It would be easy for fatigue to set in as the Bruins approach the final week of training camp in Costa Mesa. A schedule full of practices, meetings and recovery — not to mention



Nate Donlevy UCLA Athletics

**THE LEADERSHIP** of 6-foot-6 Nico Iamaleava may seriously change the trajectory of the Bruins’ program.

bonding events such as a beach day and karaoke — has left players sinking deeply into their hotel beds.

But there’s an upside to so much football for players who embrace every X and O. Matthews said the wide receivers were staying after every practice to catch at least 100 passes from a ball-launching machine.

“We all love football,” Matthews said, “so it’s not like we’re complaining, and while we’re doing this, while we’re doing that, it’s everyone just locked in, heads down, and we’re all just grinding.”

As the Bruins approached the final week of training camp, Foster said he wanted to know who had fully grasped the nuances of the way the team wanted to run things.

“Who really knows the

playbook in and out, you know?” Foster said. “Let’s get the coaches on the side and let’s start getting into more scrimmaging and stuff like that.”

Linebacker Jalen Woods said a Saturday afternoon practice spanning nearly 2½ hours might have been the longest of camp, just part of Foster’s efforts to simulate a game-like environment with three weeks left before the season opener against Utah on Aug. 30 at the Rose Bowl.

“I feel like for us to be ready for a game,” Woods said, “like, we need these long practices.”

The bonding has also had its perks. Foster identified freshman defensive lineman Robert James III, who will be sidelined indefinitely by a lower-body injury, as the team’s best singer. Players have also performed other

impromptu requests in an effort to bond.

“It’s beneficial that we do stuff like skits, and stuff like that, like doing funny stuff here and there to show everybody’s personality on the team,” Woods said. “Just a side that we don’t see, like on the football field. So, it’s basically like getting to know your teammates, and I feel like it’s going to pay dividends in the long run, trying to make a push for a championship.”

Etc.

Safety Key Lawrence suffered an apparent right leg injury early in the practice session and had to be helped off the field and into the trainers’ area. ... Foster said offensive linemen Courtland Ford and Reuben Unije, who were limited in practices earlier in the week, were managing “a little bit of wear and tear.” Offensive lineman Yutaka Mahe, recovering from a lower-body injury, is on schedule to return soon, Foster said. ... As of Friday, UCLA’s new practice fields on campus remained a big pile of dirt. Foster said the team had plenty of options, including Drake Stadium and the intramural fields, if the new practice fields were not completed by the time players returned to campus next weekend. ... Wyatt Mosier, a redshirt sophomore linebacker, has been awarded Nick Pasquale’s No. 36 as a tribute to Mosier’s ability to embody the spirit of the late wide receiver. Foster said he wanted “somebody that was gonna come out here and leave everything on the field, and that’s the way that Wyatt practices.” ... As a thank-you gesture from UCLA in response to recent wildfires, first responders can get \$4.73 tickets for the season opener.

# Stafford moving in ‘right direction’ after a workout

[Rams, from D1]

to get because we anticipate him being a big part of what we’re going to do this year.”

Corum’s “overall improvement” is evident, McVay said.

“Everything has gone in the right direction,” McVay said, “and when you’ve got a guy like him, the way he works, the mindset that he has, the enjoyment that he has for the competition, he’s just going to get better.”

Rookie Jarquez Hunter rushed for 41 yards in 11 carries, including an 11-yard gain on a third-and-five play in the third quarter.

Cody Schrader rushed for 59 yards in five carries, including one for a 25-yard gain, and caught a touchdown pass.

Ronnie Rivers suffered a rib injury that will sideline him “for a little bit of time,” McVay said.

## Bennett leads four touchdown drives

Stetson Bennett went into the game after playing with extreme confidence during training camp and a joint practice with the Cowboys.

It showed at times Saturday — he delivered a perfectly placed fourth-down pass to Xavier Smith along the left sideline in the first quarter, and also scrambled for a first down — and avoided momentum-changing miscues.

“He was awesome,” McVay said, “and he was totally present, and love what I saw.”

Bennett completed 16 of 24 passes for 188 yards and two touchdowns, one a nine-yard pass to Schrader and the other a five-yard pass to receiver Brennan Presley. Bennett’s long pass attempt to rookie receiver Konata Mumpfield in the third quarter was picked off by safety Israel Mukuamu.

“I thought I played pretty well,” Bennett said.

Bennett, who rushed for 11 yards in three carries, will start next Saturday against the Chargers.

## Stewart takes a step toward rotation

Early in the second quarter, Josiah Stewart came off the left edge and sacked quarterback Joe Milton for an eight-yard loss.

“I wanted to get the ball out,” he said. “But you can’t have everything.”

Starters Jared Verse and Byron Young, watching from the sideline, were no doubt elated.

Stewart, a third-round draft pick from Michigan, adds another element to an ascending pass rush.

## Linebacker Paul showed leadership

Chris “Pooh” Paul, a fifth-round draft pick from Mississippi, started and called defensive signals.

Paul made five tackles. “You felt his presence, you felt his range out there,” McVay said, adding, “He’s got a good game-day demeanor.”

Paul credited veterans Troy Reeder and Nate Landman and second-year pro Omar Speights for helping him prepare.

“It helped a lot, getting knowledge from guys who’ve got NFL experience and what to expect on certain plays, certain downs, certain areas of the field,” Paul said, adding, “I took those coaching points with me out there.”

Shaun Dolac, an undrafted free agent from Buffalo, also started at linebacker and made six tackles.

Cornerback Cam Lampkin made the catch of the day in the third quarter when he intercepted a long pass in the end zone.

## Stafford goes through workout

Stafford, who had not practiced because of a back issue, threw more than 60 passes during a morning workout in Woodland Hills before the game.

“It was awesome,” McVay said. “He looked good. He threw the ball really well, there was no limitations in terms of the types of throws — deep, intermediate, short. ... And he felt really good.”

“And so looking forward to progressing him back into practice on Monday. But it was a good step in the right direction.”

Stafford, 37, is working through an aggravated disc issue. McVay said he did not know if Stafford felt discomfort during the workout, and that the 17th-year pro would participate only in individual drills on Monday.

Earlier in the week, McVay said Stafford was not scheduled to participate in a scheduled joint practice with the Chargers on Wednesday. That practice has been canceled, McVay said, because of Chargers injuries.

“I think they’re a little bit banged up,” McVay said, adding that he had spoken with Chargers coach Jim Harbaugh. “Bummer that we weren’t able to get that done, but I totally understand. And we’ll figure out a way to get great work against ourselves.”

McVay said the Rams were working with the New Orleans Saints to possibly hold a joint practice on Thursday in Carson.



ALLEN J. SCHABEN Los Angeles Times

“STAY true to the thing you’re doing,” says Rams running back Jarquez Hunter, here in action against Dallas.

# How Rams rookie Hunter honed his ‘super power’ in Mississippi

Skills and patience he learned on the state’s rolling greens could take him far in NFL.

BY IRA GORAWARA

In 2020, inside the clang-and-clatter of Neshoba Central High’s powerlifting gym, Jarquez Hunter’s coach laid down a dare: squat 645 pounds on three counts.

With a nod and coat of chalk, Hunter went to work. Challenges don’t faze him.

At a Mississippi water company three years prior, Hunter’s co-workers coaxed him into a pickup basketball game. Still in his button-down shirt and cowboy boots, the 5-foot-9 Hunter went airborne. And dunked.

In those same boots, the Rams’ rookie running back completed more delicate tests: He patiently broke and nurtured a horse that he eventually rode across Auburn’s campus.

“Stay true to the thing you’re doing,” Hunter said.

On Saturday at SoFi Stadium, Hunter made his NFL debut in a preseason game against the Dallas Cowboys. Lining up behind quarterback Stetson Bennett, he took a handoff on a third-

and-six play and mimicked a sprinter stealing a head start — his shoulders low and knees churning. Hunter knifed through the defense and broke for an 11-yard gain.

“That was a great run,” said Rams coach Sean McVay. “He’s knocking guys back and finishing forward where what might be a four-yard run ends up being an eight-yard or seven-yard run.”

That bruising style helped Hunter rush for 3,371 rushing yards and 29 touchdowns in four seasons at Auburn. The Rams selected Hunter in the fourth round of the 2025 NFL draft, adding him to a running back corps that features starter Kyren Williams and second-year pro Blake Corum.

“He’s definitely laser-focused on what you’re saying,” Rams running backs coach Ron Gould said during training camp. Or, as McVay illustrated it: “He can stare a hole through you.”

Gould dubbed Hunter’s speed as his “super power,” a gift confirmed by a 4.44-second 40-yard dash. But Hunter’s ability to twist defenders out of position mid-chase is his calling card. Proof? He amassed 278 yards in 23 carries last October against Kentucky.

“Since I was in middle

school growing up, I did a lot of squatting,” Hunter said. “I do a lot of leg workouts. I run hills and pull sleds. That’s really how I get the power in my legs.”

Rams linebacker Chris “Pooh” Paul Jr., a fellow rookie, played against Hunter three times at Arkansas before Paul transferred to Mississippi. Every matchup against Hunter’s Tigers, Paul said, was the same headache.

“We knew he ran hard,” the Rams linebacker said. “We knew he was hard to bring down. We knew he had speed. Very good in pass [protection]. ... Man, he’s very dangerous.”

But that danger vanishes once the pads come off. They’re replaced by the patience of a country boy.

Hunter, who also stashes party tricks like leaping out of a swimming pool, grew up in the rolling greens of central Mississippi. And back home, Hunter’s most loyal running mate doesn’t wear pads. Danger, a chestnut quarter horse with a white blaze down his face and a deep copper coat, was born the same summer Hunter first wore an Auburn jersey.

The colt was born while Hunter was driving home for a short break before fall camp, its spindly legs still

wobbly in the pasture.

The patience to break a horse, the stubbornness to work one until it trusts you, the dawn-to-dusk commitment of tending to something that can’t speak back — Hunter said he swears it all bleeds into his game.

“When you’re out there working with animals, you gotta stay true,” Hunter said. “You gotta go with the training. You still gotta work with them.”

That same discipline shows when Hunter rides his ATV up a steep hill, hauls in catfish by hand, or waits patiently for a buck in the woods — and it’s the same grit he’ll lean on as he pushes for a place in the Rams’ running back rotation.

Hunter will line up again Saturday against the Chargers, with a chance to outpace the 41 yards he logged in 11 carries in his debut.

“Pretty decent,” Hunter said, “but it’s things I got to fix.”

Because for Hunter, the fixes are the fun part of challenges — whether it’s mending a missed block, pumping out another squat or winning the trust of a restless colt.

Staff writer Gary Klein contributed to this report.

# Lance closes gap in race for backup quarterback spot

[Chargers, from D1]

yard scrambles in the second quarter. He capped the drive with a designed quarterback draw near the goal line for a five-yard touchdown run.

Most of Lance’s production came on the ground, rushing seven times for 48 yards. He also completed seven of 14 passes for 55 yards.

Taylor Heinicke, who sat out the preseason opener, looked rusty in his first action, starting the game but finishing one for five for eight yards with one sack.

During his lone quarter of work, he overshot several receivers — Tyler Conklin downfield and Kimani Vidal near the sideline. Several drives stalled with Heinicke under center, as the Chargers started deep in their territory and pressure collapsed the pocket.

## Murphy making the most of his snaps

Early in the second quarter, Caleb Murphy burst off the left edge to sack quarterback Spencer Rattler, knocking the ball loose for a Saints turnover.

On the next Saints possession, this time from the

right side, Murphy bull-rushed the tackle and again got to Rattler.

Signed to the practice squad last season as an undrafted free agent, Murphy is taking full advantage of extra reps with Khalil Mack, Bud Dupree and Tuli Tuipulotu not playing in the preseason. The Chargers are still searching for depth at edge rusher, and Murphy’s showing is keeping him in that conversation.

His main competition, fourth-round pick Kyle Kennard, did not dress. Tre’Mon Morris-Brash finished with three assisted tackles.

## Rogers’ showcase

Under the tutelage of defensive backs coach Steve Clinkscale, the Chargers’ secondary continues to shine with their ball-hawking skills, following up on a three-interception performance in the Hall of Fame Game.

This week, undrafted rookie Eric Rogers showcased his ball-tracking ability by jumping to grab a Tyler Shough pass and returning it 55 yards for a pick-six. Later in the fourth quarter, Rogers high-pointed a Jake Haener pass for his second interception.



ERIC THAYER Associated Press

**TREY LANCE** (5) scores a touchdown for the Chargers during Sunday’s preseason game against the Saints.

A rookie fighting for a spot on the 53-man roster, Rogers made a strong case — but he was injured on kick-off coverage in the fourth, remaining down for minutes before trainers helped him off the field.

## Special teams hit and miss

With the volume of attempts he had last season, Cameron Dicker ranked among the league’s most accurate kickers — and he

looked in form again, drilling 44-yard and 40-yard field goals.

Nyheim Miller-Hines, meanwhile, had a rougher outing in his bid to secure the second returner role alongside Derius Davis.

He muffed a punt that set up the Saints in scoring position and later bobbled another before recovering it, prompting rookie Luke Grimm to take over punt return duties in the second half.

# Latest start by Snell a sneak peek at ‘stacked’ staff

Left-hander strikes out 10 in win over Blue Jays as Dodgers’ rotation appears to be more formidable.

By STEVE HENSON

It took until August, but the sparkling starting rotation the Dodgers envisioned in spring training is coming into focus an outing at a time, by five — even six — different pitchers.

Vowing not to revisit the predicament they endured last postseason, when only two true starters and a stacked bullpen somehow patched together enough innings to win a World Series, the Dodgers added two-time Cy Young award winner Blake Snell to a rotation that already boasted four potential aces and several other candidates coming off injuries or ascending from the minor leagues.

Snell complained of shoulder inflammation April 2 after his second start and took his sweet time recovering — four months, to be precise. But if his performance against the Toronto Blue Jays on Saturday night at Dodger Stadium is a fair indication, the wait was worthwhile.

Snell struck out 10 in five scoreless innings of a 9-1 Dodgers victory, living up to the “Snellzilla” nickname he stole from his older

brother as a brash 11-year-old and still uses as his Instagram handle.

In two starts since coming off the injured list, the left-hander in the first year of a five-year, \$182-million contract has 18 strikeouts in 10 innings. And he believes the best is yet to come.

“There are some things I want to do in my next start that I’m excited about,” Snell said. “I still [have] a lot of work to do. I can be better. I’m trying to find a rhythm, trying to figure it out. It was only my second start.”

He got support from the Dodgers’ offense, which was fueled by the long ball early. Max Muncy belted a two-run, opposite-field home run in the fourth inning and Shohei Ohtani absolutely crushed his 40th long ball of the season 417 feet to dead center in the fifth. It marked the fourth time in the last five seasons that Ohtani has hit at least 40 homers.

A six-run rally an inning later put the game away. Two hit batters and two walks set the table, and Dalton Rushing and Mookie Betts each delivered two-run singles with none out. Andy Pages drove in the last two with a two-out double, his second hit of the inning.

The win was the second in a row against Toronto (68-50), which remains in first place in the American League East. The series concluded Sunday with another formidable starter — Tyler Glasnow — taking the mound for the Dodgers (68-49).



GINA FERAZZI Los Angeles Times

**BLAKE SNELL** has 18 strikeouts in 10 innings since returning from a shoulder injury.

Glasnow took a similar if less pronounced path than Snell this season, going on the injured list before the end of April and not returning until July 9. He has given up only one run in four of his five starts since returning and most recently went seven strong innings against the St. Louis Cardinals.

It’s clear that Snell and Glasnow are healthy, their arms as fresh and live as would be expected coming out of spring training. The same is true of Ohtani and Clayton Kershaw, two future Hall of Famers whose recoveries from injuries also were methodical and unhurried. Both are pitching well.

And so is Yoshinobu Yamamoto, the only starter whose

health hasn’t cost him time off. He’s made 22 starts, going 10-7 with a 2.51 earned-run average and leads National League starters with eight scoreless outings.

“This is how we hoped it would play out as far as every night, you see the probable [starting pitchers] and have a chance to prevent runs,” Dodgers manager Dave Roberts said. “And you look at the lineup and see you have an opportunity to score runs. Then you go play the game.”

