

LAWSUIT FAULTS EXXON'S PLASTICS CLAIMS

In a first, California accuses the oil giant of deceiving the public about the potential of recycling.

By **TONY BRISCOE**
AND **SUSANNE RUST**

California Atty. Gen. Rob Bonta has filed a first-of-its-kind lawsuit aimed at Exxon Mobil Corp. — one of the largest producers of petroleum-based polymers — for allegedly deceiving the public about the potential for plastic recycling and creating an environmental blight that has cost the state billions of dollars to clean.

The lawsuit, filed Monday in San Francisco Superior Court, accuses Exxon Mobil of falsely promoting plastics as universally recyclable when, in fact, the vast majority of these products cannot be reused. Decades of misleading marketing in newspaper advertisements, social media posts, television commercials and public statements caused consumers to buy and use more single-use plastic than they would have otherwise, Bonta alleged.

The lawsuit seeks to compel the oil giant to “end its deceptive practices” about plastics recycling, and asks the court to order Exxon Mobil to establish an abatement fund and pay financial penalties “for the harm inflicted by plastics pollution upon California’s communities and the environment.”

“The company has propped up sham solutions, manipulated the public and lied to consumers,” Bonta said at a news conference Monday. “It’s time Exxon Mobil pays the price for its [See Plastic, A7]

Newsom unveils climate initiative

Governor asks residents to modify their daily behavior to aid the environment. **CALIFORNIA, B1**



BRYAN WUERKER

VICTOR was a well-known fixture in Mammoth, frequently seizing food or fish. On Aug. 21, he injured a woman.

COLUMN ONE

A bear swipes at a woman and a furious wildlife debate ensues

Victor was a part of the surroundings in Mammoth Lakes, forcing officials to defend to an angry public what they did next

By **LILA SEIDMAN**

A 500-pound bear with chestnut fur and a tan muzzle hunches over a picnic table in a Mammoth Lakes campground, picking over T-bone steak and jostling drinking glasses.

“Don’t spill my wine — that’s all we have!” someone calls out in a video of the incident. Somewhere, out of view of the camera, campers attempt to scare the bear away by making loud clanging noises.

Unfazed by the racket, the hulking mammal then lumbers over to a metal bear box just past a woman who stands looking petrified on a stump.

The woman’s hand shakes as she eyes the beast warily. The bear then turns to the woman and swipes her leg, sending her fleeing as onlookers gasp. It doesn’t pursue her.

The Aug. 21 video has fueled a raging debate over humanity’s coexistence with wild animals, particularly those that inspire both awe and terror.

For some, the video is an example of people baiting wildlife with perilous consequences. To others, it illustrates the problem of wild animals becoming habituated to interactions with humans.

The quick swipe led to a deep laceration that an [See Bear, A10]



DREA LEITHEISER

THIS CUB named Victoria is believed to be the offspring of Victor because of a similar V-shaped marking on her chest.

Israeli airstrikes kill nearly 500 in Lebanon

In a sharp escalation of the yearlong fight, the military says it hit more than 1,100 Hezbollah targets.

By **NABIH BULOS**

BEIRUT — Amid the threat of a wider Middle East war, Israeli warplanes pounded towns and villages in Lebanon on Monday, conducting airstrikes on what the Israeli military said were more than 1,100 Hezbollah



HUSSEIN MALLA Associated Press

SMOKE from airstrikes billows over Nabatiyeh, Lebanon, seen from the southern town of Marjayoun.

targets. The strikes killed 492 people and wounded 1,645 others, including 58 women and 35 children, Lebanese Health Ministry officials said.

Hezbollah responded by lobbing dozens of rockets into Israel, some reaching as far as Haifa. The group said it was targeting military bases and a weapons manufacturing company.

Late Monday, an airstrike hit a building in a Hezbollah-dominated Beirut neighborhood, targeting what the Israeli military said [See Mideast, A4]

State bill to help undocumented migrants is vetoed

Newsom kills measure on hiring college students. UC and CSU feared running afoul of federal law.

By **TERESA WATANABE**
AND **LAUREL ROSENHALL**

Gov. Gavin Newsom vetoed a bill Sunday that would have directed the University of California, California State University and state community colleges to hire undocumented students for campus jobs — his second veto of legislation aimed at expanding aid to those who are not living in California legally.

The action crushed the hopes of tens of thousands of

students who were brought illegally to the United States as children and have not been able to obtain work permits to help finance their educations or qualify for research and teaching jobs crucial to their academic programs. An estimated 55,000 undocumented students in those straits attend California public colleges and universities; the state is home to a fifth of the nation’s undocumented college students.

Despite California’s “proud history” of expanding educational opportunities for undocumented students, Newsom said he was vetoing Assembly Bill 2586 because of legal risks to state employees who could be deemed in violation of federal laws against hiring un- [See Veto, A7]

Man wrote of plot to kill Trump

Suspect in the apparent assassination attempt kept a list of where the ex-president would be, officials say. **NATION, A5**

Action urged over illicit puppy mills

Lawmakers and animal advocates say California must address “disturbing” findings in a Times inquiry. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

‘SportsCenter’ host keeps it fresh

Scott Van Pelt and “Bad Beats” continue to draw younger viewers to ESPN in a YouTube world. **BUSINESS, A6**

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Sunny and warm.
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PERSPECTIVES

Catholic thinkers' influence on Vance

'Postliberals' envision a new social order to reshape government and universities.

By PETER SMITH
AND MICHELLE R. SMITH

By his own account, Ohio Sen. JD Vance's 2019 conversion to Catholicism provided a spiritual fulfillment he couldn't find in his Yale education or career success.

It also amounted to a political conversion.

Catholicism provided him a new way of looking at the addictions, family breakdowns and other social ills he described in his 2016 best-selling memoir, "Hillbilly Elegy."

"I felt desperate for a worldview that understood our bad behavior as simultaneously social and individual, structural and moral; that recognized that we are products of our environment; that we have a responsibility to change that environment, but that we are still moral beings with individual duties," he wrote in a 2020 essay.

His conversion also put Vance in close touch with a Catholic intellectual movement, viewed by some critics as having reactionary or authoritarian leanings, that had been little known to the American public before Vance's rise to the national stage as the Republican vice presidential nominee.

These are not your father's Catholic conservatives.

The professors and media personalities in this network don't all agree on everything — even on what to call themselves — but most go by "postliberal." Vance has used that term to describe himself, though the Trump-Vance campaign did not respond to questions about where Vance sees himself in the movement and whether he shares some of the beliefs promoted by many postliberals.

Postliberals do share some long-standing Catholic conservative views, such as opposition to abortion and LGBTQ+ rights.

But where Catholic conservatives of the past have seen big government as a problem rather than a solution, the postliberals want a muscular government — one



MORRY GASH Associated Press

JD VANCE, who converted to Catholicism in 2019, has used the term "postliberal" to describe himself. Postliberals want a muscular government — one that they control. Some Catholics, including conservatives, say the movement's beliefs mirror those of right-wing regimes.

that they control.

They envision a counter-revolution in which they would take over government bureaucracy and institutions such as universities from within, replacing entrenched "elites" with their own and acting upon their vision of the "common good."

"What is needed ... is regime change — the peaceful but vigorous overthrow of a corrupt and corrupting liberal ruling class and the creation of a postliberal order," wrote Patrick Deneen, a prominent author in the movement, in his 2023 book, "Regime Change."

Vance has signaled his alignment with some of what Catholic postliberals advocate. He's said the next time his allies control the presidency or Congress, "we really need to be really ruthless when it comes to the exercise of power" and said Republicans should seize institutions including universities "to make them work for our people." He's advocated for government

policies to spur childbearing, a notion reflected in his digs at "childless cat ladies" with allegedly no stake in America's future.

Scholars who study this movement caution that Vance does his own thinking and doesn't necessarily embrace everything proposed by postliberals — or by a subset of them known as integralists, who want a state working in tandem with the Catholic Church. The latter is not a label Vance has used for himself.

But Vance has spoken alongside prominent postliberals at public events and praised some of their work.

At an Ohio conference featuring a who's who of Catholic postliberals in 2022, he told fellow speakers he has "admired a lot of you from afar" as "some of the people who I think are most interesting about what's going on in this country."

Vance praised Deneen's book at a 2023 panel discussion with the author, a professor of political science at the University of Notre Dame.

Vance has also met privately with leading postliberals, who have posted photos of their gatherings on social media and cheered his vice presidential nomination.

Catholic journals for years have bristled with debates about postliberalism, but with little public attention — in part because its adherents are few and its views are far from mainstream.

But now, postliberals have an avid listener in Donald Trump's running mate.

"You can go from people writing on an unusual Catholic theology blog to the vice presidential candidate in the course of less than a decade," said James Patterson, professor of politics at Ave Maria University in Florida.

Vance's preoccupations show an influence from the movement, he said, citing the senator's remarks about the childless.

"Most ordinary American Catholics would not treat a childless single woman with cats with this kind of contempt," Patterson said. Even if Vance is not steeped in the philosophy, Patterson added, "he is picking up on the postliberal vibe."

Some Catholics, including conservatives, have raised alarms about the company Vance has kept, saying postliberalism has historical connections to 20th century European movements that are associated with authoritarian regimes such as Francisco Franco's in Spain.

"We're talking about people that prefer right-wing authoritarian regimes," Patterson said.

In a postliberal society, Patterson wrote in an August commentary in the online journal the Dispatch, citizens become "subjects" and personal liberties subjected to "administrative despotism."

Vance has recently tried to downplay his Catholicism's effect on policy-making.



VIVIEN CHER BENKO Hungarian prime minister's office

PRAISE is common among postliberals for Hungary's nationalist prime minister, Viktor Orban, right, shown meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping in May.

Trump's Supreme Court appointees provided the crucial majority to overturn Roe vs. Wade, which had legalized abortion nationwide. But the issue has become a political liability, with voters in several states rejecting abortion restrictions.