The Dodgers employ a sixth starter to give Ohtani and Yamamoto five to seven days off between starts. The job belonged to Dustin May until he was traded to the Red Sox at the deadline, creating an opportunity for Emmet Sheehan, who was impressive over 60 innings as a rookie in 2023 but had Tommy John surgery in May 2024.

Sheehan has pitched well, posting a 3.00 ERA over 30 innings, giving the Dodgers a luxury they haven’t enjoyed in recent memory: trotting out a starting pitcher every night who can prevent runs through the middle innings.

“I’m pretty pleased,” Roberts said. “You look at the starters and the next guy is going to try to outdo the next guy and that’s how you build momentum.”

That leaves the bullpen to finish the job, and injuries and inconsistency continue to riddle the relief corps. Roberts said help is on the way, with several key relievers on

| SATURDAY’S LATE BOX<br>DODGERS 9, TORONTO 1 |           |          |          |          |      |               |           |          |           |          |      |  |  |  |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|------|---------------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|------|--|--|--|
| Toronto                                     | AB        | R        | H        | BI       | Avg. | Dodgers       | AB        | R        | H         | BI       | Avg. |  |  |  |
| Schneider If                                | 3         | 0        | 0        | 0        | .235 | Ohtani dh     | 4         | 2        | 1         | 2        | .282 |  |  |  |
| d-Barger                                    | 1         | 0        | 0        | 0        | .267 | Betts ss      | 5         | 1        | 1         | 2        | .308 |  |  |  |
| Clement 2b                                  | 4         | 1        | 2        | 1        | .289 | Freeman 1b    | 4         | 1        | 1         | 0        | .305 |  |  |  |
| Guerrero dh                                 | 4         | 0        | 0        | 0        | .294 | Muncy 3b      | 3         | 1        | 2         | 2        | .260 |  |  |  |
| Bichette ss                                 | 4         | 0        | 0        | 0        | .298 | Dean cf       | 1         | 0        | 0         | 0        | .000 |  |  |  |
| Kirk c                                      | 3         | 0        | 0        | 0        | .298 | Hernandez rf  | 4         | 0        | 0         | 0        | .251 |  |  |  |
| France 1b                                   | 3         | 0        | 1        | 0        | .375 | Rojas 2b      | 1         | 0        | 0         | 0        | .238 |  |  |  |
| Varsho cf                                   | 2         | 0        | 0        | 0        | .237 | Pages cf      | 4         | 1        | 2         | 2        | .278 |  |  |  |
| Kennedy 3b                                  | 3         | 0        | 1        | 0        | .200 | Conforto If   | 1         | 1        | 1         | 0        | .191 |  |  |  |
| b-Loperfido                                 | 1         | 0        | 0        | 0        | .378 | a-Call If     | 1         | 0        | 0         | 0        | .250 |  |  |  |
| Straw If                                    | 3         | 0        | 0        | 0        | .254 | Freid 2b      | 3         | 1        | 0         | 0        | .222 |  |  |  |
| c-Lukes                                     | 1         | 0        | 1        | 0        | .263 | Rushing c     | 4         | 1        | 1         | 2        | .189 |  |  |  |
| <b>Totals</b>                               | <b>32</b> | <b>1</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>1</b> |      | <b>Totals</b> | <b>35</b> | <b>9</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>9</b> |      |  |  |  |
| Toronto                                     |           |          |          |          |      | 000           | 000       | 010      | -1        | 5        | 1    |  |  |  |
| Dodgers                                     |           |          |          |          |      | 000           | 216       | 00x      | -9        | 10       | 0    |  |  |  |

a-flied out for Conforto in the 6th. b-flied out for Kennedy in the 9th. c-singled for Straw in the 9th. d-popped out for Schneider in the 9th.

**Walks**—Toronto 5: Schneider 1, Kirk 1, France 1, Varsho 2. **Dodgers** 5: Ohtani 1, Freeman 1, Muncy 1, Conforto 1, Freeland 1, Bichette 1, Kirk 1, France 2, Varsho 2.

**HR**—Clement (1), off Dreyer; Muncy (16), off Bassitt; Ohtani (40), off Bassitt.

**RBIs**—Clement (35), Muncy 2 (61), Ohtani (76), Rushing 2 (13), Betts 2 (63), Pages 2 (66).

**Runners left in scoring position**—Toronto 4 (Barger, Varsho, Kennedy, Guerrero); Dodgers 5 (Betts, Hernández, Freeland, Call 2).

**RISP**—Toronto 0 for 6; Dodgers 3 for 9.

| Toronto         | IP        | H        | R        | ER        | BB        | SO        | NP        | ERA        |
|-----------------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Bassitt, L 11-6 | 4 1/3     | 6        | 3        | 2         | 2         | 6         | 68        | 4.17       |
| Rodriguez       | 2         | 4        | 4        | 1         | 0         | 19        | 3.09      |            |
| Dominguez       | 2         | 2        | 2        | 2         | 2         | 22        | 11.25     |            |
| Fisher          | 1         | 0        | 0        | 0         | 3         | 24        | 2.27      |            |
| Nance           | 1         | 0        | 0        | 0         | 1         | 14        | 0.77      |            |
| <b>Dodgers</b>  | <b>IP</b> | <b>H</b> | <b>R</b> | <b>ER</b> | <b>BB</b> | <b>SO</b> | <b>NP</b> | <b>ERA</b> |
| Snell, W 2-1    | 5         | 3        | 0        | 0         | 3         | 10        | 90        | 2.37       |
| Stewart, H 2-1  | 1         | 0        | 0        | 0         | 1         | 1         | 19        | 4.91       |
| Dreyer          | 2         | 1        | 1        | 0         | 2         | 26        | 2.98      |            |
| Diaz            | 1         | 0        | 0        | 1         | 1         | 28        | 4.05      |            |

**Inherited runners scored**—Rodriguez 2-0, Dominguez 2-2, Fisher 2-0.

**IBB**—off Dominguez (Ohtani). **HBP**—Rodriguez (Conforto). **WP**—Dominguez (2). **U**—D.J. Reysburn, Sean Barber, James Hoye, John Libka. **T**—2:50. **Tickets sold**—44,727 (56,000).

the mend. If they return as effective as the starters, pitching could be a Dodgers strength entering the postseason.

“Honestly, right now, watching everybody, it’s a lot better than I thought we were going to be,” Snell said. “This staff’s stacked.”

# Plenty of hits and walks, but not runs

[**Dodgers**, from D1] important: The loss, combined with the Padres’ win over the Boston Red Sox in San Diego, cut the Dodgers’ lead in the National League West to two games.

The Blue Jays came to Los Angeles after a three-game sweep of the Rockies in Colorado in which they scored 45 runs and had 63 hits. Against the Dodgers, Toronto scored just three times and had just 17 hits entering the fifth inning. Glasnow did his part, giving up two runs and four hits through 5 2/3 innings, striking out eight. It was his fifth stellar start in six outings since returning from an inflamed shoulder last month and he left with a 3-2 lead, the first time since his first start of the season in March that he left a game with a chance at a win.

But the bullpen couldn’t hold it, with Treinen giving up back-to-back homers to Vladimir Guerrero Jr. and Addison Barger with one out in the eighth. After the Dodgers came back to tie the score on a bases-loaded walk to Freddie Freeman in the bottom of the inning, Vesia gave the lead right back in the ninth.

Glasnow, as he has all season, deserved a better fate. He has given up more than two runs just once in his last nine starts and has given up just 20 hits in 34 2/3 innings since returning from the injured list. Yet he has little positive to show for it,



WALLY SKALIJ Associated Press

**THE DODGERS’** Mookie Betts is tagged out by Toronto shortstop Bo Bichette on a steal attempt in the first inning of the 5-4 loss.

with nine of his 11 starts ending with no decision despite a 3.06 ERA and .172 opponents’ batting average.

“I really like the way that he’s got the blinders on it, and nothing’s affecting him,” Dodger manager Dave Roberts said before the game.

“To say a player, specifically Tyler, is unflappable is a big compliment, and I think that that’s something he’s worked on because he gets emotional.

“There’s things that you can’t control at times, and his ability to kind of lock back in, he’s been really, really impressive.”

Glasnow got off to a slow start, getting an out on his first pitch

then missing the strike zone on five of his next six before Guerrero — who came in hitting .364 lifetime against Glasnow — drove a run-scoring double to the wall in center field.

But by the time Glasnow came out to start the second inning, he had a lead. Ohtani evened the score, lining his 23<sup>rd</sup> career leadoff home run into the right-field bleachers to run his hitting streak to nine games, matching his season high.

Two outs later, Freeman put the Dodgers in front, slicing an 0-2 pitch over the wall in left-center for his 14<sup>th</sup> homer of the season.

Glasnow, who continued to struggle with his control, nearly

gave the lead back, loading the bases on two walks sandwiched around a double by Joey Loperfido. But after a mound visit from pitching coach Mark Prior, the right-hander got Nathan Lukes to ground into an inning-ending double play.

That allowed the Dodgers to extend their lead to 3-1 in the bottom of the second when Freeman walked with the bases loaded.

Glasnow wouldn’t be in trouble again until the sixth, when Bo Bichette led off with a single and came around to score on a two-out flare to right by Ty France, cutting the lead to 3-2. That drove Glasnow from the mound an out short of the seventh inning.

The Dodgers missed a chance to add to that lead shortly after Glasnow left when Ohtani was thrown out at third on the front end of a double steal with two on and two out and Freeman at the plate to end the sixth. That proved costly when Treinen, the fourth reliever summoned to close out the game, coughed up the lead on the back-to-back homers.

Freeman wouldn’t be denied his next opportunity, drawing his second bases-loaded walk of the game, and the fourth walk of the inning, on a full-count pitch to tie the score with two out in the eighth.

But while the Dodgers would load the bases again the ninth, they would get no more.

## SOCCER REPORT

# Son helps LAFC rally for tie in his MLS debut

WIRE REPORTS

**Denis Bouanga** scored on a penalty kick in the 81st minute to rally LAFC to a 2-2 draw with the Chicago Fire on Saturday night at Seat-Geek Stadium in Bridgeview, Ill.

Bouanga notched his 14th goal of the season for LAFC (10-6-7) after subbing in for **Mathieu Choinière** in the 61st minute. The PK was awarded after **Son Heung-Min** — in his debut with the club — was fouled by defender **Carlos Terán**.

Chicago (10-9-6) grabbed a 1-0 lead in the 11th minute on Terán’s first goal this season. **Phillip Zinckernagel** collected an assist on the score.

LAFC pulled even in the 19th minute on a goal by defender **Ryan Hollingshead** — his second. Nineteen-year-old midfielder **David Martínez** picked up his first assist this season after notching two in 17 appearances last year.

The Fire took a 2-1 lead in the 70th minute on a goal by **Jonathan Bamba** — his fourth in his first season in the league. Zinckernagel snagged another assist — his 13th — and **Brian Gutierrez** earned his second.

**Chris Brady** saved four shots for Chicago. **Hugo Lloris** made one save for LAFC.



PATRICK McDERMOTT Getty Images

**CHICAGO’S** Carlos Terán, right, fouls LAFC’s Son Heung-Min, drawing the tying penalty kick on Saturday night in Bridgeview, Ill. It was Son’s MLS debut match.

## ANGEL CITY FC Kennedy forges draw with Wave

**Alanna Kennedy** headed in a goal in the 92nd minute to help Angel City FC salvage a 1-1 tie with the San Di-

ego Wave at Snapdragon Stadium on Saturday.

**Makenzy Robbe** scored for the Wave in the 85th minute, seemingly giving San Diego enough for its first home win since 2022. But the 5-foot-9 Kennedy measured up a long crossing pass from **Sveindís Jónsdóttir** and got it past Wave goalkeeper

**Kailen Sheridan**. It was Kennedy’s first goal for Angel City.

In the first half, after being struck in the head by the ball, Angel City defender **Sarah Gorden** left the game with a concussion.

Angel City (4-7-4) is winless in its last seven games and remains 11th in the table.

## INTERNATIONAL Salah questions UEFA ‘farewell’

Liverpool’s **Mohamed Salah** is questioning UEFA’s “farewell” to former Palestinian soccer player **Suleiman Obeid**, who was reportedly shot and killed by Israeli forces while awaiting aid in Gaza.

“Can you tell us how he died, where, and why?” Salah asked on X in response to a post from UEFA saying, “Farewell to Suleiman al-Obeid, the ‘Palestinian Pelé.’ A talent who gave hope to countless children, even in the darkest of times.”

Obeid, 41, was fatally shot by Israeli forces on Wednesday while he was waiting among crowds for aid near a distribution site in southern Gaza, the Palestine Football Assn. said. The Associated Press could not independently verify the account contested by Israeli officials.

Obeid scored more than 100 goals over his career with local clubs, said the PFA.

**Kunishige Kamamoto**, who scored 75 goals in 76 games for Japan’s national team, died of pneumonia on Sunday, according to the Japan Football Assn. He was 81.

## MLS STANDINGS

Through Saturday

| WESTERN CONFERENCE   |    |    |    |     |    |    |
|----------------------|----|----|----|-----|----|----|
|                      | W  | L  | OL | Pts | GF | GA |
| San Diego FC         | 15 | 7  | 4  | 49  | 50 | 32 |
| Vancouver            | 13 | 6  | 4  | 45  | 43 | 28 |
| Minnesota United     | 12 | 5  | 8  | 44  | 42 | 28 |
| Seattle              | 10 | 6  | 8  | 38  | 39 | 35 |
| LAFC                 | 10 | 6  | 7  | 37  | 41 | 30 |
| Portland             | 10 | 8  | 7  | 37  | 33 | 34 |
| Austin FC            | 9  | 8  | 7  | 34  | 23 | 28 |
| San Jose             | 8  | 10 | 8  | 32  | 49 | 45 |
| Real Salt Lake       | 9  | 11 | 4  | 31  | 26 | 30 |
| Colorado             | 8  | 11 | 6  | 30  | 31 | 39 |
| FC Dallas            | 7  | 11 | 7  | 28  | 37 | 45 |
| Houston              | 7  | 11 | 7  | 28  | 32 | 41 |
| Sporting Kansas City | 6  | 13 | 6  | 24  | 36 | 47 |
| St. Louis City       | 5  | 14 | 6  | 21  | 27 | 41 |
| GALAXY               | 3  | 14 | 7  | 16  | 28 | 48 |

| EASTERN CONFERENCE |    |    |    |     |    |    |
|--------------------|----|----|----|-----|----|----|
|                    | W  | L  | OL | Pts | GF | GA |
| Philadelphia       | 15 | 5  | 6  | 51  | 44 | 25 |
| Cincinnati         | 15 | 6  | 4  | 49  | 39 | 31 |
| Nashville          | 14 | 7  | 5  | 47  | 43 | 29 |
| Columbus           | 12 | 5  | 8  | 44  | 41 | 36 |
| Inter Miami CF     | 12 | 4  | 6  | 42  | 49 | 34 |
| Orlando City       | 11 | 6  | 8  | 41  | 46 | 33 |
| Charlotte FC       | 12 | 11 | 2  | 38  | 43 | 39 |
| New York City FC   | 11 | 8  | 5  | 38  | 34 | 42 |
| Chicago            | 10 | 9  | 6  | 36  | 47 | 29 |
| New York           | 9  | 10 | 6  | 33  | 39 | 36 |
| New England        | 7  | 11 | 7  | 28  | 33 | 35 |
| Toronto FC         | 5  | 13 | 7  | 22  | 26 | 33 |
| Atlanta            | 4  | 11 | 10 | 22  | 30 | 46 |
| CF Montréal        | 4  | 15 | 7  | 19  | 24 | 47 |
| D.C. United        | 4  | 15 | 7  | 19  | 22 | 51 |

## NWSL STANDINGS

Through Saturday

|                | W  | L  | OL | Pts | GF | GA |
|----------------|----|----|----|-----|----|----|
| Kansas City    | 13 | 2  | 0  | 39  | 32 | 10 |
| Orlando        | 8  | 4  | 3  | 27  | 22 | 12 |
| Washington     | 8  | 4  | 3  | 27  | 23 | 20 |
| San Diego      | 7  | 3  | 5  | 26  | 26 | 17 |
| Seattle        | 7  | 4  | 3  | 24  | 19 | 13 |
| Portland       | 6  | 4  | 4  | 22  | 20 | 14 |
| Louisville     | 6  | 6  | 3  | 21  | 20 | 25 |
| North Carolina | 5  | 5  | 5  | 20  | 19 | 14 |
| Gotham FC      | 5  | 6  | 4  | 19  | 19 | 22 |
| Bay FC         | 4  | 6  | 4  | 16  | 16 | 19 |
| Angel City     | 4  | 7  | 4  | 16  | 21 | 27 |
| Houston        | 4  | 8  | 3  | 15  | 17 | 25 |
| Chicago        | 1  | 9  | 4  | 7   | 11 | 28 |
| Utah Royals FC | 1  | 11 | 3  | 6   | 12 | 31 |



PREP FLAG FOOTBALL PREVIEW

Orange Lutheran aims to build on championship

By STEVE GALLUZZO

Last year's theme for the Orange Lutheran flag football team was "Set the Standard."