Vance had strongly opposed abortion, saying in the run-up to his 2022 senatorial win that "two wrongs don't make a right" when referring to exceptions for rape and incest. The campaign said in an email Wednesday that he supports "reasonable" exceptions for rape, incest, and life of the mother.

But Vance has aligned with the Republicans' first post-Roe platform in 2024, in which it backed off from its long-standing support for nationwide abortion restrictions.

He pledged he could "absolutely commit" that a Trump-Vance administration would not impose such an abortion ban.

Trump has spoken insistently about a ballot measure repealing Florida's ban on abortions after six weeks of pregnancy.

After facing backlash from antiabortion activists for seeming to indicate he would support the measure, Trump said he would oppose it.

The Catholic Church's U.S. bishops declared opposing abortion "our preeminent priority."

Vance told the New York Post in August that Catholic social teaching "certainly influences how I think about issues."

But he acknowledged "there are a lot of things the Catholic Church teaches that frankly, Americans would just never go for."

He added that in a democracy, "you have to give people their ability to have their own moral views reflected in public policy. There are a lot of non-Catholics in America and I accept that."

Julian Waller, a political science professor at George Washington University, said Vance has numerous influences outside of Catholic postliberalism — from

Trump-style populists to his mentor, tech billionaire Peter Thiel.

It remains to be seen whether Catholic postliberals would get prominent appointments in a Trump-Vance administration — or even how often they'd get their calls returned.

"Someone like JD Vance can read them, be interested in them, attend talks, know them personally, get insights from them," Waller said. "But he's not on the hook to obey them."

For an example of what an administration using state power for postliberal ends might look like, Waller pointed to Florida and Gov. Ron DeSantis' efforts to rid public higher education of diversity initiatives and critical race theory.

"If you want the model for what someone like JD Vance is really interested in, it's probably the Florida model, forcefully changing institutions, capturing institutions," Waller said.

Postliberals' ideas vary, but there are common themes, said Kevin Vallier, author of "All the Kingdoms of the World," a 2023 book on the modern postliberal and integralist movements and their centuries-old roots.

Depending on who's talking, a postliberal regime change could involve enjoining childbearing, easing or removing church-state separation, banning pornography, reimposing laws limiting business on the Sabbath, supporting private-sector unions and strengthening safety nets for the middle class.

It's common to hear postliberals praising Hungary's nationalist prime minister, Viktor Orban, particularly for his use of financial incentives for families that have more babies. Orban has championed what he calls "illiberal democracy," which includes restrictions on immigration and LGBTQ+ rights.

Vance has praised Orban for Hungary's subsidies to married couples with children and for "smart decisions" in seizing control of universities.

The senator has echoed the regime-change rhetoric

of using government, staffed by like-minded officials, for postliberal goals.

"You need to have a functional state that accomplishes some of the things that we care about. You need good people to go and work in that functional state," he said at a 2022 conference at Franciscan University of Steubenville, Ohio. It featured prominent postliberals such as Deneen and Harvard Law School professor Adrian Vermeule.

Vermeule has advocated for "common-good constitutionalism," in which the government enacts "strong rule in the interest of attaining the common good."

Deneen and Vermeule declined requests for interviews.

Vance's choice to speak at Steubenville underscored his affinity with postliberals, Vallier said.

"He could have given that talk anywhere," said Vallier, a professor at the Institute of American Constitutional Thought and Leadership at the University of Toledo in Ohio. "Why is he appearing with these intellectuals if he's not sympathetic to their ideas?"

Vance's religious journey began in a family that rarely went to church when he was young, he wrote in "Hillbilly Elegy." But he said his grandmother — the most stable adult in his turbulent household — regularly read the Bible and taught a Christianity that demanded hard work, forgiveness and hope.

For a time, the young JD embraced the strict biblical literalism of his father's Pentecostal church, crediting it as a stabilizing force, he wrote.

But in college, Vance embraced what he later viewed as an arrogant and fashionable atheism.

Eventually, he wrote in a 2020 essay for the Catholic journal the Lamp, he concluded he "needed grace" to provide him the virtues to be a good husband and father.

"I needed, in other words, to become Catholic," he wrote.

Peter Smith and Michelle R. Smith write for the Associated Press.

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THE WORLD

France's new leader inherits New Caledonia crisis

By BARBARA SURK

NICE, France — After four months of deadly unrest in New Caledonia, tensions in the French Pacific territory between the pro-independence Indigenous Kanak people and the white settler communities loyal to Paris are simmering as the vast archipelago east of Australia marks the anniversary of colonization on Tuesday.

The communities stand far apart on the territory's future after the Kanaks' revolt in May against President Emmanuel Macron's voting reform in New Caledonia. The loyalists have called on supporters in the capital, Noumea, to mark the 171st anniversary of the French takeover by honking horns during a radio broadcast of France's national anthem, "La Marseillaise."

Separately, the National Council of Chiefs of the Kanak people is meeting on the neighboring Mare Island and is expected to unilaterally declare sovereignty over the Kanak nation on their customary territories. Macron sidelined the controversial voting reform — along with the situation in New Caledonia — in June after he dissolved the Parliament and called for early legislative elections.

As mainland France was embroiled in an unprecedented political crisis after July's inconclusive vote and the Paris Olympics euphoria, it was France's police and military troops that were largely dealing with the unrest and discontent in New Caledonia. They conducted raids and arrests of authorities suspected of involvement in violence that included clashes, looting and arson. Thirteen people were killed and widespread damage was done to businesses, homes and public property amounting to more than \$2 million.

Since the start of Macron's presidency in 2017, the French Pacific territory has been central to his Indo-Pacific strategy as he aimed to boost France's influence in the region where China and the U.S. are jostling for



KANAK pro-independence protesters walk along a road littered with rubble as they block the bridge leading to the village of Houailou on the east coast of the French Pacific territory of New Caledonia in July.

power. New Caledonia is a major global producer of nickel, a crucial raw material that is needed to make electric vehicle batteries, solar panels, steel and other everyday items.

New Caledonia became French in 1853 under Emperor Napoleon III, Napoleon's nephew and heir. It became an overseas territory after World War II, with French citizenship granted to all Kanaks in 1957.

Tensions have simmered for decades between Indigenous Kanaks, who have long sought to break free from France after suffering from strict segregation policies and widespread discrimination, and colonizers' descendants and other white settlers who want it to remain part of France. People of European descent in New Caledonia distinguish between descendants of colonizers and descendants of the many prisoners sent to the territory by force. During the 1980s, tensions between the communities morphed into violence that had

brought the archipelago to the brink of a civil war.

A peace deal between rival factions was reached in 1988. A decade later, France vowed to give broad autonomy to New Caledonia and the Kanak people and hold up to three referendums, which could pave the way to self-determination as part of the agreement known as the Noumea Accord.

The three referendums were organized between 2018 to 2021 and a majority of voters chose to remain part of France instead of backing independence. The pro-independence Kanak people rejected the last referendum's results in 2021, which they boycotted because it was held at the height of the pandemic.

Tensions were rising and deepened early this year when Macron rushed through Parliament a bill aimed at amending France's Constitution and changing voting lists in New Caledonia. It granted voting rights in local elections to residents who have settled there in the

last decade, leaving the Indigenous people in fear of further erasure of their identity.

The adoption of the controversial bill by both houses of the French Parliament in May led to mass demonstrations that turned violent, prompting Macron to declare a state of emergency and fly thousands of police and army reinforcements to the faraway territory. Thirteen people, mostly Kanaks, and two police officers, have been killed and nearly 3,000 people have been arrested since New Caledonia's police launched an investigation just days after the protests in May turned violent.

Among those detained in police raids were 11 Kanak activists with the pro-independence group known as the Field Action Coordination Unit that has organized protests against French rule since April. Seven of the detained activists, including Christian Tein, a Kanak leader, were flown 10,500 miles from home to seven prisons in mainland France

for pretrial detention.

The activists' transfer in June triggered renewed rioting across the archipelago. It widened the gap between the communities and quashed the remaining bit of trust in political actors' willingness to overcome enormous differences over New Caledonia's future and its economic disparities with "concrete and serious negotiations" that Macron had demanded during his whirlwind trip to Noumea in May.

Tein's group accused French authorities of "colonial practices" and demanded the activists' immediate release and return to their homeland. They vowed that "the Kanak people will never give up on their desire for independence with peaceful means." France's then-interior minister, Gerald Darmanin, said the Field Action Coordination Unit was "a mafia-style organization" that was made up of "delinquents and criminals" who operate under the disguise of a pro-independence movement. His comments

caused fury among Kanak leaders with Grand Chief Hippolyte Sinewami-Htamumu expressing full support for the pro-independence group.

After weeks of wrestling with political blocs in the fractured Parliament, new French Prime Minister Michel Barnier formed a new government Saturday. France's ballooning debt and a new budget will top Barnier's agenda. But many have called on the veteran politician and former EU Brexit negotiator to change France's approach to New Caledonia and tackle its security and economic crisis with policies that would deliver on the Noumea Accord promise: a "common destiny" and, eventually, "complete emancipation."

Barnier is expected to outline his approach in his inaugural policy speech in the National Assembly, France's influential lower house of Parliament, on Oct. 1. His first decision on New Caledonia is likely to be whether to hold or postpone provincial elections scheduled for Dec. 15.

Surk writes for the Associated Press.

30 bodies found on boat off Senegal

ASSOCIATED PRESS

DAKAR, Senegal — At least 30 bodies were found on a boat drifting off the coast of Senegal's capital, the military said Monday, as the number of migrants leaving West Africa increases.

The navy was informed of the vessel's presence on Sunday evening and sent out a boat patrol to the area, 38 nautical miles from Dakar, said Ibrahima Sow, a spokesperson for Senegal's military, in a statement.

"So far, 30 bodies have been counted," Sow said.