The Lancers did just that, finishing 23-2 and defeating Newport Harbor 20-18 to win the inaugural Southern Section Division 1 title and secure the No. 1 ranking in California.

Coach Kristen Sherman revealed this season's theme is "Raise the Bar" and, having graduated only one starter, it looks as if her team could be even better than a year ago. It may have to be if it wants to defend its crown as the talent throughout the Southland is deeper than ever.

"We're hoping to reach a higher level this year," said Sherman, whose husband, Rod, is head coach of Orange Lutheran's football squad. "These new rules change a lot. I may have preferred the old rules, but the girls like punting and returning, so I think it'll be more fun for them."

Since defensive players will now be able to line up six yards closer to the ball, an elite quarterback will be essential, and the Lancers have the best in Makena Cook, the reigning CIF player of the year. On Aug. 6, the two-sport athlete committed to Georgia for soccer, but her focus right now is on a repeat.

"We're definitely better... but it's a clean slate," Cook said after tossing six touchdown passes against host Long Beach Poly in a scrimmage Thursday — her first competitive game since November.

As a sophomore last season, Cook passed for 6,611 yards and 97 touchdowns, 20 of them caught by All-CIF receiver Julia Oberholtzer (now a senior) who also led the defense with 114 flag pulls and eight interceptions.

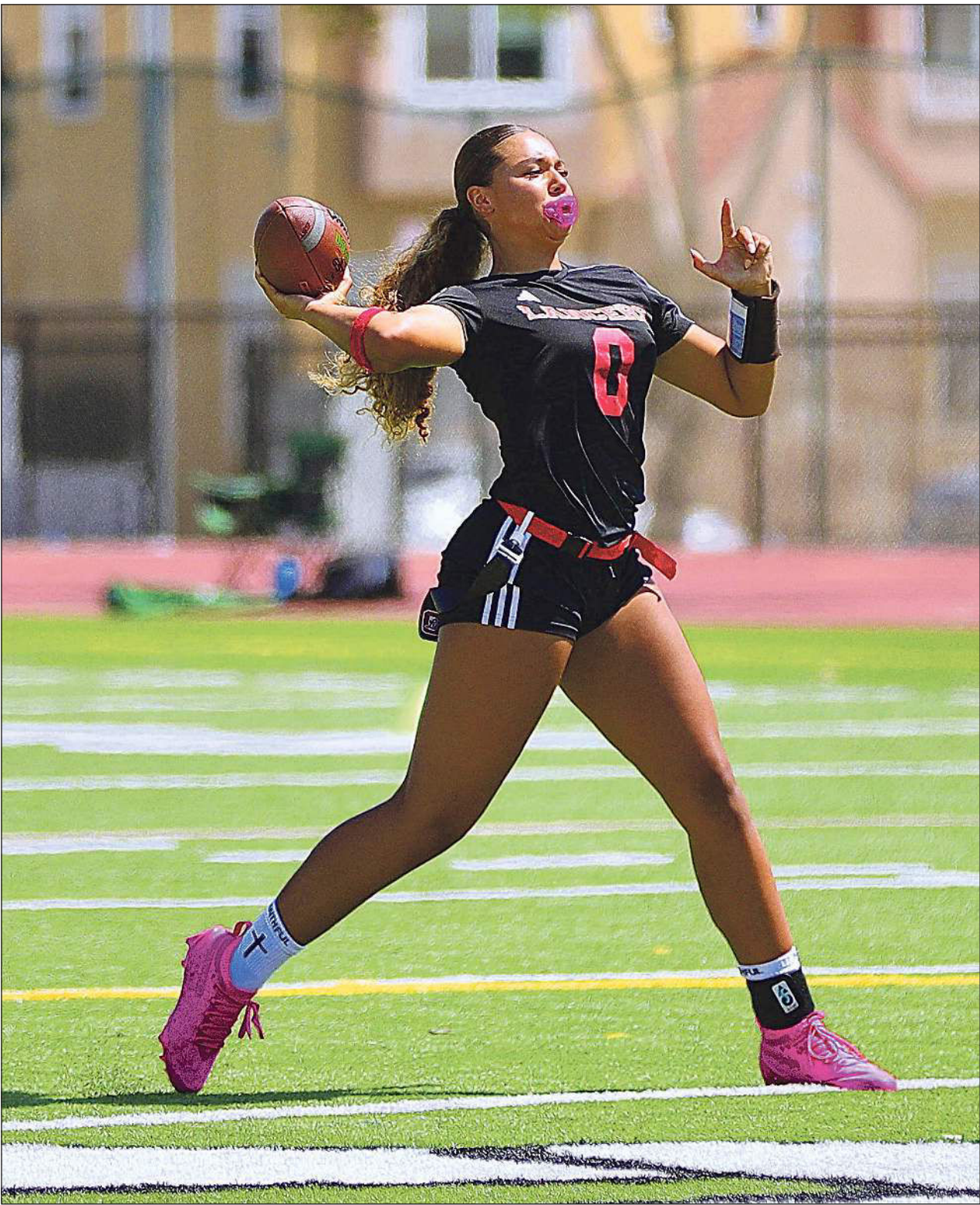
The Lancers open the season Wednesday at Woodbridge. Sherman once again filled the schedule with quality opponents, including a Sept. 4 clash with Irvine Northwood, which took the Division 2 title last fall thanks to Natalie Keith, who earned division player of the year honors after throwing for five touchdowns in the final against Trabuco Hills.

Sherman predicted Trinity League competition will be a "smack in the face."

JSerra's roster features three incoming freshmen who are members of the 15U junior national team — quarterback Katherine Meier and wide receiver/defensive backs Tessa Russell and Ava Irwin.

Kendra Hansen will be a scoring threat every time she touches the ball for Mater Dei, and running the offense at Santa Margarita will be All-CIF senior Madi Lam, who quarterbacked her Conquer Chargers club team at the NFL Flag Championships in Canton, Ohio, in July.

Division 1 finalist Newport Harbor graduated All-CIF quarterback Maia Helmar, but sophomore Scarlett Guyser will take over the



ORANGE LUTHERAN has an elite quarterback in junior Makena Cook, the reigning CIF player of the year.

THE TIMES' PRESEASON PREP FOOTBALL RANKINGS

By Eric Sondheimer

| Rk. | School (W-L)            | Next game (last week's ranking)                                                                                                                |
|-----|-------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | MATER DEI               | It's possible the Monarchs can go unbeaten with their exceptional receivers, strong lines and top two-way player Tomuhini Topui, a USC commit. |
| 2   | ST. JOHN BOSCO          | Experience on defense and improving sophomore quarterback Koa Malau'ulu will be key for the Braves to break through and finish on top.         |
| 3   | ORANGE LUTHERAN         | Strong offensive and defensive lines will help Lancers overcome inexperience at quarterback.                                                   |
| 4   | SIERRA CANYON           | Trailblazers' defense will be the best in Southern California, led by impressive depth on the line and in the secondary.                       |
| 5   | CORONA CENTENNIAL       | Coach Matt Logan has scheduled three straight Trinity League opponents in attempt to prepare team for Division 1 playoffs.                     |
| 6   | MISSION VIEJO           | Quarterback Luke Fahey, an Ohio State commit, is the real deal and will have lots of weapons to help the Diablos succeed.                      |
| 7   | SANTA MARGARITA         | With good coaches, improved line play and a healthy Trent Mosley, the Eagles are capable of making a big jump.                                 |
| 8   | GARDENA SERRA           | It's a yearly challenge for the Cavaliers to stay healthy enough for their immense talent to make it through a 14-game schedule.               |
| 9   | SERVITE                 | The offensive line is outstanding, which will help the Friars stay competitive in the tough Trinity League.                                    |
| 10  | NEWBURY PARK            | QB Brady Smigiel must gain chemistry with a new group of receivers, but the talent is there for the Panthers to have another big season.       |
| 11  | CATHEDRAL               | The Phantoms are ready to rise to prominence behind quarterback Jaden Jefferson.                                                               |
| 12  | JSERRA                  | New quarterback Koa Smith-Mayall is better than people think, and there's young players ready to step forward.                                 |
| 13  | VISTA MURRIETA          | Coach Coley Candaele trusts quarterback Bryson Beavers, an Oregon commit.                                                                      |
| 14  | YORBA LINDA             | Coach Jeff Bailey keeps being underrated, but the Mustangs keep producing big wins.                                                            |
| 15  | EDISON                  | Junior quarterback Sam Thomson received lots of playoff experience during state championship run.                                              |
| 16  | SAN JUAN HILLS          | A strong summer performance showed the skill position players are ready, led by quarterback Timmy Herr.                                        |
| 17  | OAKS CHRISTIAN          | There is talent throughout the lineup, including speedy running back Deshonne Rdeaux, who will try to stay healthy.                            |
| 18  | INGLEWOOD               | After reaching Division 1 playoffs last season, Sentinels are still the favorite to win the tough Bay League.                                  |
| 19  | CHAPARRAL               | Quarterback Dane Weber continues to progress, making his team very dangerous.                                                                  |
| 20  | CORONA DEL MAR          | The Sea Kings have returnees at key positions, making them a possible Bravo League title contender.                                            |
| 21  | DAMIEN                  | Quarterback Isaiah Arriaza passed for nearly 3,000 yards as a junior, allowing Spartans to build around him.                                   |
| 22  | PALOS VERDES            | Defending state champions have junior quarterback Ryan Rakowski, CB Jalen Flowers and DB Cameron Hughes for challenging schedule.              |
| 23  | DOWNEY                  | Quarterback Oscar Rios, an Arizona commit, can pass, run and lead.                                                                             |
| 24  | SHERMAN OAKS NOTRE DAME | Transfer quarterback Wyatt Brown will combine with wide receiver Luc Weaver to provide the Knights with offensive explosiveness.               |
| 25  | OXNARD PACIFICA         | Juniors Isaiah Phelps and Alijah Royster showed as sophomores they're ready to become stars.                                                   |

THE DAY IN SPORTS

Van Gisbergen ties record with fourth straight Cup win

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Shane van Gisbergen continued his march into NASCAR history and set a Cup Series record with his fourth victory this season, blowing out the competition again at Watkins Glen (N.Y.) International.

The Trackhouse Racing driver joined 2020 champion Chase Elliott and NASCAR Hall of Famer Jeff Gordon as the only drivers to win four consecutive Cup races on road or street courses.

Unlike his prior wins at Mexico City, Chicago and Sonoma, van Gisbergen was unable to qualify from the pole position after he was nipped by Ryan Blaney. The Auckland, New Zealand, native bided his team after starting second, taking his first lead on Lap 25 of 90 and then settling into a typically flawless and smooth rhythm on the 2.45-mile road course.

The rookie made his final pit stop with 27 laps remaining and cycled into first place on Lap 74 of a clean race with only three yellow flags.

Alex Palou wrapped up

his fourth IndyCar championship in the last five seasons at Portland International Raceway when title contender Pato O'Ward lost power early in the race.

O'Ward started from the pole and was the only driver mathematically eligible to beat Palou for the championship. Palou went into Sunday with a cozy 121-point lead over O'Ward in the standings and so long as he left Portland up by 108 points, he'd clinch the championship in the first race of a three consecutive weekends to close the season.

ETC.

Rose prevails in St. Jude playoff

Justin Rose made up a three-shot deficit over the last five holes against hard-luck Tommy Fleetwood, and then made two birdies in a playoff against J.J. Spaun to win the FedEx St. Jude Championship in Memphis.

Rose closed with a three-under 67 for his 24th victory worldwide that puts him back into the top 10 in the



ROOKIE DRIVER Shane van Gisbergen gives a thumbs-up after his NASCAR win at Watkins Glen.

world at age 45.

Steve Allan won the Boeing Classic for his second PGA Tour Champions victory in three starts and third of the season, closing with a birdie for a seven-under 65 and a one-stroke margin over Stewart Cink in Snoqualmie, Wash. ... Dean Burmester overcame a rough start to get into a three-way playoff, and then beat Jon Rahm and Josele

Ballester on the first extra hole with a six-foot birdie putt to win LIV Golf Chicago. ... Grant Forrest won his second European Tour title in the Nexo Championship in Aberdeen, Scotland.

San Francisco Giants' ace Justin Verlander became the 10th pitcher in MLB history with 3,500 strikeouts but CJ Abrams homered and the Washing-

ton Nationals spoiled the milestone achievement with an 8-0 win. ... The Atlanta Braves beat the Miami Marlins 7-1 with Jen Pawol as home plate umpire a day after Pawol became the first female umpire to work a regular-season game in the majors.

Reagan Bills hurled a 105-pitch one-hitter with seven strikeouts, collected two hits and drove in the winning run to lead Johnstown, Pa., over Floyds Knobs, Ind., 1-0 for Pennsylvania's first Little League Softball World Series since 1978.

Breanna Stewart is feeling better after suffering a bone bruise in her right knee late last month and hopes to be back by the end of the month.

The two-time WNBA MVP hurt her knee in the Liberty's 101-99 loss to the Sparks on July 26 and talked before New York fell to the Minnesota Lynx 83-71 on Sunday in a WNBA Finals rematch.

Quarterback Tua Tagovailoa completed five of six

position. Cooper Dick (a Texas Tech soccer commit) and Maddy Michel are set to be her primary targets. Skylie Cid led the team in touchdowns as a freshman. The Sailors beat Orange Lutheran in triple overtime in a tournament at Beckman over the summer, but Cook did not play.

Huntington Beach has all the offensive firepower it needs to challenge Newport Harbor for Sunset League supremacy with the return of Roxie Shaia, who threw for 7,465 yards and 99 touchdowns in 2024, and receiver/safety Taylor Savage, who racked up 1,491 receiving yards.

Last fall, Ventura lost a shootout to Huntington Beach in the Division 1 quarterfinals, but the Cougars could ride the arm of senior Ava Ortman to a deeper playoff run in 2025. Statistically, she was one of the best in the section with 6,974 yards, 110 touchdowns and a 141.2 rating. In its opener Thursday, Ventura takes on Camarillo, which has one of the top two-way players in Ventura County in Stella Alessi (41 touchdowns and 14 interceptions last season).

Long Beach Poly will seek to three-peat in the Moore League, but it will be a taller task without All-CIF quarterback Kenzie Paimany, who tore her anterior cruciate ligament playing soccer. She threw for 60 touchdowns last year. The most versatile player for the Jackrabbits is senior receiver/linebacker Ki'ele Ho-Ching, who has committed to Oklahoma for softball.

"We're hoping she can come back toward the end of the season," Poly coach Rob Shock said about Paimany. "We take every game as a tough game. Nothing's given, everything's earned."

Lakewood St. Joseph suffered only one defeat in 22 games last year, but the Jest-ers are poised to go further with junior signal-caller Lexi Loya (5,377 yards and 73 touchdowns last fall) throwing to sophomore receiver Jaclyn Brennan (76 catches for 985 yards and 16 touchdowns).

The City Section is up to 93 teams, and the one to beat appears to be Narbonne, led by its All-City two-wayers Faith Ugoje, Shayla Rivera and Luna Orozco.

The Gauchos beat King/Drew 7-0 for the Division I title last year and twice defeated the 2024 Open Division winner Banning in the summer. Ugoje was chosen Division I player of the year after rushing for 1,660 yards, catching 60 passes for 828 yards and scoring 23 touchdowns as a freshman under City coach of the year Sherrelle Holmes.

Also contending for the Marine League crown is two-time Open finalist San Pedro.

Teams to watch: Orange Lutheran, JSerra, Santa Margarita, Newport Harbor, Mater Dei, Huntington Beach, Northwood, Eastvale Roosevelt, Ventura, Narbonne, Lakewood St. Joseph, Aliso Niguel, Trabuco Hills and Anaheim Canyon.



LUKE HALES Getty Images

**DEARICA HAMBY** of the Sparks drives past Seattle’s Dominique Malonga for the game-winning layup with 5.6 seconds remaining. Hamby finished with 19 points.

## Sparks get another tough win over Storm

By IRA GORAWARA

Less than 10 days ago, the Seattle Storm and the Sparks battled deep into a second overtime — the first of the 2025 WNBA season — wringing every drop of drama out of Climate Pledge Arena. On Sunday night, the same stakes were at play as the teams tried to strengthen their playoff chances.

The intensity didn’t let up till the final horn. With 5.6 seconds left, Dearica Hamby roared into the paint and scored on a driving layup to put the Sparks ahead for good. After the Storm missed their final chance to win, pandemonium spilled onto the floor — Sparks players leaping into one another’s arms, fans hollering over the hardwood, chanting “Hamby” in celebration of the Sparks’ 94-91 victory.

“We’re playing for that kind of game,” said guard Julie Allemand,

who had eight assists, “it’s exciting to play that kind of game. At the end, when you make the great shot that we need, it’s a great feeling.”

The Sparks managed to rally after falling into a 16-point deficit in the first quarter, perhaps a symptom of playing on back-to-back nights.

Then came Kelsey Plum — who finished with 20 points, seven assists and six rebounds — bending her game in every direction to haul the Sparks to their ninth win in 11 games.

Sparks coach Lynne Roberts has painted Plum as a shape-shifter — able to twist her game into whatever the game demands.

“That’s what your best players should do — get everybody else involved and make sure we’re flowing,” Roberts said before the game, “and then when they need you, you step up. She’s done a tremendous job.”

Trailing the Storm (16-16) by 17 in the first quarter, Plum, who still hadn’t scored yet, tore into a one-on-five fast break, freezing the defense with a hesitation at the arc and a glide into the basket for a three-point play. Seconds later, Plum created another opportunity off an extended right elbow, drilling a three-pointer in Erica Wheeler’s face.

“I’ve always been known as a scorer and I learned that over time, your impact on the game a lot of time is because you can score, you’re going to draw attention and find people,” Plum said. “On the run we’ve been on, we’re better when I’m kind of doing both.”

It was the spurt of momentum the Sparks (15-16) needed to overcome a sputtering start.

Playing the entire first half, Plum went from the table-setter to shot-maker in the second quarter — springing Rae Burrell for a corner three before splashing a triple

to tie it 29-29 with 6:30 left in the second quarter.

“Leadership is hard, figuring out when to push, when to pull, when to give it up, when to take it over,” Roberts said. “[Plum] just continues to get better and better at it. ... She’s so competitive and wants to win.”

Azurá Stevens and Cameron Brink were strong in the key early, but the Sparks clanked jumpers, dribbled into traffic and watched offensive possessions die on the rim in addition to committing eight first-quarter turnovers. So Roberts rolled the dice on a smaller look — swapping her paint patrol of Stevens and Brink for guards Julie Vanloo and Burrell.

“When they go really big, we kind of went a little smaller with Rickea [Jackson] at the four,” Roberts said. “It was a battle of wills — it seems like every time, like the last time we played them, back and forth.”

Plum and Allemand kept the smaller unit in constant motion, whipping passes from wing to wing and slicing open lanes for Burrell and Jackson, while Vanloo, Allemand and Plum cashed in from beyond the arc. Roberts rode that group into the second quarter, and they whittled the deficit.

Hamby finished with 19 points and seven rebounds, Stevens had 15 points and eight rebounds and Brink contributed 14 points, five rebounds and two steals off the bench.

When the final buzzer faded, players were still grinning through hugs, and the crowd’s “Hamby” chants continued — excitement for a Sparks team that had yanked itself out of the fire.

“Really proud of that bounce-back,” Plum said. “We could have folded — especially early. But there’s something to this team. We’re young, we’re competitive, we’re hungry.”

## Sounders extend their unbeaten streak with shutout of the Galaxy

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Danny Musovski scored a goal in each half and 18-year-old Snyder Brunell scored in his league debut as the Seattle Sounders cruised to a 4-0 victory over the Galaxy on Sunday night at Dignity Health Sports Park.

Seattle grabbed the lead in the 25th minute on an own goal by defender Julián Aude.

The Sounders took a 2-0 lead in the 37th minute on Musovski’s unassisted goal. He made it 3-0 in the 54th minute with another unassisted goal. Musovski has already scored a career-high eight times this season. He had five netters with LAFC as a rookie in 2020 and five for Real Salt Lake in 2023.

Brunell subbed in for Jesús Ferreira in the 73rd minute and scored in the 85th. Defender Álex Roldán notched his third assist of the season and the fourth of his career. Rookie Kalani Kossa-Rienzi collected his third assist.

Andrew Thomas finished with three saves for his first clean sheet in his seventh start of the season for Seattle. He had two shutouts in five starts last season.

Novak Micovic saved five shots for L.A. He had three saves and Thomas wasn’t tested in the first half.

Seattle is unbeaten in its last

seven league matches at 4-0-3 and is on a 10-match unbeaten streak across all competitions after winning all three matches in Phase One of the Leagues Cup to advance.

The last time the two clubs squared off was in last season’s Western Conference championship match — a 1-0 victory at home for the Galaxy on a goal in the 85th minute by Dejan Joveljic, who now plays for Sporting Kansas City.

Seattle leads the all-time series 15-11-14 in league play and 21-18-14 across all competitions.

The Galaxy head to Florida to play Inter Miami on Saturday.

### GYMNASTICS

#### Rivera wins national women’s title at 17

Hezly Rivera pulled away for a victory at the U.S. gymnastics championships, looking more than ready to be the standard-bearer for the women’s program in the early stages of the run-up to the 2028 Games in Los Angeles.

Olympic gold medalist Rivera, 17, the youngest member of the five-woman team that finished atop the podium in Paris a year ago, posted a two-day total of 112.000 just eight-



LUIZA MORAES Getty Images

**GALAXY FORWARD** Gabriel Pec, right, battles Seattle defender Nouhou for the ball during L.A.’s 4-0 loss Sunday. The clubs had not faced off since last season’s Western Conference championship.

tenths (0.8) clear of runner-up Leanne Wong, in New Orleans. Joscelyn Roberson, an Olympic alternate last summer, was third.

Rivera bounced back from a shaky performance at the U.S. Classic last month with the kind of measured, refined gymnastics that all but assured her of a spot on the four-woman world championship team that will head to Jakarta, Indonesia, in October. She attributed her triumph simply “letting go” of whatever pressure she might feel as the lone Olympic gold medalist in a remarkably young field.

Unlike Asher Hong’s easy win in the men’s competition on Saturday, things didn’t come easily for Rivera. She was pushed through four rotations by Wong, who has been remarkably consistent over the last four-plus years.

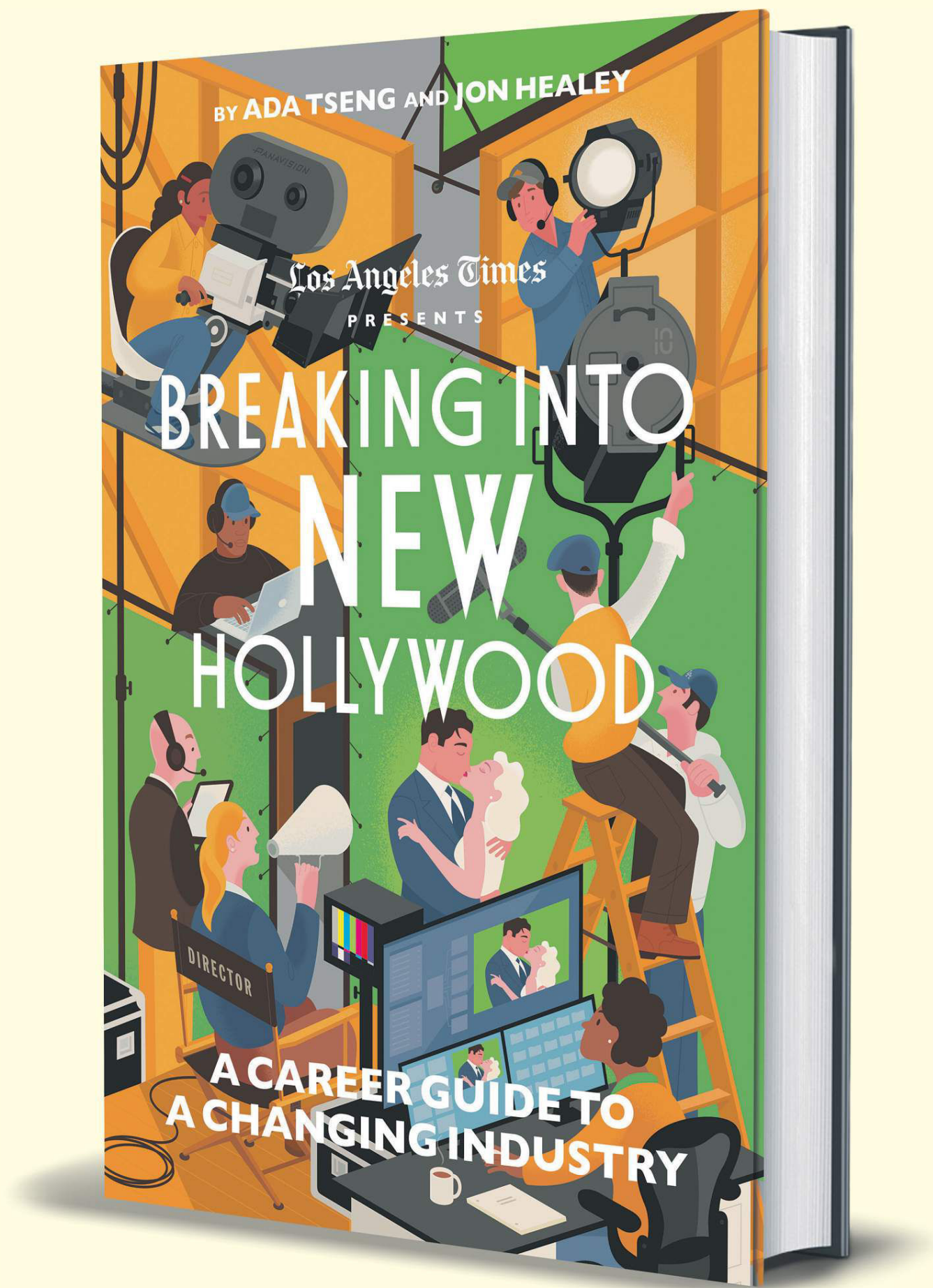
Wong put pressure on Rivera from the start with a stuck Cheng vault and didn’t relent over the course of two hours. Rivera responded each time — she posted the top scores on three of the four events — but it wasn’t until she walked off the podium following her floor routine with victory in

hand that she could relax.

Roberson looked ready to make it a three-woman race until she tweaked her ankle on floor exercise during the second rotation. The rising sophomore at Arkansas gritted her way through her vault dismount, though the five-tenths (0.5) deduction for using an additional pad for her protection took her out of contention for the all-around.

Skye Blakely, who was injured at the Olympic trials in 2021 and 2024, was sublime on uneven bars and balance beam to put herself in consideration for the world team.





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ENTERTAINMENT

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ALLEN J. SCHABEN Los Angeles Times

**SINGER-SONGWRITER** Mike Love of the Beach Boys, a band with nearly 65 years of history, performs at Stagecoach Music Festival in Indio on April 28, 2024.

From school to stand-up comedy

L.A.-born Chinedu Unaka says that his teaching past helped him succeed onstage.

By Nate Jackson

There are some aspects of comedy you just can't teach. But for comedian Chinedu Unaka, plenty was learned while giving lessons in a classroom. As a kid growing up in South L.A., it wasn't planned that he would find his way to comedy by stepping up to the chalkboard to teach mild to moderate special education students how to do algebra. But looking back on it, he says, there was really no better training ground for practicing the basics of his future craft — keeping eye contact, learning crowd work, making entertainment out of boring subjects. For over a decade, his passion-driven work that he fell into in college at UC Santa Barbara would become the day job that both

[See Unaka, E3]

THE GOOD VIBRATIONS NEVER FADE

Singer Mike Love reflects on the Beach Boys' enduring popularity and pays tribute to Brian Wilson

By Daniel Kohn

At a time when most of their peers have retired, threatened to call it quits or died, the Beach Boys continue to perform 120 shows per year. Led by original singer Mike Love and longtime multi-instrumentalist Bruce Johnston, this version of the Beach Boys performs the sounds of Southern California to three generations of fans, something which isn't lost on Love. "The positivity that our music generates, and the good vibes and good feelings, is a wonderful thing to see," Love says. "It's an inspiration to me to see kids with their parents or their grandparents at our shows." On Sunday, the Beach Boys returned to Long Beach to perform at the Terrace Theater for the first time in nearly 15 years to the day, when they performed at Harry Bridges Memorial Park. As Love recalls, the band played one of its first shows in the city at the Long Beach Municipal Auditorium on New Year's Eve 1961. "That first concert we were paid for as the Beach

Boys at the Long Beach Municipal Auditorium for the Ritchie Valens Memorial Dance," he recalls. "We played three songs and got \$300, but also on that show was Ike Turner and Kings of Rhythm. We got to hear Tina Turner sing this song called 'I'm Blue.' It was primordial and blew my mind." Thousands of shows later, the Beach Boys continue to have a receptive audience who will gladly see them perform the hits of yesteryear. Love has no issue leaning into the band's 1960s heyday. In fact, he sees it as his duty to spread "peace and love" through the Beach Boys' concerts. Chatting hours before he departed his Lake Tahoe, Calif., home to fly to Southern California for the band's latest string of shows (which included Friday night at Temecula's Pechanga Resort Casino and Saturday at the Rady Shell in San Diego), Love reflected on nearly 65 years of the Beach Boys, feeling like he finally got his due by being inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame, why he's looking forward to the decidedly un-Beach Boys crowd at Riot Fest, and honoring his cousin Brian Wilson, who died June 11. [See Beach Boys, E6]



SCOTT KOWALCHYK CBS  
**STEPHEN COLBERT** on "Late Show" in 2024.

**Voices**  
**LORRAINE ALI**  
NEWS AND CULTURE CRITIC

Trump's ratings flop like bad TV

The president loves to slam late-night ratings, yet his own approval numbers are tanking.

At a recent news conference, President Trump touched on questions about tariffs, Gaza and vaccines before zeroing in on one of his favorite subjects: TV and radio ratings. A journalist, referring to an unconfirmed report that Howard Stern's SiriusXM radio show was being canceled, handed Trump a sugar-coated softball: "Is the Hate Trump business model going out of business because it's not popular with the American people?" [See Trump, E2]

King Gizzard doesn't need Spotify anymore

The Aussie band's Stu Mackenzie discusses leaving the platform and playing the Bowl.

By August Brown

Need a model for how to thrive in the stranglehold of the modern music economy? How about a band of Australian garage-rockers who cut albums at the pace of an Atlanta rap crew, tour like peak-era Grateful Dead and who just told the biggest company in streaming to go to hell. King Gizzard & the Lizard Wizard is a fascinating phenomenon in rock. Over 15 years, its LPs have flitted between genres with insouciant musicianship, pulling from punky scuzz, re-

gal soul, krautrock, electro-funk and psychedelia. These LPs come at an insane clip — sometimes up to five in a year, 27 so far. The band's freewheeling live shows made them a coveted arena act, when few new rock bands can aspire to that. Two weeks ago, it became probably the most high-profile band to take its music off Spotify in the wake of Chief Executive Daniel Ek's investments in an AI-driven weapons firm. The band self-releases on its own labels — it needed no one's permission. King Gizzard returned to the Hollywood Bowl on Sunday, this time backed by the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra for a live read of its new album "Phantom Island," a standout LP that adds deft orchestration to its toolkit. [See King Gizzard, E6]



FRANK HOENSCH Redferns

**KING GIZZARD** & the Lizard Wizard's Stu Mackenzie in a 2024 Berlin concert. The band recently took its music off Spotify to protest its CEO's investments.