The advanced state of decomposition of the bodies is making the identification process very difficult, the military said, adding that investigations will provide more information on the death toll and the boat's origin.

A boat carrying 89 people on board capsized off the coast of Senegal this month. At least 37 people died, according to Senegalese authorities.

Many of the migrants leaving West Africa through Senegal flee conflict, poverty and a lack of jobs. Most head to the Canary Islands, a Spanish archipelago off the coast of West Africa, which is used as a stepping stone to continental Europe.

Since the beginning of the year, more than 22,300 people have landed on the Canary Islands, 126% more than the same period last year, according to statistics released by Spain's Interior Ministry.

Last month, the Senegalese army said it had arrested 453 migrants and "members of smuggling networks" as part of a 12-day operation patrolling the coastline. More than half of those arrested were Senegalese nationals, the army said.

In July, a boat carrying 300 migrants, mostly from Gambia and Senegal, capsized off Mauritania. More than a dozen died and at least 150 others went missing.

The Atlantic route from West Africa to the Canary Islands is one of the deadliest in the world. Although there is no accurate death toll because of the lack of information on departures from West Africa, the Spanish migrant rights group Walking Borders estimates the victims number in the thousands this year alone.

Migrant vessels that get lost or run into problems often vanish in the Atlantic, with some drifting across the ocean for months until they are found in the Caribbean and Latin America carrying only human remains.

U.N. OKs pact laying out a vision for future

By EDITH M. LEDERER

UNITED NATIONS — The U.N. General Assembly adopted a "Pact for the Future" to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Now comes the hard part: uniting the world's divided nations to move quickly to implement the agreement's 56 actions.

As Czech President Petr Pavel put it Monday at the summit meeting surrounding the pact: "Our work begins at home."

The document approved by the 193-member world body is meant to link nations in tackling challenges including climate change, artificial intelligence, escalating conflicts and increasing inequality and poverty — and improving the lives of the world's more than 8 billion people.

The 42-page pact was adopted at Sunday's opening of a two-day "Summit of the Future," which continued Monday as leaders of many countries gave their views on the challenges facing the world.

And with them, the leaders gave something of a preview of themes to expect at the assembly's big annual meeting, which gets into full gear Tuesday.

In remarks Monday, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi called for technology regulation that's global but "ensures that national sovereignty and integrity are upheld." Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi reiterated his government's frequent complaints about nations dividing into geopolitical blocs, and about countries single-handedly imposing sanctions.

Ecuadorian President Daniel Noboa exhorted the world to lower youth unemployment. Slovakian President Peter Pellegrini worried about the spread of disinformation, and Angolan President João Lourenco about inequality.

Leaders slated to speak



AT THE "Summit of the Future," United Nations members on Sunday adopted a pact to jointly tackle challenges including climate change, AI, conflict and poverty.

later included Iran's Masoud Pezeshkian, Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelensky, U.S. Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken and Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Vershinin.

Russia tried to change the accord

Whether the pact would be adopted was still a question when the assembly meeting began Sunday. In fact, there was so much suspense that U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres had three prepared speeches, one for approval, one for rejection, and one if things were unclear. U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric said.

Russia's Vershinin proposed an amendment that would have significantly watered down the agreement. "No one is happy with this pact," he said.

It turned out he was wrong. Nearly 145 countries, including Africa's 54 nations, voted to not take action on Russia's amendment. Only six countries

supported Russia — Iran, Belarus, North Korea, Nicaragua, Sudan and Syria. Fifteen countries abstained.

Assembly President Philimon Yang then put the pact to a vote and banged his gavel, signifying the consensus of all U.N. member nations that was required for approval — to vigorous applause.

Russia has made significant inroads in Africa, including in Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger and the Central African Republic. The rejection of Russia's amendments by African countries and Mexico, a major Latin American power, was seen as a blow to Moscow by some diplomats and observers.

Secretary-general issues a challenge

Guterres, clearly relieved at the outcome, then issued a challenge to the leaders: Prioritize dialogue and negotiations. End "wars tearing our world apart" in the Middle East, Ukraine and Sudan. Reform the powerful U.N.

Security Council. Accelerate reforms of the international financial system. Ramp up a transition from fossil fuels. Listen to young people and include them in decision-making.

For all the endorsements of the agreement, some speakers noted shortcomings.

The Marshall Islands' president, Hilda Heine, said it's "hard not to be frustrated over apparent political limitations" in the pact.

"There is an incredible and persistent gap between ambitious solutions and international finance at hand," she said.

Speaking for the U.N.'s main bloc of developing countries — the Group of 77, which now has 134 members, including China — Ugandan Prime Minister Robinah Nabbanja regretted that the pact doesn't recognize actions that developed countries should take to close the widening gaps between them and developing countries.

In a rare move at a high-level U.N. meeting where

leaders often exceed the time limit, speeches were muted after five minutes.

A long list of things to tackle

The Pact for the Future says world leaders are gathering "at a time of profound global transformation," and it warns of "rising catastrophic and existential risks" that could tip people everywhere "into a future of persistent crisis and breakdown."

Guterres singled out a number of key provisions in the pact and its two accompanying annexes, a Global Digital Compact and Declaration on Future Generations.

The pact commits world leaders to reform the 15-member Security Council, to make it more reflective of today's world and "redress the historical injustice against Africa," which has no permanent seat, and to address the underrepresentation of the Asia-Pacific region and Latin America.

It also "represents the first agreed multilateral support for nuclear disarmament in more than a decade," Guterres said, and it commits "to steps to prevent an arms race in outer space and to govern the use of lethal autonomous weapons."

The Global Digital Compact "includes the first truly universal agreement on the international governance of artificial intelligence," the U.N. chief said.

As for human rights, Guterres said, "In the face of a surge in misogyny and a rollback of women's reproductive rights, governments have explicitly committed to removing the legal, social and economic barriers that prevent women and girls from fulfilling their potential in every sphere."

Lederer writes for the Associated Press. The AP's Jennifer Peltz contributed to this report.

Israeli army intensifies airstrikes on Lebanon

[Mideast, from A1] was a senior military commander. Israeli media identified the target as Ali Karaki, head of Hezbollah's southern forces. Hezbollah officials said he survived.

Monday's barrage was a sharp escalation in the year-long fight between Israel and Hezbollah, and the deadliest day for the Lebanese since the 2006 war, when Hezbollah and Israel last faced off in a major conflict.

It comes as Israeli leaders announced a "new stage" in their fight against Hezbollah, the Iran-backed Lebanese Shiite paramilitary faction and political party. Israel says its aim is to push Hezbollah forces away from the border to allow the return of Israeli residents to the country's north.

The Biden administration has for months urged Israel, Hezbollah and other parties to avoid a wider conflict in the region, where fighting between Israel and Hamas militants has already convulsed the Gaza Strip. War with Hezbollah could be even more devastating because the Lebanese group is far better armed than Hamas.

The Pentagon said Monday that it is sending additional troops to the Middle East in response to the recent violence.

Ahead of the Israeli strikes, residents across Lebanon reported receiving phone calls on landlines and SMS messages with warnings from the Israeli military to stay away from buildings or areas where Hezbollah was hiding or deploying weapons. Those who received phone calls in Beirut said they heard a pre-recorded message with someone speaking with an Egyptian accent. Ogero, the country's state-owned landline operator, said its systems detected some 80,000 attempted calls that were suspected to be Israeli.

Others reported the same message broadcast on Lebanese radio.

One recipient of a phone warning was the office of Lebanese Information Minister Ziad Makari, who dismissed the warnings as part of Israel's "psychological war."

The Lebanese Health Ministry suspended all non-urgent surgeries so as to make space for treatment of the wounded. Abbas Halabi, Lebanon's caretaker education minister, ordered all schools closed for Monday

and Tuesday in southern Lebanon, the Bekaa Valley and the southern suburbs of Beirut, where Hezbollah has a dominant presence. Later, Health Minister Firas Abiad issued a statement ordering all nurseries in Lebanon to close Tuesday.

Meanwhile, an exodus began from the country's south, with motorists reporting extensive traffic jams on the main coastal highway toward Beirut. Social media were deluged with people trying to find or rent accommodation in Lebanon's north.

Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said in a statement issued by his office that Monday's campaign was "crushing what was built by Hezbollah for 20 years," adding that its leader, Hassan Nasrallah, "remains alone at the helm" after having lost "entire units" of the group's elite special forces.

Speaking in a video address Monday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed to press ahead unless Hezbollah backs down.

"I would like to clarify Israel's policy to whoever does not yet understand: We are not waiting for the threat, we are preempting it — everywhere, in every sector, constantly," he said. "We are eliminating senior figures, terrorists and missiles — and our arm is still extended. Whoever tries to harm us, we will harm them all the more forcefully."

In another later statement directed to "the people of Lebanon," he accused Hezbollah of using them as "human shields."

"It placed rockets in your living rooms and missiles in your garage," Netanyahu said. "To defend our people against Hezbollah strikes, we must take out those weapons."

U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd J. Austin III conferred with his Israeli counterpart late Sunday for the second time in less than a week to offer support for Israel's defense but also urge a diplomatic solution to the conflict.

"The secretary expressed his support for Israel's right to defend itself as Hezbollah extends its attacks deeper into Israel, and stressed the importance of finding a path to a diplomatic solution that will allow residents on both sides of the border to return to their homes as quickly and safely as possible," Pentagon spokesman Maj. Gen.

Pat Ryder said in a statement Monday.

The air campaign comes after a bruising week for Hezbollah. In a two-day period beginning Sept. 17, the group suffered a double wave of attacks that saw thousands of pagers and walkie-talkies explode, leaving 39 dead and thousands of Hezbollah fighters, officials and administrators maimed and incapacitated.

The attacks were widely attributed to Israel, which did not claim responsibility.

On Friday an Israeli airstrike hit a residential compound in Beirut's southern suburbs, killing a top Hezbollah commander and 15 of its special forces leadership, along with more than double that number in civilians. Nine people remain missing, according to Lebanon's civil defense.

Israel is gambling that the escalation will force Hezbollah to suspend its rocket campaign, which the group started Oct. 8, one day after Hamas' assault on southern Israel and the fierce Israeli bombardment on Gaza that followed. Hezbollah said it attacked Israel in solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza.

Since then, Israel and Hezbollah have engaged in a near-daily exchange of fire across the Lebanese-Israeli border. The fighting has displaced around 110,000 people in Lebanon, and about 60,000 in northern Israel, leaving both sides of the border depopulated.

Shortly before 3 p.m., the Israeli military's Arabic-language spokesman Avichay Adrae posted a message on the social platform X informing residents in the Bekaa Valley who live "inside or near a house containing Hezbollah weaponry" that they had two hours to move 1,000 yards outside their village or head to a "central school close to you," and not return until further notice.

Hezbollah officials say they have no intention of stopping until a cease-fire is forged in Gaza. On Sunday, deputy leader Naim Qassem said that the group was now in an "open-ended battle of reckoning" with Israel and that the group was ready for "all military possibilities."

"The support front will continue no matter how long it takes until the war on Gaza stops," Qassem said.

Times staff writer Tracy Wilkinson in Washington contributed to this report.

U.S. is sending 'small number' of additional troops to Mideast

State Department warns Americans to leave Lebanon as risks in the region grow.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — The U.S. is sending "a small number" of additional troops to the Middle East in response to a sharp spike in violence between Israel and Hezbollah forces in Lebanon that has raised the risk of a greater regional war, the Pentagon said Monday.

Pentagon Press Secretary Maj. Gen. Pat Ryder would provide no details on the number of many additional forces or what they would be tasked to do. The U.S. has about 40,000 troops in the region.

On Monday, the aircraft carrier USS Harry S. Truman, two Navy destroyers and a cruiser set sail from Norfolk, Va., headed to the 6th Fleet area in Europe on a regularly scheduled deployment.

The ships' departure opens up the possibility that the U.S. could keep both the Truman and the aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln, which is in the Arabian Gulf, in the region in case more violence breaks out.

"In light of increased tension in the Middle East and out of an abundance of caution, we are sending a small number of additional U.S. military personnel forward to augment our forces that are already in the region," Ryder said. "But for opera-

tional security reasons, I'm not going to comment on or provide specifics."

The new deployments come after significant strikes by Israeli forces against targets inside Lebanon that have killed hundreds and as Israel is preparing to conduct further operations.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Monday warned Lebanese civilians in a video message to evacuate their homes ahead of a widening air campaign. He spoke as Israeli warplanes continued to strike alleged Hezbollah targets in southern and eastern Lebanon.

U.S. officials said a decision is expected soon, possibly this week, on whether the Lincoln will stay in the Middle East or continue on to the Asia-Pacific region.

Having two carrier strike groups in the Middle East at the same time has been relatively rare in recent years. But as violence has spiked between Israel and Hamas and Hezbollah, both Iranian-backed, the Biden administration has ordered the Navy to have the carriers and their warships overlap for several weeks on a couple of occasions.

It will take the Truman about two weeks to cross the Atlantic Ocean and get into the Mediterranean Sea. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss troop movements.

The State Department is warning Americans to leave Lebanon as the risk of a regional war increases.

"Due to the unpre-

dictable nature of ongoing conflict between Hezbollah and Israel and recent explosions throughout Lebanon, including Beirut, the U.S. Embassy urges U.S. citizens to depart Lebanon while commercial options still remain available," the State Department cautioned Saturday. Ryder would not say if those additional forces might support the evacuation of those citizens if needed.

There is already a Marine amphibious ready group in the eastern Mediterranean Sea, with the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit aboard, which is expected to be able to assist in an evacuation if needed.

Defense Secretary Lloyd J. Austin III held back-to-back calls with Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant over the weekend as he pressed for a cease-fire and a reduction of tensions in the region, Ryder said.

"Given the tensions, given the escalation, as I highlighted, there is the potential for a wider regional conflict. I don't think we're there yet, but it's a dangerous situation," Ryder said.

The U.S. presence in the Middle East is designed both to help defend Israel and protect U.S. and allied personnel and assets.

Navy warships are scattered across the region, from the eastern Mediterranean Sea to the Gulf of Oman, and both Air Force and Navy fighter jets are strategically based at several locations to be better prepared to respond to any attacks.

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THE NATION

Shooter who killed 10 guilty of murder

Colorado jury rejects insanity defense by mentally ill man, who faces life in prison.

BY COLLEEN SLEVIN

BOULDER, Colo. — A mentally ill man who killed 10 people at a Colorado supermarket in 2021 was convicted Monday of murder and faces life in prison.

Defense attorneys did not dispute that Ahmad Alissa fatally shot 10 people, including a police officer, in the college town of Boulder. But he pleaded not guilty by reason of insanity, with the defense arguing Alissa — who has schizophrenia — couldn't tell right from wrong at the time of the attack.

In addition to 10 counts of first-degree murder, the jury found Alissa guilty on 38 charges of attempted murder, one count of assault and six counts of possessing illegal, large-capacity magazines.

First-degree murder carries a mandatory life sentence in Colorado. Sentencing in the case was due to occur later Monday, during which victims and family were expected to address the court.

Alissa did not visibly react as the judge began reciting the guilty verdicts against him. He appeared to trade notes with members of the defense team, speaking quietly at times with one of his attorneys.

Judge Ingrid Bakke had warned against any outbursts. There were some tears and restrained crying on the victims' side of the courtroom as the murder convictions were read.

The courtroom was packed largely with victims' families and police officers, including those who were shot at by Alissa. Several members of Alissa's family sat just behind him.

Alissa started shooting



Colorado Judicial Branch
AHMAD ALISSA, right, listens to the verdict Monday in his trial for the 2021 supermarket shooting.

immediately after getting out of his car in a King Soopers store parking lot in March 2021. He killed most of the victims in just over a minute and surrendered after an officer shot him in the leg.

Prosecutors had to prove Alissa was sane. They argued he didn't fire randomly and showed an ability to make decisions by pursuing people who were running and trying to hide from him. He twice passed by a 91-year-old man who continued to shop, unaware of the shooting.

Alissa came armed with steel-piercing bullets and illegal magazines that can hold 30 rounds of ammunition, which prosecutors said showed he took deliberate steps to make the attack as deadly as possible.

Several members of Alissa's family, who immigrated to the United States from Syria, testified that he had become withdrawn and spoke less a few years before the shooting. He later began acting paranoid and showed signs of hearing voices, they said, and his condition worsened after he got COVID-19 in late 2020.

Alissa was diagnosed

with schizophrenia after the attack, and experts said the behaviors described by relatives are consistent with the onset of the disease.

State forensic psychologists who evaluated Alissa concluded he was sane during the shooting. The defense did not have to provide any evidence in the case and did not present any experts to say that Alissa was insane.

Despite the fact that he said he heard voices, the state psychologists said, Alissa did not experience delusions. They said his fear that he could be jailed or killed by police revealed Alissa knew his actions were wrong.

Alissa repeatedly told the psychologists that he heard voices, including "killing voices" right before the shooting. But Alissa failed during about six hours of interviews to provide more details about the voices or whether they were saying anything specific, forensic psychologist B. Thomas Gray testified.

The defense pointed out that Gray and his partner, Loandra Torres, did not have full confidence in their sanity finding, largely be-

cause Alissa did not provide more information about his experiences, even though that could have helped his case. Gray and Torres also said that the voices played a role in the attack and that they didn't believe it would have happened if Alissa were not mentally ill.

Mental illness is not the same thing as insanity. Colorado law defines insanity as having a mental disease so severe that it's impossible for a person to tell right from wrong.

Family members of the victims attended the two-week trial and watched graphic surveillance and police body camera video. Survivors testified about how they fled and in some cases helped others to safety.

Prosecutors did not offer any motive for the shooting. Alissa initially searched online for public places to attack in Boulder, including bars and restaurants, then a day before the shooting focused his research on large stores.

On the day of the attack, he drove from his home in the Denver suburb of Arvada and pulled into the first supermarket in Boulder that he encountered. He shot three victims in the parking lot before entering the store.

An emergency room doctor who was in the store said she crawled onto a shelf and hid among bags of potato chips. A pharmacist who took cover testified that she heard Alissa say, "This is fun," at least three times as he went through the store firing his semiautomatic pistol that resembled an AR-15 rifle.

Alissa's mother told the court that she thought her son was "sick." His father testified that he thought Alissa was possessed by a jinn, or evil spirit, but did not seek any treatment for his son because it would have been shameful for the family.

Slevin writes for the Associated Press.

Suspect left note declaring intent to kill Trump

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — The man accused in the apparent assassination attempt of Donald Trump at a golf course in Florida left behind a note saying that he intended to kill the former president and kept in his car a handwritten list of dates and venues where Trump was to appear, the Justice Department said Monday.

Trump complained that the current holding charges against the man were too light, but prosecutors indicated much more serious charges were coming.

The new allegations about the note were included in a detention memo filed ahead of a hearing Monday at which federal prosecutors argued that Ryan Wesley Routh should remain locked up as a flight risk and a threat to public safety. U.S. Magistrate Ryon McCabe agreed, saying the "weight of the evidence against the defendant is strong" and ordered him to stay behind bars.

The latest details were meant to bolster the Justice Department's contention that the 58-year-old suspect had engaged in a premeditated plan to kill Trump, a plot officials say was thwarted by a Secret Service agent who spotted a rifle poking out of shrubbery on the West Palm Beach golf course where Trump was playing and then opened fire in Routh's direction.

The note describing Routh's plans was placed in a box that he dropped off months earlier at the home of an unidentified person who did not open it until after his Sept. 15 arrest, prosecutors said.