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|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Alcatraz as animal preserve</b><br>Emma Sloley sets the world's last remaining zoo on Alcatraz Island in her poignant new novel. Review, E2   |             |
| <b>Band spills its guts in new LP</b><br>Nashville's Rainbow Kitten Surprise talks about forthcoming album "Bones" and its soul-baring style. E3 |             |
| <b>Comics</b> .....                                                                                                                              | <b>E4-5</b> |
| <b>Puzzles</b> .....                                                                                                                             | <b>E5</b>   |

Review ILANA MASAD

# Alcatraz zookeepers stay resilient

Two people bond in a fight to save wildlife in Emma Sloley's near-future novel.

Hundreds to thousands of animal species go extinct every year, according to the World Wildlife Fund, and things are projected to get even worse if climate change continues unabated. A new novel by U.S.-based Australian writer Emma Sloley, “The Island of Last Things,” imagines a time in the near-ish future when not only animals but whole ecosystems of living things have been wiped out, leaving a handful of surviving zoos around the globe attempting to preserve the species in their care.

Except that those zoos close, one by one, due to a multitude of reasons: insufficient funding, a movement protesting the care and feeding of (nonhuman) animals in a time of mass human suffering and a deadly strain of *Candida* spreading through the wildlife population. The last remaining zoo sits on Alcatraz Island, inhabiting the grounds and structures of the former prison.

“The Island of Last Things” is largely narrated by Camille, a woman in her mid-20s who prefers the company of animals to people and has worked on Alcatraz for pretty much the entirety of her adulthood. Unlike most of the other workers who travel to the mainland every Sunday, Camille stays put. “I only ever felt fully real when I was working,” she explains early in the book, “and after the workday was done I retreated into a state of minimal existence, like a robot



Images from Flatiron Books

**SLOLEY** takes on animal extinction in second novel.

powered down between tasks.” She’s a natural with the animals, though, her presence as calming to them as theirs is life-giving to her.

Everything begins to change for Camille when a new zookeeper, Sailor, arrives on the island. Sailor is in her 40s and had a long career at the Paris Zoo before it, too, closed down. Camille is assigned to give her the new employee tour, and the two quickly form a bond based in their deep love of, and respect for, the animals in their care.

It’d be easy to assume that all 200 or so zookeepers on the island are there for that exact reason too, but the reality is more complicated. Zookeeping is a practical choice for some “because it offers a better life than anything else going,” Sailor points out. Zookeepers “may as well live and die surrounded by animals than in a sweatshop or war zone, right?” Then, too,

there’s the sheer bleakness of the role: “Everyone starts off enthusiastic.” Camille tells Sailor, “but then, I don’t know. They just sort of give up.” And why wouldn’t they? After all, they are aware, every single day, that the animals locked in their various enclosures are some of the, if not *the*, last of their kind, and they’re living out the end of their species in an environment far removed from their native habitat. It’s no wonder that many keepers choose to emotionally distance themselves and sink into apathy.

As Sailor settles into her new job on Alcatraz, she begins to shake things up, which both thrills and terrifies Camille, who has always kept her head down and followed the rules. Even more meaningful to Camille than Sailor’s boundary pushing, though, is Sailor’s friendship and how she includes Camille in whatever she’s dreaming up: “it’s hard to



## The Island of Last Things

By Emma Sloley  
Flatiron Books: 272 pages, \$29

describe to anyone who hasn’t lived a life of loneliness how powerfully that casual ‘we’ worked on me.”

Camille is an interesting narrator in part because she’s what some might derogatorily call a “passive” character, but whom I read instead as intensely observant and watchful.

It’s true that she’s not the instigator of most of the drama that occurs on the island once Sailor arrives, but she’s often along for the ride, surprising herself over and over again by how far she’ll go to maintain her friend’s attention and respect. Camille has a front-row seat to how Sailor is constantly working those around her — flirting, befriending, gently threatening, subtly manipulating — in order to get what she wants, and perhaps it’s because what Sailor wants is always in service to the animals that Camille doesn’t mind. Still, there’s a bitter-sweet dramatic irony at play

because the reader can recognize that Camille is, at least sometimes, yet another of Sailor’s tools.

In brief chapters that alternate with the main narrative, Sailor’s history comes alive in bits and pieces, and it becomes clear that she’s intent on trying to smuggle animals out of the zoo to get them to a rumored sanctuary on a vast tract of land somewhere in China. But Alcatraz Zoo is owned by a billionaire (of course) and is guarded within an inch of its life, so the whole endeavor seems far-fetched and potentially impossible — yet Sailor’s plan, once hatched, moves forward despite all of Camille’s concerns.

Is the sanctuary even real? Readers never get a completely satisfactory answer to this, and the way Sailor talks about it certainly makes it sound like a fairy tale, one that she and Camille both willingly believe in because the prospect of a world without any hope is just too painful.

Indeed, “The Island of Last Things” doesn’t sugarcoat how bad things have gotten in that future world, but Sloley refuses to let her characters succumb to despair; she is intent on highlighting the small moments of beauty, joy and care that emerge even during disastrous, horrible times. “Do me a favor, huh?” Sailor asks Camille one night. “Promise me you’ll start imagining a better world than this one.”

Imagining such a world, Sloley seems to be reminding her readers, is the only way to begin the work of creating it.

Masad, a books and culture critic, is the author of the novel “All My Mother’s Lovers” and the forthcoming novel “Beings.”

Review ROBERT ALLEN PAPINCHAK

# A blistering satire of foreign correspondents

Phoebe Greenwood’s provocative debut novel drops a clueless reporter in Gaza.

“Dr. Strangelove,” “MASH” and “Catch-22” collide in British journalist Phoebe Greenwood’s blistering debut novel, “Vulture,” a darkly comic, searing satire grounded in historic politics, suffused with incipient journalism and imbued with self-aggrandizement.

Dominoes fall quickly and hard for 33-year-old budding reporter Sara Byrne, assigned as a freelance stringer by the fictional London Tribune to cover the 2012 Gaza War. She is ambitious and clueless. A nepo baby, she’s certain a scoop will make her career and bring her out of the shadow of her recently deceased father, Bill, a foreign affairs writer considered a titan among the giants of Fleet Street. She finds herself ensconced in all-expenses-paid headquarters for foreign correspondents like her: the Beach, Gaza’s four-star “nice hotel,” an

“oasis of humanity in a blighted desert” featuring a room with uninterrupted sea views and shrimps in a clay pot. Observing the consequences of conflict, Sara soon realizes she is embedded in her own emotional war zone.

The Beach is a convenient location for mingling, networking and seeking contacts through a fixer, someone essential for foreign correspondents. Sara’s fixer is Nasser. He introduces her to an aged, grieving Palestinian widower who has lost his whole family in a bombing, but she doesn’t see any point in even being in Gaza if the only story “was sad Mohameds talking about their dead kids and dead wives and neighbors and so forth.”

She dismisses ongoing attacks, thinking everything is “getting a bit samey.” A morgue visit elicits disinterest and little more than a body count, with Sara wondering if “ten makes a massacre. I only counted six.” In a crowd of dead, limp bodies, she spots a sobbing Pulitzer Prize-winning photojournalist and exclaims, “What good is a crying photographer to anyone?” Heartless, she wants a bigger story, something that would put

her byline on the front page. If Nasser can’t get her into Hamas’ underground tunnels “where all the men running the war were hiding with their rockets,” then she would have to find someone who could.

That someone appears to be Fadi, part of the fixer culture. He wore “skin-tight black jeans and a black t-shirt with I Heart Brooklyn written on it in red, loopy letters” and “stank of aftershave that could easily have been his sister’s perfume and smoked cigarettes greedily.” His alluring credentials include an uncle he claims is a top fighter in the resistance who can get Sara a meet and greet with the leader of the Al-Yasser Front. Fadi promises a photo shoot with black balaclavas, guns and black flags. Foolhardily, defying Nasser’s caution, Sara offers Fadi \$1,000 for an excursion into the “terror tunnels,” certain this will give her a proper story to write rather than what she terms “mon-key journalism.” Instead, after several delays and setbacks, she finds herself involved in an excruciatingly senseless death when the Beach’s restaurant is bombed.

Greenwood’s graphic details are vivid and disturbing, from screaming that is “a high unnatural wail that could shrivel souls like salted slugs” to air “powdered with concrete and sulfur.” With dead bodies scattered around her, Sara, her hands dripping a trail of blood, retreats to her room, feeling responsible for one particularly shocking death.

A series of flashbacks sprinkled throughout the novel highlight the deep psychological wounds Sara brings to her wartime experience. They underscore the guilt she carries from traumatic relationships with her father, mother and an adulterous affair. She believes she can never match her father’s success as a reporter and on the first anniversary of his death, instead of visiting his grave, her mother takes her to a Sloane Square department store (because that’s where she was taken as a child to buy shoes). Her clandestine involvement with her father’s close friend and literary agent, whose wife is dying of cancer, implodes, leaving her a bitter “other woman” living her own soap opera. It complicates a sexual encounter with an Italian cohort in Gaza.

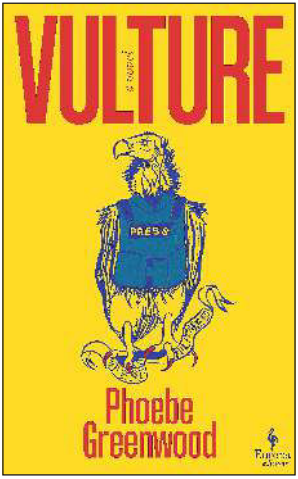
One of those flashback chapters, “The Cradle of Civilization,” unravels the ironic, ravaging narcissistic, perhaps psychopathic implications of the title. Like the bird of prey seeking carrion, a foreign correspondent is characterized as a misery merchant or conflict cowboy, making a living from death and disaster. Even as their function is to give voice to the voiceless, Greenwood writes, their assignment is to “stand in the middle of something,” to understand (from the Old English, *understanden*) and listen. As they do so, like Sara, seeking a “defining moment” they might morph into news cannibals.

And then there are the other birds. They are scattered throughout the novel. Keep an eye on them. Sara does. The literal ones and the magical, metaphorical ones. The first sighting is a simple one, easily dismissed. A manky bird on her balcony jolts Sara from semi-wakefulness right after she’s had a dream of her dying father. Its habitual appearance becomes disconcerting. Is it just a bird or is it a harbinger of doom and death? She begins to think of it as a “de-



SANDRA SEMBURG

**GREENWOOD** is a journalist based in London.



Europa Editions

## Vulture

By Phoebe Greenwood  
Europa Editions: 256 pages, \$27

ranged stalker” terrorizing her. Eventually, Sara, her health deteriorating from what appears as an undiagnosed illness, begins to hallucinate, seeing the bird’s “heart beating visibly under its feathered ribs, its metallic purple face,” culminating in believing the bird has transmogrified into a talking pigeon that is her father.

Greenwood’s stinging, salient novel remains relevant (the more things change, the more they stay the same), excoriating those who make a business of war whether it’s public or personal. As the owner of the Beach observes: “War may be hell but it’s one hell of an employer.” “Vulture” is a provocative, uncompromising powerhouse of a read.

Papinchak, a former university English professor, is an award-winning book critic in the Los Angeles area.

# A ratings dive in Trump’s ‘show’

[Trump, from E1]

The president was primed and ready to take a swipe at late-night television, namely Paramount’s recent cancellation of “The Late Show With Stephen Colbert” and other types of hosted programs he perceives as the Enemy. Anything to distract from his broken promises around IVF funding, a tepid jobs report and his failure in producing the Epstein files.

“Colbert has no talent,” said the president. “I mean, I could take anybody here. I could go outside in the beautiful streets and pick a couple of people that do just as well or better. They’d get higher ratings than he did. He’s got no talent. Fallon has no talent. Kimmel has no talent. They’re next. They’re going to be going. I hear they’re going to be going. I don’t know, but I would imagine because they’d get — you know, Colbert has better ratings than Kimmel or Fallon.”

Ratings are important to Trump. It’s data he’s fond of weaponizing. Just ask his “Celebrity Apprentice” successor Arnold Schwarzenegger. But what about the president’s ratings? According to a Gallup poll, six months into Trump’s second term, his job approval rating has dipped to 37%, the lowest of this term and just slightly higher than his all-time worst rating of 34% at the end of his first term.

In comparison with other two-term presidents at the same point in their presidency, he’s well below the 59% average, second-quarter rating set by all post-World War II presidents elected from 1952 to 2020. Bill Clinton (44%) came the closest as the only other president to have a sub-majority approval rating during his second quarter.

So Trump and Clinton do have something in common other than their association with the late sex trafficker Jeffrey Epstein. Which brings us to polling numbers about Trump’s handling of those files.

A recent YouGov poll shows 46% of Americans think Trump was involved in crimes allegedly committed by Epstein. A whopping 82% of Americans — including 91% of Democrats and 76% of Republicans — believe that the government should release all documents it has on the Epstein case. And only 4% of those polled are in favor of Trump pardoning Epstein’s co-conspirator, Ghislaine Maxwell.

There are no major polls yet on how folks feel about Maxwell being quietly moved from a Florida prison to a minimum-security federal prison camp in Texas where the majority of inmates are serving time for nonviolent offenses and white-collar crimes. Maxwell’s role in a violent crime — the recruiting and trafficking of minors for sex — led to her 20-year sentence.

Trump’s public obsession with ratings date back to his time hosting the television reality competition “The Apprentice.” It was a genuine hit in that first season, rounding out the year 2004 as the seventh-most-watched TV show of the year.

But its ratings declined steadily each year after that, according to the Chicago Tribune, from 11th place overall in its second season, to 15th, then 38th. By its sixth season, it finished as the 75th-most-watched show. If Trump’s presidency were a reality TV show, he’d be headed into his sixth season.

Enough about TV shows. Let’s look at a quantifiable way to apply television ratings to the presidency: inaugurations. According to Nielsen, Trump’s first swearing-in ceremony drew 30.6 million total viewers — 19% less than Barack Obama’s in 2009, when 37.8 million tuned in.

Trump’s 2025 swearing-in ceremony had 6 million fewer U.S. viewers than his first-term inauguration. Even worse, that’s 9 million fewer viewers than Biden attracted for his big day in 2021.

Here’s where the art of distraction comes in handy. Focus on other people’s faults to cover your own. Enter the Clintons, again. At Wednesday’s news conference, Trump said that shock jock Stern’s ratings “went down when he endorsed Hillary Clinton [in 2016].” What’s Trump’s excuse?