The box also contained ammunition, a metal pipe,

building materials, tools, phones and letters.

One note Routh left, addressed "Dear World," appears to have been premised on the idea that the assassination attempt would be unsuccessful.

"This was an assassination attempt on Donald Trump but I failed you. I tried my best and gave it all the gumption I could muster. It is up to you now to finish the job; and I will offer \$150,000 to whomever can complete the job," the note said, according to prosecutors.

The letter offers "substantial evidence of his intent," Assistant U.S. Atty. Mark Dispoto said in court Monday. "That's the message he wanted to send to the world in advance of this incident," he said.

In a statement, Trump accused the Justice Department of "mishandling and downplaying" the apparent assassination attempt by bringing charges that were a "slap on the wrist."

Routh is charged with illegally possessing his gun despite multiple felony convictions, including two charges of possessing stolen goods in 2002 in North Carolina, and possessing a firearm with an obliterated serial number.

But Dispoto said in court Monday that prosecutors would pursue additional charges before a grand jury accusing him of having tried to "assassinate a major political candidate" — charges that would warrant life in prison in the event of a conviction.

It is common for prosecutors to file more easily provable charges as an immediate placeholder before adding more significant allegations as the case proceeds.

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Los Angeles Times

BUSINESS

How ESPN's Van Pelt keeps 'SportsCenter' fresh

By STEPHEN BATTAGLIO

As a younger generation of sports fans increasingly turned to YouTube and other online sources for game highlights, ESPN's "SportsCenter" appeared to be on borrowed time in 2015.

It's why the Walt Disney Co. unit turned to Scott Van Pelt to put a new spin on the late-night edition of its flagship program.

The veteran ESPN radio host and golf reporter provided a dry wit and a conversational vibe that in short order soon attracted more younger viewers than the traditional desk and sofa shows on the broadcast networks.

The competitive landscape has become only more challenging as pay-TV cord-cutting and streaming take their toll on legacy media. But Van Pelt, who entered his 10th season this month, is still thriving as ESPN has turned his "SportsCenter" into a postgame show for its biggest events, including "Monday Night Football."

Van Pelt often gets tuned in the old-fashioned way, with massive audience lead-ins from the live events that have become even more vital to ESPN as the network competes with streamers and prepares for a post-cable world where it will be available as a direct-to-consumer offering.

Van Pelt's "SportsCenter" averaged 6.3 million viewers on April 5 when it followed the NCAA Women's Basketball Final Four game between University of Connecticut and Iowa, the most-viewed episode in the show's history according to Nielsen data.

The program scored 3.4 million viewers when it aired after the College Football Playoff championship game on Jan. 8. It hit 2.2 million viewers or more three times following NFL games last season.

The stars show up as a result. Van Pelt did his show from the U.S. Open Tennis Championship in Queens,



SCOTT CLARKE ESPN Images

"SPORTSCENTER" HOST Scott Van Pelt, left, and commentator "Stanford Steve" Coughlin. Van Pelt, who entered his 10th season on the show this month, is still thriving even in a more competitive landscape.

N.Y., this year for the first time. After one of his wins, Novak Djokovic showed at the "SportsCenter" desk, grinning like a superfan.

The show also remains appointment viewing for its signature segment, "Bad Beats," a "Scared Straight" for gamblers where Van Pelt and sidekick Stanford Steve Coughlin riff on clips showing supposedly sure bets that go awry.

At 58, he is the father of three young children, which keeps him connected to the new ways of video consumption that are a galaxy away from his analog upbringing.

"I was the remote," Van Pelt told The Times during a recent conversation at ESPN headquarters in Bristol, Conn. "Hey Buzz, turn it to Channel 4" — in the days of the big-ass Zenith that weighed 7 tons.

While ESPN looks to evolve, Van Pelt is along for the ride but isn't about to change his act.

You still show up on televi-

sion like you're a guest in someone's home. A suit, a tie, a pocket square. When you look at the popularity of Pat McAfee's ESPN show, which looks like they're in a rec room but attracts major guests, do you feel any pressure to do your show differently to attract a younger demographic?

I think guests recognize that these are immensely popular places to go. I think Pat and his crew create a comfortable space for conversation. It's different than anywhere else by design. My grandpa wore pocket squares. This is my ode to him. If I'm doing a television show, this is how I will present myself because that's just how I always have. I'm in my late 50s. If I start showing up in a tank top or a hoodie and whatever else, it would be like that Steve Buscemi meme where he says, "Hey, fellow kids."

I believe we've successfully created a very comfortable place for the host, for the audience and I believe

for the coaches and players that join us. They know what our show is. They understand it's morphed largely into a postgame show for the biggest events we have and what I think what we find is that you're getting people to stick around in those big-event moments and because they understand what they're going to get.

Athletes are taking control of their content. They are doing their own podcasts and TikTok videos. Does that pose any kind of challenge to you when they come on your show and you're trying to get good stuff out of them in interviews?

I have had the benefit of having done this so long. We had Caitlin Clark on this year. I've never met Caitlin Clark. But she was very gracious, and as we were waiting to come on, she's telling me, "I've watched you forever. It's so cool to be on." And you realize that, "Jesus,

I'm the old guy." I've done this her whole life. You might be talking to someone for the first time, but they're not meeting a stranger.

In no way do I see myself as like some Johnny Carson figure. I'm exactly the same on the air as I am talking to you right now. So I think what happens is, I'm pretty accessible to the person. I'm not trying to get anything out of you other than the answers to the questions I have. And because I'm asking you typically with your jersey still on and sweat still on your shoulders, I get that raw reaction to, "You just made it to another Final Four," and then probed the things that matter in that space. If I can't get good content, then that's my fault.

When you started, there was not a huge amount of sports gambling talk on TV. Now with apps — including ESPN Bet — we've all become degenerates.

We're in the bookmaking

business. Who would have dreamt?

You're in the promotions for ESPN Bet. Do you use the app?

I don't. I've never been an app-based gambler. I was the guy that had a guy.

Are you still using a bookie?

No, that would be illegal, wouldn't it? I'd never doing anything illegal. God forbid. Who would do that?

Was it a tough sell to get that segment on at the time?

When I talked to [former ESPN programming executive] John Wildhack before our show started and I told him I'm going to do a segment called "Bad Beats," he didn't blink. I give him a ton of credit because it wasn't legal in the way that it is now. I didn't know that it would become the most popular thing that we do on our show.

"Bad Beats" is the thing people always bring up, and I'll ask, "Do you gamble?" And oftentimes they'll say, "No, I just love seeing like how these things could possibly go wrong." It doesn't seem like it could really happen like this. I tell them it happens every day.

And it's funny.

There's something about shared misery. We laugh to keep from crying. In my office in Washington, D.C., I have a bet slip for the all-timer of all-timers: Virginia and Abilene Christian. Abilene Christian was getting 38½ points and they lost on the last play of the [college football] game. It was the most preposterous thing you've ever seen, and Stanford Steve says on the show, "Who bet on this game?" A man from Kentucky mailed me his bet slip. It's the reminder some poor schmuck had Abilene Christian, and so we owe it to that man to properly document what happened and try our best to laugh in a way that's comforting.

MARKET ROUNDUP

Stocks edge up to more records on heels of rate cut

ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — U.S. stock indexes reached new heights Monday after drifting higher in a quiet day of trading.

The Standard & Poor's 500 rose 16.02 points, or 0.3%, to 5,718.57 and edged past its record set Thursday. The Dow Jones industrial average added 61.29 points, or 0.1%, to its own all-time high set Friday and closed at 42,124.65. The Nasdaq composite gained 25.95 points, or 0.1%, to 17,974.27.

Tesla led the way with a gain of 4.9% and has clawed back all its losses from earlier in the year. It was down as much as 42% at one point in April, when it was cutting prices on its cars to boost flaccid sales.

That helped offset a 10.3% tumble for Trump Media & Technology Group, which fell to its lowest price since taking its place on the Nasdaq stock market in March. The company behind former President Trump's Truth Social network has dropped six straight days amid speculation about when Trump and other company insiders may sell their shares now that they're no longer bound by a "lockup" agreement. Trump has said he doesn't plan to sell.

Financial markets have broadly been romping higher after the Federal Reserve last week cut its main

interest rate for the first time in more than four years by an unusually large amount. The hope is that as it continues to cut interest rates, the boost given to the U.S. economy through lower rates for car loans, mortgages and other borrowing will help it avoid a recession.

A report on Monday morning suggested U.S. business activity is not growing as quickly as economists expected, mostly because of a continued downturn in manufacturing. The preliminary report from S&P Global said U.S. manufacturing shrank more severely in September than in August and hit a 15-month low. It's been one of the parts of the economy hurt most by high interest rates.

The overall figures suggest a U.S. economy that's still growing at a healthy rate, said Chris Williamson, chief business economist at S&P Global Market Intelligence. "But there are some warning lights flashing, notably in terms of the dependence on the service sector for growth, as manufacturing remained in decline, and the worrying drop in business confidence."

In the bond market, the yield on the 10-year Treasury held steady at 3.74%, where it was late Friday. The yield on the two-year Treasury, which moves more with expectations for Fed action, edged down to 3.58% from 3.60% late Friday.

Major stock indexes

Index	Close	Daily change	Daily % change	YTD % change
Dow industrials	42,124.65	+61.29	+0.15	+11.77
S&P 500	5,718.57	+16.02	+0.28	+19.89
Nasdaq composite	17,974.27	+25.95	+0.14	+19.74
S&P 400	3,119.45	+16.13	+0.52	+12.15
Russell 2000	2,220.28	-7.61	-0.34	+9.53
EuroStoxx 50	4,885.57	+14.03	+0.29	+8.05
Nikkei (Japan)	37,723.91	+568.58	+1.53	+12.73
Hang Seng (Hong Kong)	18,247.11	-11.46	-0.06	+7.04

Associated Press

A big push to unionize pharmacy workers

By SUHAUNA HUSSAIN

Dozens of employees at a CVS specialty pharmacy in Redlands filed a petition with the National Labor Relations Board seeking to hold a union election.

The decision last week to organize by 135 workers at the pharmacy that provides medications to patients with complex and chronic conditions is the largest such move in a broader campaign to unionize pharmacy workers across the U.S. by the Pharmacy Guild, a labor group that was launched in March. The Redlands CVS is also the first workplace in California to join the campaign.

In a statement, the guild said employees at the Redlands pharmacy, who often handle medications with strict temperature controls and short shelf lives, are being pressured to cut corners in ways that compromise patient care. Their patients rely on medications for serious conditions, including cancer and autoimmune diseases, the union said.

"This is incredibly specialized work that takes extreme care to fill for our patients. We are unionizing to make sure safety is always put above profits," said Tarun Dhiman, a pharmacist who has worked at the pharmacy for more than 10 years, according to a news release by the Pharmacy Guild. "We see this as an opportunity to stand up for our patients and advocate for them."

A national effort that began last year to unionize in the face of what pharmacists have described as worsening conditions inside CVS and other chains including Walgreens and Rite Aid picked up speed in March, when workers at a CVS Omnicare pharmacy in Las Vegas filed a petition with the labor board to hold an election to join the guild. Since then, a total of seven pharmacies scattered across states including Nevada, Washington and Rhode Island have



MARCIO JOSE SANCHEZ Associated Press

THE DECISION to organize by 135 workers at a Redlands CVS is the largest such move to unionize U.S. workers by the Pharmacy Guild. Above, a Pasadena store.

voted to join the union.

CVS spokesperson Amy Thibault said the company respects Redlands facility employees' right to unionize but prefers to resolve issues with employees without the presence of a union.

"We'll continue to work closely and collaboratively with all our colleagues to work through any concerns they have," Thibault said in an emailed statement.

For years, retail pharmacists working for large chains have complained about insufficient staffing levels that they say force a dwindling number of workers to handle an increasing number of prescriptions, vaccinations and other tasks.

The high-pressure workloads intensified during the pandemic, when pharmacists also were required to administer COVID-19 tests and vaccinations, said Lannie Duong, co-founder of the Pharmacy Guild. Pharmacy workers in Kansas and Missouri staged walkouts last year to bring attention to the issue.

"Pharmacy technicians are going home and wondering if they made a mistake that could cost a patient

their life," Duong said. Unmanageable workloads "is a nationwide issue. It's not specific to just community pharmacy or specialty pharmacies. It is across the board, the entire industry. Our highest concern is patient safety."

The Pharmacy Guild is an offshoot of the International Assn. of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, which represents tens of thousands of healthcare workers.

A Times investigation last year highlighted the issue of overworked pharmacists, finding that most mistakes were made at national chains where a pharmacist may fill hundreds of prescriptions during a shift, while juggling other tasks such as calling doctors' offices to confirm prescriptions. California pharmacies make an estimated 5 million errors every year, according to the state's Board of Pharmacy.

CVS workers in Southern California who are represented by a local chapter of the United Food and Commercial Workers union also are ramping up their activity this week with a call for a boycott of CVS pharmacies

in Long Beach and Anaheim. The union, which planned to hold a rally in Long Beach on Monday, said CVS pharmacy employees have been at the bargaining table for three months with little movement on issues of livable wages and better benefits.

Healthcare benefits have been a major sticking point with the union, which claims the insurance CVS offers is inadequate and unaffordable for most employees.

"CVS says it's a healthcare company, one with a 'heart,' but we don't see them prioritizing health or heart anywhere in how CVS treats its workers, customers and patients," Andrea Zinder, president of UFCW Local 324, said in a news release from the union last month.

Thibault, the CVS spokesperson, said the company has met with the union five times to hash out new contracts and has made progress toward tentative agreements.

She said the company is "confident we can reach an agreement that supports workplace safety, appropriate staffing and competitive wages and benefits."

Aid for undocumented immigrants vetoed

[Veto, from A1]
documented people.
“Given the gravity of the potential consequences of this bill, which include potential criminal and civil liability for state employees, it is critical that the courts address the legality of such a policy and the novel legal theory behind this legislation before proceeding,” he said in his veto message.

Newsom said UC and others could seek clarity first by asking a federal judge to rule on the bill’s legality before moving to hire undocumented students.

Jeffrey Umaña Muñoz, a Cal State L.A. graduate student, said undocumented students were disheartened by the veto but would continue to fight for the opportunity to work as a movement that is “unashamed, unafraid and unstoppable.”

“We are ashamed and appalled that the Governor... has decided to cave to the anti-immigrant vitriol of Trump and the Republicans and deny us the equitable opportunities we deserve,” he said in a statement on behalf of all California undocumented students.

Both UC and CSU had expressed concerns about the bill, saying it could cause them to run afoul of a federal law that bars employers from hiring undocumented people — putting at risk their students, their employees who would hire them and billions of dollars in federal funding.

UC receives more than \$12 billion in annual federal funding for research, student financial aid and healthcare. The system is the largest recipient of federally sponsored research — \$3.8 billion last year — among U.S. higher education institutions.

The bill had drawn national attention over the humanitarian stakes, legal risks and potentially explosive politics. Illegal immigration is a top issue in the 2024 election amid a tight presidential contest between Vice President Kamala Harris and former President Trump.

Trump’s running mate, Sen. JD Vance of Ohio, co-sponsored a bill in March



JAY L. CLENDENIN Los Angeles Times

UNDOCUMENTED students and their supporters rally outside a meeting of the Board of Regents at UCLA in May 2023. An estimated 55,000 undocumented students attend California public colleges and universities.

cutting off federal funding to universities that hire undocumented people — and he specifically criticized UC as a “left wing” institution bent on a “lawless” scheme.

Newsom’s veto of AB 2586 marked the second time this month that he nixed legislation to expand services to undocumented immigrants. Earlier this month he vetoed a bill that would have allowed undocumented immigrants to apply for interest-free home loans through a program run by the state.

Both bills had the support of most legislative Democrats, who argued that California should do more to help undocumented immigrants because they contribute to the economy and pay taxes. They were opposed by Republicans who

argued that California should prioritize funding services for citizens and said providing aid would encourage more immigrants to enter California illegally.

The bills presented a difficult decision for the Democratic governor in this presidential election year. If he sided with his party’s base and supported more aid for undocumented immigrants, Newsom risked bringing attacks on Harris, a fellow California Democrat.

“It would be impossible to not have California act on these and have this be part of the 2024 election cycle,” said Mike Madrid, a GOP political consultant and expert in Latino politics.

He noted that Harris has taken a more conservative position on immigration

than most Democrats by backing a bipartisan border security bill that failed after Trump came out against it. Passage of the legislation in California could have complicated her efforts to win moderate voters in battleground states, Madrid said.

“Kamala Harris is trying to prevent these attacks,” he said. “She is trying to inoculate against these attacks by running on the most conservative border security position of a Democrat probably ever.”

The bill’s author, Assemblyman David Alvarez (D-San Diego), expressed “profound disappointment” at the veto, saying it denies students the opportunity to better themselves through education. In a statement Monday, he said he would re-

introduce the bill during the next legislative session.

But even within the UC system, some critics feared that Newsom would have handed Republicans “red meat” against Democrats had he signed the bill.

In a statement Sunday, UC said it believed undocumented students should have access to resources and opportunities, including jobs, enjoyed by all other students, and vowed to continue supporting them. The university supplements state grants and private scholarships with such resources as university legal aid and fellowships that offer hands-on learning with grants of up to \$7,200.

“This is a complicated situation, and we acknowledge the Governor’s basis

for his veto in light of concerns that federal law would prohibit the University from hiring undocumented students, and that the implementation of this law could put our students, faculty, staff, and significant federal funding at risk,” UC said. “The University will continue to support our undocumented students, including expanding access to opportunities that allow undocumented students to gain valuable experiential learning and financial support.”

UC did not say whether it would ask a federal judge to rule on the legality of hiring undocumented students, saying only that it would “continue to explore all options.”

CSU, in a statement Monday, said the bill “shone a bright light on the inconsistencies of state and federal immigration policies and employment laws.”

Undocumented students were given a lifeline under the Obama-era Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program — better known as DACA — which granted work permits and protection from deportation to certain youth who were brought to the United States as children. But many students could not obtain that status because then-President Trump rescinded the program and, during the Biden administration, a court order froze all petitions.

Students who do not have DACA protections now outnumber those who do. Among an estimated 86,800 undocumented students in California, only 37% are recipients of DACA or are eligible for it. Each year, 41,000 more undocumented students graduate from California high schools, according to the Higher Ed Immigration Portal.

The students draw widespread sympathy and support even as attitudes toward illegal immigration have hardened. A July Gallup poll showed the majority of Americans wanted immigration reduced, the highest share in two decades. But 81% favored allowing those brought to the U.S. illegally as children the chance to become U.S. citizens if they meet certain requirements — including 64% of Republicans polled.

In 2022, UCLA scholars presented a potential path forward for the students by crafting a novel legal theory that asserts the federal ban on hiring undocumented people does not apply to states because they are not specifically mentioned as employers subject to sanctions in the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act. Before that law, the legal analysis notes, the U.S. Supreme Court established that Congress must use “unmistakably clear” language if it wants to regulate state governments.

Scholars at the Center for Immigration Law and Policy at the UCLA School of Law developed the theory and 29 immigration and constitutional scholars signed on as backers.

Students and their supporters launched a statewide campaign to prod UC and other public colleges to embrace the theory, test the law and hire the students. But UC, after consulting with multiple law firms and legal experts inside and outside UC, declined to do so, concluding there were too many legal risks.

State accuses Exxon Mobil of recycling deceit

[Plastic, from A1]
deceit. It’s time Exxon Mobil is held accountable.”