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| <b>ROYAL</b><br>11523 Santa Monica Blvd. West L.A.<br><b>EAST OF WALL</b> 7:00 PM<br><b>SOURCE VANE'S STORY</b> 12:50 3:00 5:10 7:30<br><b>SHOSHANA</b> 1:10 PM<br><b>STAR PEOPLE</b> 7:10 PM<br><b>BAD SHABBOBS</b> 1:30 PM<br><b>KEROUAC'S ROAD: THE BEAT OF A NATION</b> 4:20 PM<br><b>MONK IN PIECES</b> 3:00 PM<br><b>MONICA</b> 1332 Second Street Santa Monica<br><b>MY MOTHER'S WEDDING</b> 1:10 4:30 7:20<br><b>STRANGE HARVEST</b> 1:00 7:30<br><b>THE SPARROW IN THE CHIMNEY</b> 1:30 4:20<br><b>FOLKTALES</b> 4:00 7:10<br><b>OH, HI!</b> 1:20 5:10<br><b>CLOUD</b> 1:00 7:00<br><b>DOY! LET'S GO TO THE DOGS TONIGHT</b> 4:10 PM<br><b>SORRY, BABY</b> 1:10 7:00<br><b>2000 METERS TO ADRIIVKA</b> 4:10 PM<br><b>DEATH LETTER BLUES</b> 3:10 PM<br><b>NATIONAL THEATRE LIVE: THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST</b> 7:00 PM<br><b>SHORT FILM PROGRAM</b> 3:20 PM | <b>TOWN CENTER</b> 17000 Ventura Blvd. Encino<br><b>MY MOTHER'S WEDDING</b> 1:20 4:30 7:20<br><b>WEAPONS</b> 1:10 4:10 7:10<br><b>THE NAKED GUN</b> 1:00 3:10 5:20 7:30<br><b>TOGETHER</b> 1:30 PM<br><b>CLOUD</b> 4:00 PM<br><b>SORRY, BABY</b> 5:10 PM<br><b>BAD SHABBOBS</b> 1:00 7:40<br><b>DIE/CED: RELOADED</b> 3:10 PM<br><b>NATIONAL THEATRE LIVE: THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST</b> 7:00 PM<br><b>NoHo 7</b> 5240 Lankershim Blvd. No. Hollywood<br><b>IT'S NEVER OVER, JEFF BUCKLEY</b> 1:00 4:00 7:00<br><b>STRANGE HARVEST</b> 1:30 7:20<br><b>WEAPONS</b> 1:10 4:10 7:10<br><b>THE NAKED GUN</b> 1:00 3:10 5:20 7:30<br><b>TOGETHER</b> 1:10 4:30 7:10<br><b>THE FANTASTIC FOUR: FIRST STEPS</b> 1:20 4:20 7:20<br><b>EDDINGTON</b> 4:10 PM<br><b>DEAR MAA</b> 12:50 4:00 7:00 | <b>GLENDALE</b> 207 N. Maryland Ave Glendale<br><b>EBONY AND IVORY</b> 4:30 PM<br><b>IT'S NEVER OVER, JEFF BUCKLEY</b> 1:00 4:00 7:10<br><b>SHAMAN</b> 7:20 PM<br><b>SITE</b> 4:10 PM<br><b>TOGETHER</b> 4:20 PM<br><b>CLOUD</b> 1:10 7:00<br><b>SORRY, BABY</b> 1:20 PM<br><b>NATIONAL THEATRE LIVE: THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST</b> 7:00 PM<br><b>SHORT FILM PROGRAM</b> SONGS OF BLACK FOLK: 3:30 PM<br><b>SHORT FILM PROGRAM</b> MAYBE IT'S JUST THE RAIN: 4:00 PM<br><b>THE OCCUPANT</b> 1:40 PM<br><b>THE ROSE: COME BACK TO ME</b> 12:50 3:00 5:10 7:30 | <b>NEWHALL</b> 22500 Lyons Ave. Santa Clarita<br><b>FREAKIER FRIDAY</b> 1:30 4:20 7:20<br><b>STRANGE HARVEST</b> 4:20 PM<br><b>WEAPONS</b> 1:10 4:10 7:10<br><b>THE BAD GUYS 2</b> 1:20 4:30 7:10<br><b>THE NAKED GUN</b> 1:00 3:10 5:20 7:30<br><b>TOGETHER</b> 1:40 PM<br><b>THE FANTASTIC FOUR: FIRST STEPS</b> 1:15 4:00 7:20<br><b>SUPERMAN</b> 1:00 4:00<br><b>F1 THE MOVIE</b> 6:50 PM<br><b>NATIONAL THEATRE LIVE: THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST</b> 7:00 PM<br><b>CLAREMONT</b> 450 W. 2nd Street Claremont<br><b>FREAKIER FRIDAY</b> 1:30 4:30 7:20<br><b>STRANGE HARVEST</b> 4:20 PM<br><b>WEAPONS</b> 1:10 4:10 7:10<br><b>THE NAKED GUN</b> 1:00 3:10 5:20 7:30<br><b>TOGETHER</b> 1:40 PM<br><b>THE FANTASTIC FOUR: FIRST STEPS</b> 1:00 4:00 7:00<br><b>NATIONAL THEATRE LIVE: THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST</b> 7:00 PM |
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BARGAIN IN ( )

CLOSED CAPTION

NON-STANDARD PRICING

FOR 8/11/2025 ONLY

**MIKAEL WOOD**  
**POP MUSIC CRITIC**

Last year, the British dance musician known as Fred Again.. put out a feeler to the Nashville-based alt-rock band Rainbow Kitten Surprise about a possible collaboration. Ela Melo, who's fronted Rainbow Kitten Surprise since she and guitarist Darrick Keller formed the group over a decade ago as students at North Carolina's Appalachian State University, was intrigued by the invitation. "It's brilliant music," she says of Fred Again..'s soulful electronica.

So the singer and songwriter began sending ideas to the artist's team. "They'd be like, 'That's not it, but keep sending stuff,'" Melo recalls. Before long, she and her bandmates had written nine songs, then 32, then 48. "Eventually, we ended up with close to 160 songs because it just felt so good to write," she says.

What happened with the Fred Again.. feature? "I don't know," Melo says with a laugh. "If he's still interested, we're still here."

One thing that happened was a new Rainbow Kitten Surprise album: "Bones," which the band said Wednesday will come out Sept. 26 from Atlantic Records. A 10-track collection produced by Jay Joyce, it's a quick and dirty follow-up to last year's "Love Hate Music Box," which ran for 22 tracks — including "Overtime," with Kacey Musgraves — and which took the band six years to complete.

"This one kind of just came pouring out," Melo



SHERVIN LAINEZ

**RAINBOW** Kitten Surprise members Jess Haney, from left, Ethan Goodpaster, Ela Melo and Darrick Keller.

# Rainbow Kitten Surprise spills its guts on 'Bones'

Frontwoman Ela Melo talks sobriety, the resurgence of rock and the band's forthright new album out in September

says from upstate New York on a recent afternoon between tour dates. The sound is raw yet tuneful, with scratchy electric guitars and whomping live drums in place of the synth-ier, more intricately layered productions of "Love Hate Music Box."

Rounded out by guitarist Ethan Goodpaster and drummer Jess Haney, RKS had its rowdy live show in mind as it worked on "Bones," according to Melo. "It was the idea that we gotta be able to play this stuff — not build it and play it later, but play it right out

of the gate," the singer says. (Next month, the band will log its fourth sold-out show at Colorado's Red Rocks Amphitheatre and perform at the annual Ohana festival in Dana Point.) Melo wrote many of the LP's songs on guitar, she says, which provided "a different energy"

compared with writing on keyboards as she did for "Love Hate Music Box" and 2018's "How To: Friend, Love, Freefall."

The straightforward sound is matched by lyrics Melo describes as "way more direct" than RKS' earlier stuff. "It's a spill-your-

guts-out record," she says, adding that for every song, she'd write a first verse, then ad lib the rest in the studio. In more than a few tunes, she sings about how relationships are affected by drinking and drugs. "It's interesting what comes out on the mic," says the frontwoman, who says she's been sober for about 10 months. "I feel like it's channeling some energy that I don't take part in anymore, though I do have fond memories of getting stoned on the Parkway in Boone, North Carolina."

What inspired her life change? "I noticed that when I drank, I could be a little meaner — just say things I wouldn't normally say," she replies. "I realized I want control of that, and anything that removes some of that control is a no-go. It applies to music, as well. Being as regulated as you can possibly be opens you up to — this gets a little heady — but to other frequencies. Then you have the largest bandwidth to communicate your truth — maybe *the* truth — into a microphone."

With its fuzzy textures and unruly tempos, "Bones" arrives as rock seems to be resurging after years of domination by rappers and pop stars. Melo has no grand theories as to why, but she knows exactly when she started to believe that rock is back. "It was the opening track of 'Guts' by Olivia Rodrigo," she says of the former Disney kid's "All-American Bitch." "That kick drum hit me, and I was like, 'Ah man, I don't need an 808 and all the bells and whistles — I just need old-school guitars, bass and drums.' That's — hits."

# Chinedu Unaka on being a stand-up educator

[**Unaka**, from E1] funded his dream and gave him the tools to achieve it as he held the attention of kids with ADHD while making them learn while laughing. Coming at comedy from the lens of a charismatic instructor with a Nigerian American background, Unaka's quick wit and dry humor about life, relationships and his immigrant parents is on full display in his latest special, "LOL Live With Chinedu Unaka," which premiered last month on Hulu. Unaka talked to The Times recently about his unique path into stand-up that also led to acting on shows like "Insecure" and "Abbott Elementary."

**Your background as a special education teacher comes up a lot in your new special. What inspired you to take that career path before comedy?**

I think something like that has to be in you a little bit. I was always that kid in school who was trying to help my friends understand the material better or help my teammates try to pass classes and stuff like that. So I knew that part was always in me. I've always been a person that had a desire to help and share what I know. When I was in college, I started stand-up comedy, and I knew I liked this art form, but I didn't necessarily know how to make money. Randomly, I saw a Teach for America group promoting in the quad at school. And so that's when I approached them. I figured "Oh, I could be a teacher. I'm probably done by 3:30 to 4 o'clock, and still have my nights and do what I need to do while figuring out stand-up." I applied to Teach for America and that's the kind of how I got into education. I was pretty good at it, just because I think A) having a heart for it. And then, B) I think humor plays a big part in helping teachers become great. Teaching helped me become a better comedian as well. Teaching mild to moderate special education students algebra and trying to make that entertaining was a lot harder than performing at a comedy club.

**Kids can definitely be a tough crowd.**

Especially when you're trying to teach them something they are not necessarily in the mood to learn. So watching how students would relate to different lessons and why this lesson

went well versus this lesson, etc., when it comes to a lot of those small things, I kind of applied it to doing stand-up. That included getting better at maintaining eye contact on stage with certain people, or moving across the stage a certain way, or knowing when is it time to actually go into a crowd and do some crowd work, to bring the energy back into the room.

**You grew up in South L.A. and Harbor City, and then you went to college in UC Santa Barbara; definitely a culture shock in terms of diversity. What was your first experience with stand-up in college? How did that help you find your voice later as a comedian?**

It definitely helped. Because being from Harbor City or the Carson area, it's super diverse. So my high school, Narbonne High, we had everybody there. ... And so I was used to white folks, but I never met white folks that had never met Black folks until I got to UC Santa Barbara. I think that's kind of what helps my comedy too, because I have friends from different places, and because I'm genuinely interested and curious about people's stories and their background. I think when I write to tell my own story it is easily digestible by everyone just because I have an understanding of many different types of people. And so when I started comedy in college, it was definitely something random that my friend Dion was constantly trying to get me to do because you thought I was just a little bit funnier than average, but it was something that I loved watching. It wouldn't necessarily be anything I wanted to do until I dared to try it, and the bug bit me. I was like, "Oh, my funny off-stage kind of translates onstage," and then the joke writing came quicker than usual, because I was writing a lot of poetry and music in high school, and so I was used to playing with words. So I was able to survive onstage because of that background of writing and then the performance came later.

**What areas of the L.A. scene helped you tighten your craft and what aspects of it are unique?**

There were two comedy clubs that are now closed — the J Spot and the Comedy Union. Those were huge for me, because when I moved



JESSICA DAO

**COMEDIAN** Chinedu Unaka says his time teaching special ed provided a training ground for his future craft.

back to L.A., they were the first places to let me onstage. And it was historically, more of like a Black entertainment spot.

**Have any of your former students ever come see you perform material about them?**

A lot of my co-workers came to see me while I was working. A lot of them still come to see me after I left teaching [in 2015]. I had students being in the audience, like they're grown people. I'll be like walking down the street sometimes and I'll hear, "Mr. Unaka!"

**What's been the best gig that you've had so far as an actor?**

Either "Abbott Elementary" or "Insecure." I think just as an educator, to be on that show was really cool. I didn't play an educator on the show. I was a parent. But I know Quinta [Brunson] as well, and then director Justin [Halpern] as well, got to meet Janelle James on that set, and everybody's just super nice. So I do remember that being a really cool moment, being on that show as someone that cares so much about education. Then also "Insecure" was dope as well, because my good friend Yvonne Orji was one of the stars of that show.

And so finally getting to be on that show was really cool.

**With Yvonne being a fellow Nigerian American, did you guys ever talk about how your path in comedy might be different than other Black comics?**

Oftentimes you're going to be the only person within your immediate family that kind of went that route [of doing comedy]. I have four other siblings. They're all service workers — have a sister who is a doctor. My little brother is a doctor. My older brother worked at probation services. So as a comic you're doing something, yeah, so different than what your parents might necessarily want. And so when you find someone of Nigerian descent, also kind of like taking a risk or just walking their own path that's like, true to their souls. It is cool and it is comforting to have that camaraderie and to kind of keep that energy around you. That way you could focus on what needs to be done versus on the thought of, "Did I make a mistake?" or something. Comedy definitely found me. I wasn't searching for it, but when it did find me, it felt like home. And, yeah, it's just something that I just genuinely enjoy doing and it has nothing to do with, like,

anything that could necessarily come from it. I just genuinely always love making people laugh and then to get paid for that still feels crazy to me.

**To get your own special on Hulu through Kevin Hart's LOL Network and Hartbeat must feel like a big moment for you. How did that come about?**

First, shout-out to Kevin for even putting vehicles like this out there, because he doesn't have to. And it's not the first time he's done something like this before. I worked with him when he was booking comedians for his LOL Network to go to tape for Just for Laughs. And at that point, I never did Just for Laughs, only auditioned for the "New Faces" showcase and stuff like that. But this was a thing that I didn't have to audition for. His people reached out to my people, like "we love Chinedu to do this for us." They paid us, they put us up, they flew us out. And it was during the festival, and it was an incredible feeling. So to work with him again on something similar but on a bigger scale was definitely like a dream come true; especially respect who Kevin is as an artist, but then also just his work ethic and how he goes

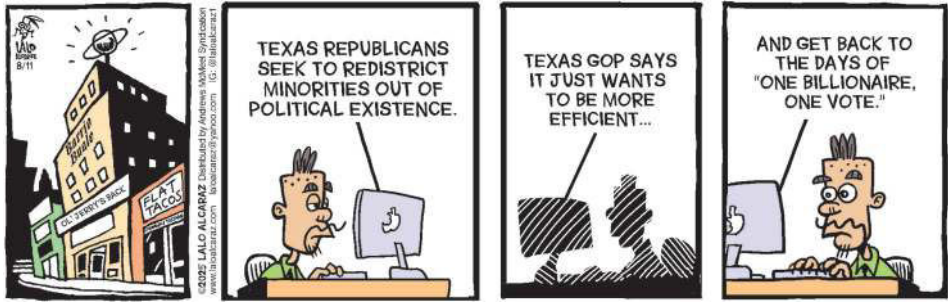
about his business and how he's just very forthcoming and helping the younger generation get more eyes on them. So doing that, and then doing with the people at Hartbeat as well and seeing how much attention to detail they took to it, versus it being a rush job. It felt dope, just like the way it looked. They filled the room. Everything about it felt actually special. So to have an opportunity to be one of these comedians selected was incredible. And I'm happy that I was ready for it, and that it went well. We basically had one shot to tape it too. I think I got it right.

**What do you think is next for you in your career?**

I think what's next for me is to definitely, you know, produce some TV show ideas that I have. I would love to get those out to people then definitely start having this podcast me and my boy, James Davis, are doing named after my first album, "Mostly Kidding," and so I'll be releasing that soon. And that's really just to give the audience another vehicle to understand my humor, understand more of who I am, what I've been through. Then outside of that, just hoping to make comedy with friends.