Asked for comment Monday, Exxon Mobil said it was California that was to blame for the failure of plastic recycling.

“For decades, California officials have known their recycling system isn’t effective,” a company statement read. “They failed to act, and now they seek to blame others. Instead of suing us, they could have worked with us to fix the problem and keep plastic out of landfills. The first step would be to acknowledge what their counterparts across the U.S. know: advanced recycling works.”

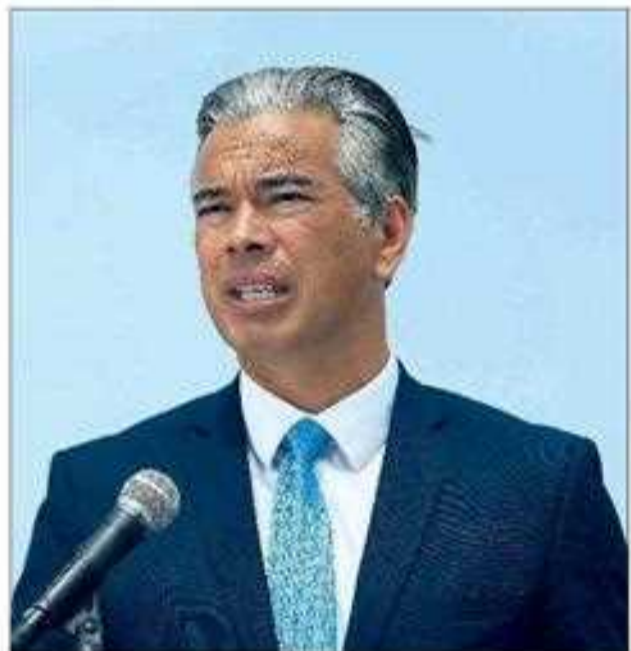
Environmental groups lauded Bonta’s action and expressed optimism that this precedent-setting lawsuit could begin to stem the proliferation of plastics.

“This is the single most consequential lawsuit filed against the plastics industry for its persistent and continued lying about plastics recycling,” said Judith Enck, a former Environmental Protection Agency regional administrator and president of Beyond Plastics, an advocacy organization.

“The plastics industry has known for decades that — unlike paper and glass and metal — plastics are not designed to be recycled and therefore do not achieve a high recycling rate. Yet, the industry made every effort to convince the public otherwise while profiting off the planetary crisis it created,” Enck said. “This lawsuit will set an invaluable precedent for others to follow.”

However, at least one legal expert said the battle was likely to be long and intense.

“Lawsuits against the fossil fuel companies for deception about climate change have been kicking around since 2008,” said Michael Gerrard, an environmental law professor at Columbia Law School. “They have put pressure on the companies to be more honest, but so far none has gone to trial or settled, and



GARY CORONADO Los Angeles Times

“IT’S TIME Exxon Mobil is held accountable,” California Atty. Gen. Rob Bonta said in touting the suit.

several have been dismissed. I’m sure that Exxon will resist this case as ferociously as it has the climate cases.”

Bonta did not mention if other oil companies would be investigated further. However, he said other states and public agencies could follow California’s example.

“Other states who have been harmed by Exxon Mobil... should respectfully consider bringing their own lawsuit and fighting to hold Exxon Mobil accountable on behalf of their state or their public entity,” Bonta said.

The suit comes almost 2½ years after Bonta launched an investigation into the fossil fuel and petrochemical industries for their alleged role in causing and exacerbating a global crisis in plastic waste pollution.

At the time, Bonta said he’d subpoenaed Exxon Mobil Corp. seeking information related to the company’s “historic and ongoing efforts” to minimize the public’s understanding of the harmful consequences of plastic.

Bonta secured corporate documents via subpoena that provide the “fullest picture to date” of the oil giant’s

office said, the company falsely claimed that “[p]roper incineration of foam produces virtually nothing but harmless carbon dioxide and water vapor.”

The lawsuit alleges that Exxon Mobil, through a trade organization, co-opted the triangular “chasing arrows” symbol, which was originally created for paper recycling. The logo is commonly found on a number of products whether they are recyclable or not.

“Indeed, in practice, the symbol led consumers to believe that all labeled plastic items were recyclable, due to the chasing arrows symbol,” the complaint said. “Instead, the coding was intended to hide the limits of recycling, delay regulation, and pass responsibility for plastic waste onto consumers.”

The lawsuit seeks injunctive relief to protect the state’s natural resources from further pollution and destruction, as well as to stop the company “from making any further false or misleading statements about plastics recycling and its plastic operations.”

Fossil fuels, such as oil and gas, are the raw material of most plastics. In recent decades, the accumulation of plastic waste has overwhelmed waterways and oceans, sickening marine life and threatening human health.

A separate lawsuit, filed by a consortium of environmental groups — including the Sierra Club, Surfrider Foundation, Heal the Bay and Baykeeper — was also announced Monday and mirrors many of the claims made in the attorney general’s lawsuit.

The announcement of the two lawsuits comes as state lawmakers seek to reduce plastic pollution at its source, with the passage and implementation of Senate Bill 54, the Plastic Pollution Prevention and Packaging Producer Responsibility Act — which seeks to turn the onus and cost of plastic pollution away from taxpayers and consumers and onto the

producers and packagers.

It also comes amid a growing body of research showing the pernicious and ubiquitous nature of microplastics in the environment and within human bodies.

Micro- and nanoplastics are produced when plastic products break down. Petroleum-based plastics never fully decompose; they break down into smaller and smaller pieces, which have now been found in the deepest trenches of our oceans, in the snows atop the highest mountains, in our air, water, food and bodies.

Environmentalists hailed the lawsuits as much-needed corrections on an industry that has for decades produced products that have infiltrated the state’s waterways and contaminated human bodies.

“For 40 years, the Surfrider Foundation has been fighting to protect our ocean, waves, and beaches. ... Despite these tireless efforts, 85% of items collected in our California beach cleanups in 2023 were still single-use plastics,” said Jennifer Savage, the Surfrider Foundation’s senior plastic pollution initiative manager. “Now, for the health of our ocean and the people who depend on it, we’re taking this fight to court to hold Exxon accountable for their contribution to the plastic pollution crisis.”

Since 1985, more than 26 million pounds of garbage has been collected from California beaches and waterways — roughly 81% of it plastic. Many of these discarded items can be traced to Exxon Mobil’s polymer resins, according to Bonta’s office.

“We can’t go on producing plastic at this rate. We need a real systematic change, and that’s what we’re hoping for,” said Tracy Quinn, chief executive of Heal the Bay. “We can’t recycle our way out of this problem. We can’t continue to pick up trash from our beaches forever. We need to stop this as a source.”

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OPINION

EDITORIAL

ELECTION 2024

Jessica Caloza for Assembly District 52

With experience in local, state and federal government, she would be a strong pro-housing advocate.

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT 52 covers much of the eastern part of Los Angeles County, stretching from Glendale and Eagle Rock to Los Feliz, Silver Lake, Echo Park, East Los Angeles and City Terrace. Lack of affordable housing, public safety and homelessness are among the issues its residents grapple with.

Two Democratic candidates are vying to represent this district. Both have remarkable life stories that have helped form them and motivated them to seek office. Jessica Caloza, a first-time candidate, immigrated here, to Eagle Rock, as a child with her family from the Philippines. They all worked multiple jobs to survive, and Caloza attended UC San Diego, becoming the first person in her family to graduate from college. Since then, Caloza has worked in Los Angeles city government, the Obama administration and the state attorney general's office, from which she is currently on leave.

Franky Carrillo was 16 when he was wrongly accused of murdering a Lynwood man in a drive-by shooting in 1991. He was convicted and sentenced at 18 in 1992 to life in prison, where he spent time combing police reports and investigators' notes from his case, looking for evidence that would

help clear him, and eventually enlisting the help of lawyers who got him exonerated and released from prison two decades later. He earned a bachelor's degree from Loyola Marymount University, won a \$10-million settlement from Los Angeles County and became a policy advisor to the Los Angeles Innocence Project at Cal State L.A. He was also appointed to the county's Probation Oversight Commission. If elected, he will be the first exonerated inmate to win a seat in the state Legislature.

There is no doubt Carrillo could be an extraordinarily valuable voice on criminal justice reform. However, for this seat, The Times' editorial board recommends Caloza. She has a stronger grasp of the many issues facing the district and more experience for the job.

In the Obama administration, Caloza, 35, worked on higher education policy, immigration policy and gender equity issues. She also worked for Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, who appointed her to the city's Board of Public Works commission.

She has a strong track record on reproductive rights as deputy chief of staff for California Atty. Gen. Rob Bonta and she has worked to reduce the state's backlog of rape kits. Though California has put in place many protections for abortion access, Caloza says one of her first orders of business would be to pass a bill that supports more funding for Planned Parenthood health centers across the state. She rightly points out that even in California, there are not enough abortion care providers in certain areas of the state outside the bigger ur-

ban centers to handle the needs of residents as well as women coming from out of state to seek abortion care.

She also wants to invest in community colleges, calling them "the most underfunded part of our education system." She would also prioritize increasing wages for teachers and staff in public schools.

She is opposed to Proposition 36, which would roll back portions of Proposition 47, and smartly says that it would increase penalties for crimes committed by people who need mental health or substance abuse treatment, not time in jail.

Caloza is supported by pro-housing groups. Although she notes that she is a renter and supports efforts to create more housing in the state, she is cautious about allowing multi-unit housing in neighborhoods zoned for single-family homes. "I want to make sure that it makes sense for that neighborhood," she says, adding that homeowners are concerned about the character of their neighborhoods changing.

Too bad; the state is unlikely to ever build enough housing if cities are allowed to block all multi-family housing in single-family zoned areas. We would like to see her be more tough-minded and creative in considering legislation to open up more opportunities for housing construction. There will always be residents who don't want any change to the structure or density of their neighborhoods. If elected officials give in to all of them, there will be no increase in desperately needed housing.