COMICS

LA CUCARACHA By Lalo Alcaraz



CRABGRASS By Tauhid Bondia



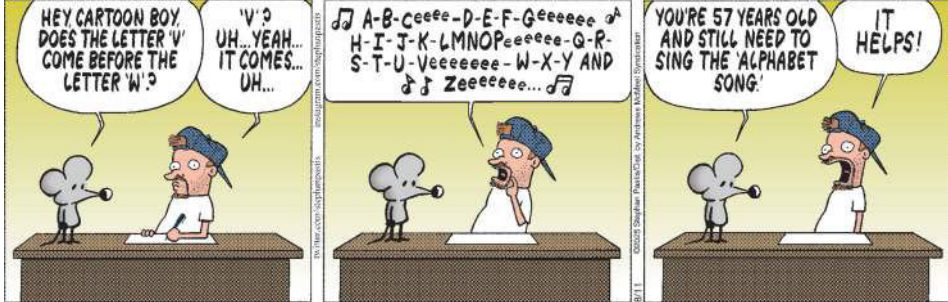
CURTIS By Ray Billingsley



LOOSE PARTS By Dave Blazek



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE By Stephan Pastis



LIO By Mark Tatulli



ZITS By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman



TUNDRA By Chad Carpenter



SIX CHIX By Isabella Bannerman



FRAZZ By Jef Mallett



NON SEQUITUR By Wiley



PICKLES By Brian Crane



BABY BLUES By Jerry Scott & Rick Kirkman



CRANKSHAFT By Tom Batiuk & Chuck Ayers



JUMP START By Robb Armstrong



MACANUDO By Liniers



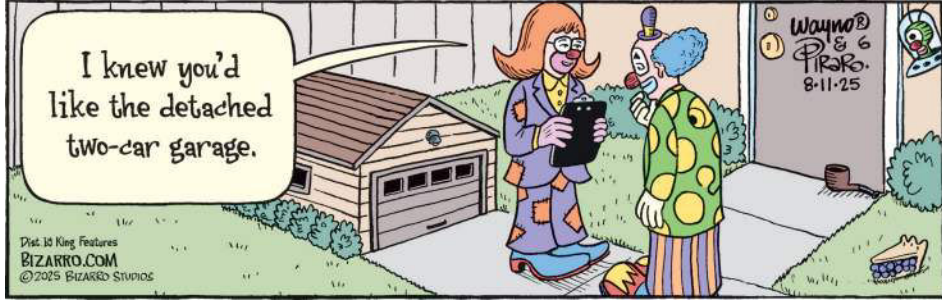
BLONDIE By Dean Young & John Marshall



BETWEEN FRIENDS By Sandra Bell-Lundy



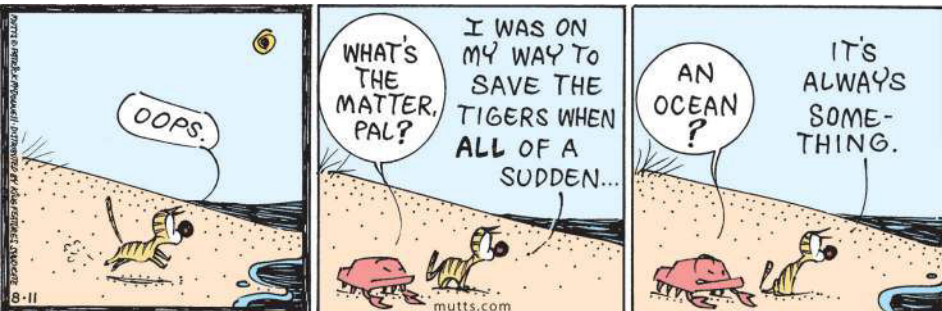
BIZARRO By Wayno and Piraro



DRABBLE By Kevin Fagan



MUTTS By Patrick McDonnell



PEANUTS By Charles M. Schulz



COMICS

SUDOKU

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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).

KENKEN

Every box will contain a number; numbers depend on the size of the grid. For a 6x6 puzzle, use Nos. 1-6. Do not repeat a number in any row or column. The numbers in each heavily outlined set of squares must combine to produce the target number found in the top left corner of the cage using the mathematical operation indicated. A number can be repeated within a cage as long as it is not in the same row or column.

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| 2    |    | 7+ |   |    |    |

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| CHALLENGING |     |    |     |    |     |
| 1-          | 11+ | 5- | 12X |    | 11+ |
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| 11+         | 1-  | 2÷ |     | 6+ |     |
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|             |     | 3  | 15+ | 1- | 5-  |
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| 3-          | 6+  |    |     |    |     |
|             |     |    |     |    |     |
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| PREVIOUS ANSWERS |   |   |   |   |   |
| 7+               |   |   |   |   |   |
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| 12+              |   |   |   |   |   |
| 6                | 4 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 1 |
| 12+              |   |   |   |   |   |
| 5                | 3 | 6 | 1 | 4 | 2 |
| 12+              |   |   |   |   |   |
| 1                | 6 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 3 |
| 12+              |   |   |   |   |   |
| 3                | 2 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 5 |

8/11/25

HOROSCOPE

By HOLIDAY MATHIS

**Aries** (March 21-April 19): You'll be faced with a complex problem. Strip away everything that's unnecessary. Hint: Nothing elevates like lightness. Levity lifts.

**Taurus** (April 20-May 20): You'll be making plans that involve many. Because you think things through, you just might do the impossible and please everyone.

**Gemini** (May 21-June 21): Stuck in a loop of judgment or comparison? Pour your energy into what absorbs you — anything that lets you forget yourself for a while.

**Cancer** (June 22-July 22): A special connection feels easy and unguarded.

**Leo** (July 23-Aug. 22): You've already arrived at the "cool." Yours is the cool of quiet mastery, of fully lived experience.

**Virgo** (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): One good move inspires another. Structures rise and

solidify as your instinct locks into what works.

**Libra** (Sept. 23-Oct. 23): Financial aspect aside, an effective criterion by which to determine the right position for you will be the job's capacity to add value, depth and richness to your life.

**Scorpio** (Oct. 24-Nov. 21): You'll be in a position to bear witness. Keep in mind there are those who will try to get away with anything and everything they can.

**Sagittarius** (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Explaining things well will be important today because people are either listening so closely they are apt to catch the slightest mistakes or are listening badly and only the most concentrated truth will shine through.

**Capricorn** (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): For most things, your approximations will be enough. Your free-form is the form that works best.

**Aquarius** (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Talk about potential

mistakes because you can prevent many. When told about a pitfall to avoid, people are open.

**Pisces** (Feb. 19-March 20): More than one person gives you something to solve. Blame it on your excellence.

**Today's birthday** (Aug. 11): You're someone self-aware enough to hold complexity without flinching. Someone who turns over every rock of the soul not to suffer but to understand. One can never quite feel one's own rarity completely, but you'll honor and be honored for it this year. More highlights: entrepreneurship, financial comforts, professional promotion and deeply joyful relationship harmony. Virgo and Sagittarius adore you. Lucky numbers: 3, 15, 49, 12 and 13.

Mathis writes her column for Creators Syndicate Inc. The horoscope should be read for entertainment.

CROSSWORD

Edited By Patti Varol  
By Mary Winslow

- ACROSS**
- 1 Split \_\_ soup
- 4 "Time to get up!" noise
- 9 Ceremonial accoutrement
- 13 Greek god of war
- 15 Called
- 16 Not for
- 17 Not illuminated
- 18 Hula dancer's bottom
- 20 Evening parties
- 22 Mount of Greek legend
- 23 Yellow spice in tangy marinades
- 26 Wile E. Coyote's explosive
- 28 Spanish gold
- 29 Classified ad shorthand
- 30 With a scoop of ice cream, as pie
- 32 Lunch spots
- 34 Cooling systs.
- 35 Technical sch.
- 36 Lounger on an ocean liner
- 40 Cathedral recess
- 43 \_\_ : raisin :: log : celery
- 44 Slangy "For sure!"
- 48 Have another nibble of
- 50 \_\_ kwon do
- 52 "And you \_\_?"
- 53 A pop
- 54 Influencer with serious clout
- 57 Civil rights icon Parks
- 59 Despised with a passion
- 60 Survive an audition, and what one may do to the start of 18-, 23-, 36-, or 54-Across?
- 63 Egyptian fertility goddess
- 65 "A Death in the Family" writer James
- 66 Criticize pettily
- 67 Director Preminger
- 68 Worktable
- 69 Lymph \_\_: immune system parts
- 70 CIA forerunner

- DOWN**
- 1 Push-up bra feature
- 2 Mark of a correction
- 3 Spray starch dispenser
- 4 Makes miffed
- 5 Texas border city on the Rio Grande
- 6 Stockpile
- 7 Hi-\_\_ photo

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| 68 |    |    |    |    | 69 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 70 |

- 8 Surgeons, e.g., for short
- 9 \_\_ Off 5th: discount fashion chain
- 10 Jennifer of "The Morning Show"
- 11 Hair pieces
- 12 Smashing success
- 14 Comedy sketch
- 19 Club \_\_: bar mixer
- 21 Pay increase
- 23 Forum admin
- 24 "To \_\_ their own"
- 25 Anna's "Frozen" sister
- 27 Vietnamese celebration that welcomes spring
- 31 Actress Sorvino
- 33 Brainchild
- 34 " \_\_ your age!"
- 37 Reformer of ancient Rome
- 38 Was certain of
- 39 Motionless
- 40 Abstract artist Jean
- 41 British aristocracy
- 42 Paintbrush marks
- 45 Becomes smitten with
- 46 University units
- 47 Feminine pronoun
- 49 Squabble

- 50 Company that takes the show on the road
- 51 Lets up
- 55 Heroic knight of medieval Spain
- 56 The Buckeye State
- 58 Participate in a scavenger hunt
- 60 Crazy (about)
- 61 QVC alternative
- 62 Music producer Brian
- 64 "Help!" letters
- ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
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8/11/25

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BRIDGE

By FRANK STEWART

"I know about your opinion of men," I said to Wendy, my club's feminist. "Haven't you ever known a man with good qualities?"

"A good man would be like a diaper," Wendy told me, "strong, soft and disposable."

In a penny game, Wendy played at today's four spades. West led his singleton diamond, and when East took the ace, Wendy ... disposed of her king!

East saw no point in leading another diamond. He shifted to the jack of clubs: king, ace, four. Wendy ruffed the next club, led a trump to dummy and returned a heart to her nine.

West took the ace and led another club, and Wendy

ruffed, cashed the queen of hearts, drew trumps ending in dummy, and took the king of hearts. When East's jack fell, Wendy disposed of her last two diamonds on the hearts. Making four.

If Wendy plays low in the first diamond, East will continue diamonds. West will ruff the king, and Wendy will go down at least one.

You hold: ♠ 7 6 3 ♥ A 7 6 3 ♦ 2 ♣ A Q 7 5 3. Your partner opens one diamond, you respond one heart, he bids one spade and you try 1 N T. Partner then rebids two diamonds. What do you say?

Answer: Your 1 N T was conservative; with 7 6 3, A 10 6 3, J 2, A Q 9 3, you might have jumped to 2 N T, inviting game. But your singleton diamond remains a deterrent. Pass. Partner suggests six diamonds, four

|                               |       |                  |                |
|-------------------------------|-------|------------------|----------------|
| West dealer<br>N-S vulnerable |       |                  |                |
|                               |       | NORTH            | EAST           |
|                               |       | ♠ A Q 9          | ♠ None         |
|                               |       | ♥ K 10 8 2       | ♥ J 5 4        |
|                               |       | ♦ 8 6 3          | ♦ A Q J 10 9 5 |
|                               |       | ♣ 8 6 4          | ♣ J 10 9 2     |
| WEST                          |       | SOUTH            |                |
| ♠ 7 6 3                       |       | ♠ K J 10 8 5 4 2 |                |
| ♥ A 7 6 3                     |       | ♥ Q 9            |                |
| ♦ 2                           |       | ♦ K 7 4          |                |
| ♣ A Q 7 5 3                   |       | ♣ K              |                |
| WEST                          | NORTH | EAST             | SOUTH          |
| Pass                          | Pass  | 3 ♦              | 3 ♣            |
| Pass                          | Pass  | All Pass         |                |
| Opening lead — ♦ 2            |       |                  |                |

Tribune Content Agency

ASKING ERIC

**Dear Eric:** I have a problem that seems to be getting worse with time. Our son is married and very happy. He lives in another state from us so it is always a quick visit to see each other, which happens usually twice a year.

The problem is my husband and I really don't enjoy our visits. They've become very stressful. We are always walking on eggshells around them. It is their way or no way. They have become selfish adults.

Our last visit was truly exhausting and my husband doesn't want to go again anytime soon. I know if I have a conversation with my son, we will probably not talk at all and it will sever our relationship. I truly don't know what to do because I didn't raise my son to be so difficult and make our family so uncomfortable in his and his wife's presence. Please help.

LOST AND STRESSED MOM

**Dear Mom:** Reading your letter, I wondered if it was possible to change the structure, schedule or even the setting of your time with your son. It sounds like you're looking for more hospitality, which is totally fair. So perhaps by giving yourself some of that hospitality and consideration, you can take the pressure off and enjoy yourself more.

If you're visiting him at his home, for instance, I

wonder if there's a part of him that feels his space is being infringed upon or his schedule is being jostled. If so, it's possible to take the triggers away. You and your husband could plan other local events for your time in his state and choose one or two pockets of time to engage with your son and daughter-in-law.

The desire to visit isn't always met by the ability to visit well. It sounds like he's got some growing to do in that area. If you're walking around on eggshells, the best thing may be to step back for a little bit.

**Dear Eric:** I have two close female friends (13 years of friendship and 30 years of friendship, respectively). I introduced them to each other. They have a lot in common and now we're all close. They are both single. In the last year my live-in boyfriend has developed Alzheimer's and I am not as available for hiking, canoeing or going to museums like they do.

I recently found out that my two friends frequently meet without me for hikes and museum trips and lunch afterward without including me. I totally understand that I cannot participate or stay away from my boyfriend for hours. I totally understand that they have these activities in common but not with me.

I just found out that they are planning an overnight trip to the West Coast of Florida as a girls trip and hiking trip. They did not ask me. A simple "We would love you to join us but understand your situation and will miss you" would have made me happy. Am I too sensitive about just wanting to be included by simply asking?

UNMATCHED MATCHMAKER

**Dear Matchmaker:** You're not being too sensitive. This hurts and it's hard. As a caregiver, you may be stretched thin, you may feel more emotions and you may find that the demands on your time are changing in ways that are out of your control.

This is a moment for compassion, for yourself and from others. Thinking generously, it's possible that your friends are trying to be compassionate by not inviting you to things they assume you can't do. But they need to say it so that their intentions are not misconstrued.

Tell them that you know your life looks different now but you still want to feel wanted. Sometimes even our closest friends need to be encouraged to think creatively about how to best show up for us.

Email questions to [eric@askingeric.com](mailto:eric@askingeric.com).

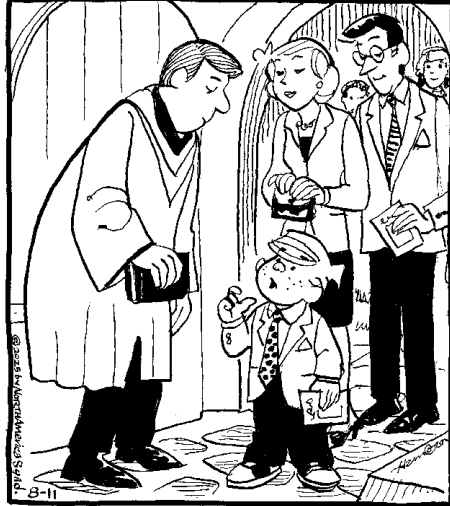
**FAMILY CIRCUS** By Bil Keane



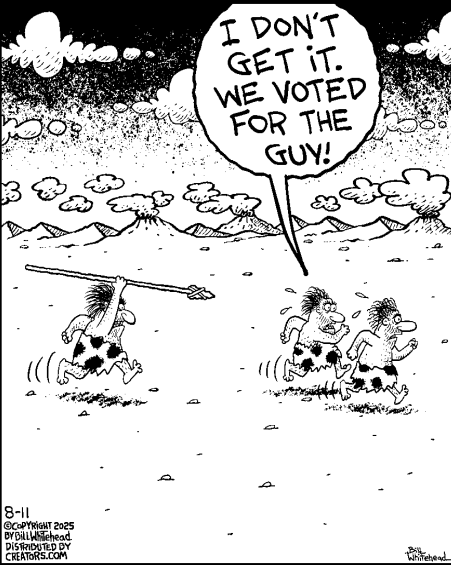
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**"San Francisco had a big earthquake when Mrs. O'Leary kicked over a lantern at the Cow Palace."**

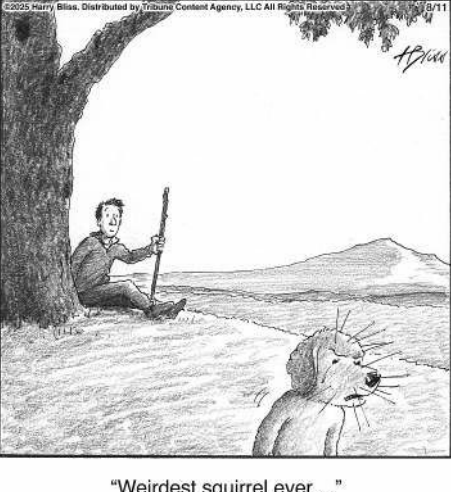
**DENNIS THE MENACE** By Hank Ketcham



**FREE RANGE** By Bill Whitehead



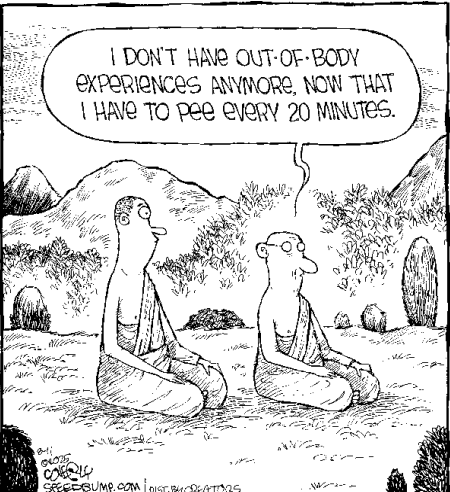
**BLISS** By Harry Bliss



**MARMADUKE** By Brad & Paul Anderson



**SPEED BUMP** By Dave Coverly



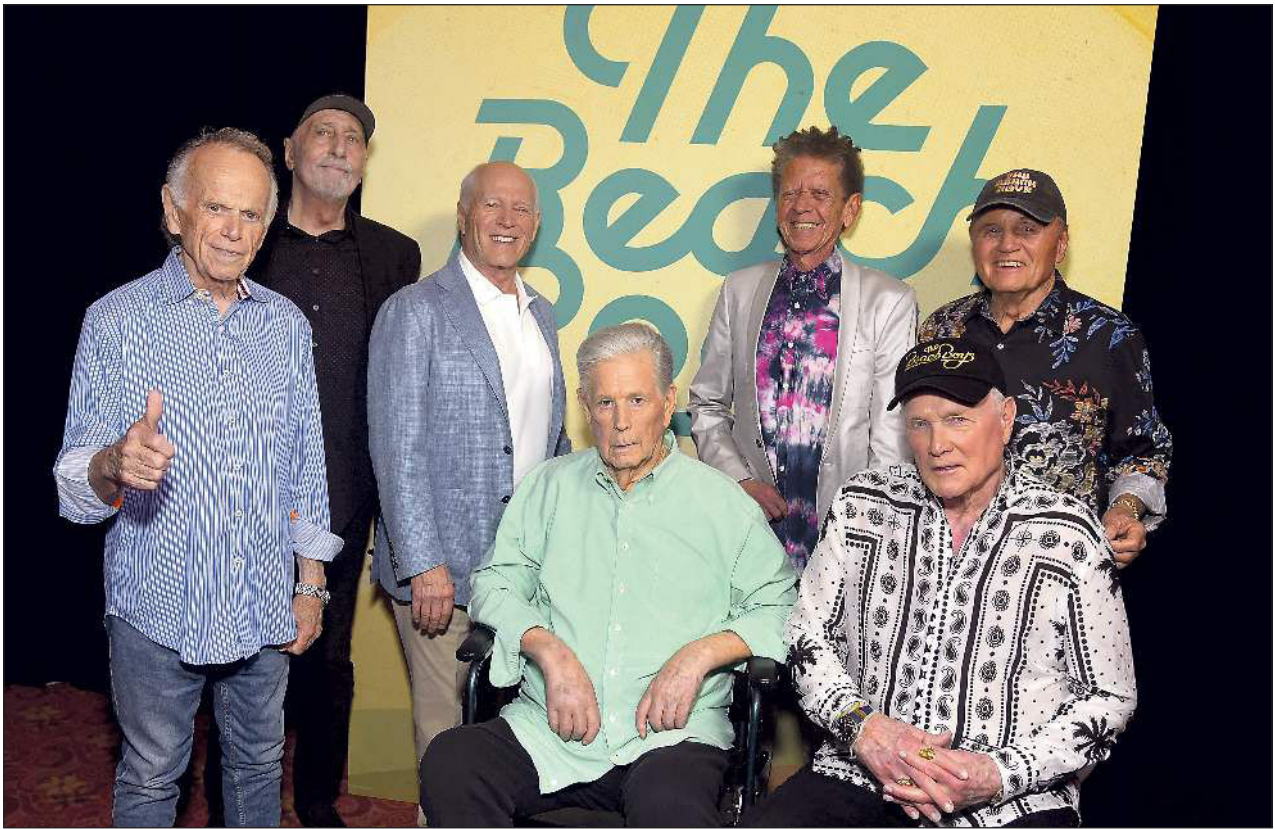
# Mike Love won't let the music fade

[Beach Boys, from E1] How did it feel to be inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame?

Better late than never, but it was a great honor. It meant a lot because I wasn't recognized for my contribution to so many of the Beach Boys' hits over the years. So the recognition is a good thing. There are various reasons I wasn't recognized for it. My uncle [Beach Boys original manager] Murry [Wilson], didn't put my contribution of the lyrics. "I Get Around," "Help Me, Rhonda," "Be True to Your School," a lot of great songs that I wasn't credited for. We fired my uncle as manager to get even for me, and he excluded me when he handled the publishing. We didn't know what publishing was when we started in 1961. We were unsophisticated regarding the business end of it, and we just loved creating music. We loved harmonizing. That was a family tradition that morphed into a long-lasting profession because my cousin Brian and I got together and wrote some songs that people still love to this day.

What is it about the songs that continue to bring people together at a time when people can hardly agree on anything?

The harmonies and the positivity go a long way towards eliminating the negativity. In "Good Vibrations," I wrote every word of it. I even came up with (*sings*) "I'm thinking of good vibrations / She gave me excitations" with the chorus melody as well as all the lyrics. But that was written in 1966. The Vietnam War was percolating, and there were student demonstrations. There were problems with integration, and stuff like that made the news. But I wanted to write "Good Vibrations." I wanted to write this song. I wrote a poem about a girl who loved nature. She was only into the peace, love and flower power, which was also going on at that time. The juxtaposition of the negative and the positive is pretty amazing. It turns out there's a psychologist in Sheffield,



DIRECTOR Frank Marshall, third from left, with the Beach Boys' Al Jardine, left, David Marks, Brian Wilson, Blondie Chaplin, Mike Love and Bruce Johnston at "The Beach Boys" documentary premiere in 2024.

England, who wanted to find out which songs made people feel the best. And our song "Good Vibrations" came in at No. 1, which is unbelievable. In 1966, when it went to No. 1 in England, we were voted the No. 1 group in Great Britain, with No. 2 being the Beatles. Incredible. That was a pretty amazing achievement.

You've been joined onstage by the likes of Mark McGrath and Dexter Holland from the Offspring. What does that say to you about the longevity of what the songs have meant?

Dexter sounded *amazing* on it! He is a really good singer, obviously, but he wanted to do "Wouldn't It Be Nice," and so we rehearsed backstage [at Oceans Calling Festival in Maryland last September], ran through it about once or twice, and came out onstage in front of 40,000 people, and it was pretty amazing! Mark McGrath is just the most positive and fun guy ever. We have the same birthday, so he's a few years younger

than I am (*laughs*).

And of course, John Stamos, who inducted you into the Songwriters Hall of Fame.

He's been with us since he was Blackie on "General Hospital." At this point, he is pretty much an honorary Beach Boy and family.

In the days after Brian's death, the clip of the band appearing on "Full House" made the rounds on Instagram. What's it like to remember that when both Brian and Carl were there and you appeared on that show?

John Stamos likes to say that we need this music more than ever now because of so much negativity in the world, and I agree. When I was writing, I accentuated the positive with the harmonies, giving that warm feeling, and the subject matter being fun at times. We'd maybe been a little introspective on "God Only Knows," maybe "In My Room," and "The Warmth of the Sun." The upbeat songs are all fun, positive, and

make people feel good. We were just in Spain, and we had standing ovations every night. It was amazing.

What's wild is seeing the Beach Boys appear on the historically punk festival Riot Fest. Are you familiar with it?

Yeah! We were invited to do it a year ago, but we are doing it this year. Our songs go over well with every demographic and all kinds of people. It doesn't matter what the format of this is. We've done very well with some country festivals, enormously well. It doesn't matter what the genre of the festival appeals to. We played Stagecoach last year, and there were 70,000 or 80,000 people at our set. Singing along and dancing around, so we had a great time at that one.

Who are you looking forward to seeing at Riot Fest?

Who is on it other than us?

On your day, it is Weezer performing the Blue Album, Jack White, a recon-

figured version of the Sex Pistols, Dropkick Murphys, All Time Low, James ...

Weezer! They did "California Girls" on a tribute show that aired on Easter Sunday a few years ago. There's a lot more guitar in that particular version (*laughs*). Maybe one of those guys will come and sing with us. What happens at those things is that you're with a lot of people you don't ordinarily see, and people like to do unique things.

Do you think the Beach Boys would have been considered a punk band, if that was a term, in 1961?

If you listen to some of our songs, like "Surfin' Safari," "Catch a Wave" and "Hawaii," there's a lot of tempo there. I think those songs appeal to all kinds of genres.

Does returning to Long Beach, near where you all grew up, carry more weight with the loss of Brian?

Well, we have a tribute song called "Brian's Back" that I wrote many, many years ago. So, back when

that was released (in 1976 as part of "15 Big Ones"), we did a video tribute to Brian that we play every night at our concerts, which people love and appreciate. He may have passed on, but he's always with us every night in the music.

Do you see the Beach Boys continuing to tour in name after you and Bruce are done?

I'm not sure. We haven't given that a whole lot of thought because we're very active these days with this configuration. Elton John said that the "Pet Sounds" album would be the one album that would be played forever, which is an amazing accolade. So those songs are pretty much immortal to some degree. So if somebody is capable of replicating them as closely as possible for the record, then great.

But the problem is that mortality is an issue, of course. So, at some point in time, nature will take over and say, "OK, you're out of here, huh?" But in the meantime, I think we've got a good several years to go.

What do people misunderstand about your and Brian's relationship?

Well, there's a lot of misinformation given out over this early part of our careers that says I didn't like the "Pet Sounds" album, which is bull—, because I actually named it and Brian brought it to Capitol Records, who didn't know what to do with it. If you listen to the tracks of "Pet Sounds," you say, "How the heck did he ever do that with the greatest musicians in L.A., the Wrecking Crew?" My cousin Brian did some amazing stuff that'll stand the test of time, if Elton John is right, forever. It's a true blessing to be able to do what started as a family hobby and became a long-lasting profession.

Is "That's Why God Made the Radio" the last Beach Boys album, or do you all have one more left in you?

Anything's possible. We don't have immediate plans, but I do think of that kind of thing from time to time.

# King Gizzard has quit Spotify, but it gained a symphony

[King Gizzard, from E1] The band's frontman, Stu Mackenzie, spoke to The Times about giving Spotify the boot, how the L.A. Phil inspired the new record's arrangements and what it's figured out about staying afloat while artists get squeezed from all sides today.

What was your initial reaction to Daniel Ek's investments in an AI arms company?

A bit of shock, and then feeling that I shouldn't be shocked. We've been saying f— Spotify for years. In our circle of musician friends, that's what people say all the time, for all of these other reasons which are well documented. We saw a couple of other bands who we admire and thought, "I don't really want our music to be here, at least right now." I don't really consider myself an activist, and I don't feel comfortable soap-boxing. But this feels like a decision staying true to ourselves, and doing what we think is right for our music, having our music in places that we feel all right about.

Was choosing to leave a complicated decision for the band?

The thing that made it hard was I do want to have our music be accessible to people. I don't really care about making money from streaming. I know it's unfair, and I know they are banking so much. But for me personally, I just want to make music, and I want people to be able to listen to it. The hard part was to take that away from so many people.

But sometimes you've just got to say, "Well, sorry, we're not going to be here right now." In the end, it actually was just one quick phone call with the other guys to get off the ship.

As the sizes of everything gets larger, all of the stakes start to feel higher. I grapple with that, because that's not the kind of band that I like to be in, where it feels like everything is high stakes. I do miss the time where we could just do anything without any consequences, but I still try really hard to operate like that. In the past, I have felt tied to it, that we have to be there. But with this band, we have been happy to take a lot of risks, and for the most part, I'm just happy to see what happens if we just choose the path that feels right for us.

Do you think Spotify noticed or cares that you left?

I don't expect Daniel Ek to pay attention to this. We have made a lot of experimental moves with the way we've released records — bootlegging stuff for free. We have allowed ourselves a license to break conventions, and the people who listen to our music have a trust and a faith to go along on this ride together. I feel grateful to have the sort of fan base you'll just trust, even when you do something a little counterintuitive. It feels like an experiment to me, like, "Let's just go away from Spotify, and let's see what happens." Why does this have to be a big deal? It actually feels like we're just trying to find our own positivity in a dark situation.



"WE JUST have a ton of fun making music together," frontman Stu Mackenzie says of King Gizzard & the Lizard Wizard. "It feels human, it feels spiritual."

"Phantom Island" is a really distinct record in your catalog for using so much orchestration. I heard some conversations with the L.A. Phil planted the seed for it?

We played this Hollywood Bowl show a little over two years ago, and being the home stadium of the L.A. Phil, we naturally chatted with them at the show. It did plant a seed of doing a show there backed by the orchestra. We happened to be halfway through making a record at that exact time that we weren't really sure how to finish. When we started talking about doing a show backed by an orchestra, we thought, "Let's just make an album with an orchestra." We rearranged and rewrote these songs with a composer, Chad Kelly. We knew the songs needed something, and we ended up rewriting the songs to work for a rock band in a symphonic medium.

Were there any records you looked to for how to make that approach work? I hear a lot of ELO in there, Isaac Hayes, maybe the Beatles' "A Day in the Life."

To be completely honest, I just don't think there was a model for it. I think we landed on something that we only could have made because we wrote the songs not knowing there

were going to be orchestral parts. When you ask me what were the touchstones, well, there weren't any. I was probably thinking of a lot of music from the early '60s, a lot of soul and R&B music at that time, which had often had orchestral arrangements. Etta James, for instance, was in the tone and the feel. This isn't the perfect way to do it, but it was a really serendipitous process.

Your live shows are pretty raucous to say the least; how did you adapt to keep that feeling with orchestras behind you on this tour?

I was pretty anxious, to be honest. We only had one rehearsal the day before the first show. We had to go in and cross our fingers, like, "OK, I think that's going to work. I'm just going to hope that it translates." Our rehearsal was the most intense two and a half hours, but for the show, you're just like, "All right, this is it." You've just got to commit to what's on the page.

We've had some really awesome people collaborating with us — Sean O'Laughlin did the arrangements for the live shows, and Sarah Hicks is an amazing conductor. We're just a garage rock band from Australia; we're very lucky to get to honestly work with the best of the best.

On the other end of the venue spectrum, what was it like playing a residency in a Lithuanian prison?

It was a real prison until really recently [Lukiskes Prison 2.0 in Vilnius, Lithuania]. The history is very dark — like, very, very dark. But there are artist spaces there now, and it's quite a culturally positive force. They're the things that make you restore your faith in humanity. You spend so much of your life losing faith in it, and then you go to places like that, and you're like, "Yeah, humans are OK."

Speaking of threats to humanity, I think your band contests the idea that artists need to use AI to make enough music to be successful on streaming. You're proof you can make a ton of music quickly, with real people.

Making music is fun as f—, especially making music with other people. That's a deeply motivating factor, and we just have a ton of fun making music together. It feels human, it feels spiritual, it feels social. It's deeply central to who we all are as human beings.

And it doesn't feel hard. It doesn't feel like we're fighting against some AI trend or anything. We just make music because it feels good.

You're an arena act with your own label, and pretty autonomous as a band. Do you think you've figured out something important about how to be successful in the modern music economy?

I think we've been good at asking internal questions, and questioning what everybody else does and whether we need to do that or not. Sometimes we do the same thing that everybody else does. Sometimes we do something completely different because it makes sense to us. I think we've been quite good at being true to ourselves and being confident, or maybe reckless enough to do that.

I do think there's some serendipity and fate in the personalities of the other guys in the band, and the people that we work with, who have also been on a pretty unconventional journey and have faith that — in the least pretentious way possible — that other people will dig it, and not worry too much about the other stuff.

Do you hope to see more and bigger bands striking out on their own, since the big institutions of the music business have yet again proved to not really reflect their values?

I just know what has worked for us, and I'm not sure that means that it'll work for other people. I don't know if there's a model in it. If there is a model, it's that you don't have to follow a path if you don't want to. The well-treaded path is going to work for some people, but you don't have to stay on that.

I think one thing about this band is that we've all been at peace with failing. That if this all fell apart and we went back home and we got regular jobs, I think we would say, "Well, we're proud of ourselves. We had a good time." We did what we wanted to do and just suffered the consequences along the way. We're probably being recklessly selfish decisions over and over again. But people, for some reason, want to come out and see us do that, and we're super grateful.