She has compiled an impressive array of endorsements from women's rights organi-



Jessica Caloza for Assembly 2024

JESSICA CALOZA

zations, environmental groups, labor groups and dozens of current and past members of the Assembly. Those coalitions could be crucial for her to get important legislation passed.

Carrillo has a few issues bedeviling his campaign. One is an allegation in a contentious divorce proceeding that he left firearms out at his ranch house when his children were around. He says it was a pellet rifle — which he used on rodents at his Lake Hughes ranch — and acknowledges he shouldn't have left it out. Another is the concern that he's not living in the district, which is required. He says the house in the district is under extensive renovation, but he stays overnight "sometimes" and otherwise is at his ranch or at his girlfriend's home in Pasadena.

Those issues aside, Caloza is a better, more prepared choice to occupy this seat and begin the hard work of helping the state.

LETTERS



BRIAN VAN DER BRUG Los Angeles Times

A SIERRA MADRE resident's bumper sticker, seen on Sept. 19, is evidence of increasing bear encounters.

These bears weren't here first

Re "American dream turns into bear necessity," Sept. 22

IN YOUR ARTICLE about the bear problems in Sierra Madre, Erinn Wilson, regional manager for the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, is reported as saying that the behavior of these bears is a result of people moving deeper into the wildlands where bears reside.

What she conveniently left out, as she does any time she discusses the problem, is that these bears are not native to the mountains of Southern California. The state itself imported black bears from the Yosemite area nearly 100 years ago — at a time when bear hunting was a thing.

Well, bear hunting has since gone out of fashion, and left unmanaged by the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the bear population continues to grow. There are now far greater numbers of bears than can be sustained by their natural food sources in the wilderness, so they intrude into populated areas.

Yes, the bears are intruding into people's territory. Unless the state steps up and does something about the problem it created, this situation will continue to get worse.

DON HANDLEY, Sierra Madre

I was disappointed that the article about these clever bears didn't mention whether the doors they were able to open were actually locked.

After living most of my life in West L.A., I moved to the foothills and learned pretty quickly that we can coexist peacefully with bears and deer.

Moreover, the first time I woke up in the middle of the night to the sound of rustling in my backyard, I was relieved to see that it was just a bear and not a human.

EDUARDO DELGADO Moorpark

::

The claim that bears in the mountains near Sierra Madre have learned to open

house and car doors is based on statements from a city attorney, who also claimed he didn't know how it was happening.

It's more likely that if the animals are learning anything, it's how to enter buildings and vehicles that are left open or unlocked by people.

If that's the case, it's the human behavior that's at fault.

DAVE SUESS Redondo Beach

A warning from an Ohio town

Re "How hate, misery came to Springfield," Sept. 21

We should regard your article on the misery and

hate in Springfield, Ohio, as a warning. If it can happen there, it can happen in any other similar community in America.

Who instigated this? The Republican nominees for president and vice president. If they can cause this much disruption and misery as candidates, what havoc can they wreak if they are elected? They have no concern for the truth of a situation. They just want to cause controversy and instill fear.

It was stated in the article that when vice presidential nominee JD Vance, a U.S. senator from Ohio, got wind of claims of "pet eating" by Haitian residents on social media, he had his staff contact the city officials to verify the claim; he was told police had received

no such reports. He went public with the charge anyway.

Then former President Trump repeated the allegations in a nationally televised debate.

It is not in the interest of these two men to put out the fire. On the contrary, this is part of their strategy for getting elected. And when elected, they will use incendiary tactics to keep us fearful, miserable and compliant so they can more easily implement their policies, whether they're popular or not.

JANE McMACKIN Temecula

::

It's outrageous that Trump and Vance could so cynically use an entire com-

munity for political purposes.

Vance should resign as Ohio's U.S. senator. Instead of looking out for his constituents, he has disrupted and endangered the lives of everyone in Springfield.

This is just a small preview of what to expect from a second Trump term: sowing hate, division and fear in order to remain in power.

CAROLE ROBERTS Lakewood

::

How dare a candidate irresponsibly disrupt the civic and private lives of a previously peaceful town? If this is what Trump's concept of a great America looks like, we should have nothing to do with it.

CHARLENE DERBY Santa Ana

Ohtani's playing set to Vin's voice

Re "50-50? Nothing halfway about Ohtani as a unanimous MVP," column, Sept. 21

I keep imagining how the late Dodgers announcer Vin Scully would have called the historic game on Sept. 19 when Shohei Ohtani exceeded 50 home runs and 50 stolen bases in a single season.

As good as his "day at the office" was, there is still room for improvement. I mean, six hits in six at-bats is great, but only half of those hits were home runs.

And then there is the future candy bar. Reggie Jackson had one. When will Ohtani's be on the market? For now, his favorite one is probably PayDay. Since he has already been shown the money, now he must be thinking, "Sho-me the candy bar."

Now I'm waiting for his endorsement of Kamala Harris and Tim Walz.

JOHN SAVILLE Corona

::

It seems like a harmonic convergence for Ohtani to make baseball history on the same night his team clinches a spot in the post-season for the first time in his Major League Baseball career.

I can't imagine even Ohtani having the same sustained drive while playing to the half-empty

seats in Anaheim in meaningless games, instead of being in the dugout with fellow MVPs Mookie Betts, Freddie Freeman and Clayton Kershaw in a tight pennant race to the cheers of adoring fans in packed Dodger Stadium.

Some things are just meant to be.

REEVE RICHARD Burbank

::

Have you watched videos of Babe Ruth running the basepaths?

Of course he didn't make the 50-50 club. He's an all-time great, but I wonder how he ever made it to first base in time for a mere single. If he had Ohtani's running legs, he might have batted .600.

Ohtani's got it all.

JOEL ATHEY Valley Village

Winning over Republicans

Re "Dad-daughter talk on Trump," letters, Sept. 22

Nearly every day, a letter writer in the L.A. Times rages against former President Trump, apparently in the hope it will weaken his support by exposing yet additional faults. Unfortunately, they are not changing the minds of Trump supporters because they are not addressing the real problem.

Many, if not most, Trump supporters are just like supporters of Vice President Kamala Harris in that they are not voting for their candidate so much as they are voting against the opposition candidate. They so fear the woke policies and the giveaways of the progressive left that they view any Republican, even Trump, as better than a Democrat.

If your letter writers want to help Harris, they need to lobby the vice president to better distinguish her policies from those of the deep political left. This way, borderline Republicans can rationalize a vote for Harris.

MICHAEL ERNSTOFF Los Angeles

HOW TO WRITE TO US

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OP-ED

Israel's war with Hezbollah is traumatizing Lebanon. There's one path to peace

President Biden must press harder for a cease-fire in Gaza to end what could become a regional conflagration

By **Mohamad Bazzi**

ISRAEL'S REMOTE DETONATION of thousands of Hezbollah pagers and walkie-talkies has set off a series of escalations leading to the deadliest day of Israeli airstrikes against Lebanon in nearly two decades.

But while many Western politicians, analysts and media outlets were fixated on the novelty of an attack that seemed to be pulled from the pages of a spy thriller — expressing amazement at Israeli intelligence's success in planting the explosive devices among militia members — they largely ignored the sheer terror thousands of Lebanese civilians experienced during the explosions that shook crowded neighborhoods over two days last week. Lebanon is a country that has suffered through decades of war and trauma, including an on-going economic collapse and the 2020 Beirut port explosion.

The booby-trapped pagers and handheld radios, which had apparently been rigged with explosives before being shipped to Lebanon, killed at least 37 people and injured more than 3,000. The blasts were followed by a dramatic escalation on Thursday, when Israeli forces carried out the most intense airstrikes on southern Lebanon in nearly a year. The next day, an Israeli airstrike leveled two buildings in southern Beirut, killing at least 45 — including three children — and injuring dozens. The attack killed two senior Hezbollah commanders and 12 other militia members who were apparently meeting underneath one of the buildings.

On Saturday, Hezbollah responded by firing dozens of rockets into northern Israel, and Israel carried out nearly 300 airstrikes in southern Lebanon said to be tar-

geting Hezbollah rocket launchers. The group fired more than 100 rockets into Israel early Sunday, striking deeper into Israeli territory than it had since October. And on Monday, Israel escalated yet again with airstrikes that killed more than 350 and injured more than 1,200, according to Lebanese officials, the heaviest toll inflicted by Israeli forces there since 2006.

Each attack and counterattack increases the risk that Israel's war on Gaza could devolve into a wider conflict that engulfs Lebanon and other countries in the Middle East. A full-scale war between Israel and Hezbollah would dwarf their conflict in the summer of 2006. It could precipitate regional hostilities pitting Israel and the United States on one side against Iran and its network of allied militias in Lebanon, Iraq, Syria and Yemen on the other.

Since Hamas militants attacked Israel on Oct. 7, President Biden and his top aides have insisted that their goal is to prevent Israel's subsequent invasion of

Gaza from growing into such a regional conflagration. Hezbollah began firing rockets and drones into northern Israel on Oct. 8 in what the group's leaders described as an act of solidarity with Palestinians intended to divert Israeli resources from Gaza.

But Biden has repeatedly failed to follow through on the most likely path to preventing a regional war: pressing for an immediate cease-fire in Gaza, particularly by using U.S. leverage to withhold billions of dollars in weapons shipments to Israel. All of Iran's allies, especially Hezbollah, have indicated that they would stop their attacks on Israel once the fighting in Gaza ends.

Over the past 11 months, Hezbollah and Israeli forces exchanged fire almost daily across the Israel-Lebanon border, but until Israel's attacks last week, Hezbollah had avoided the kind of large-scale response that would precipitate an all-out war. Israel's retaliatory airstrikes, artillery shelling and targeted assassinations, meanwhile, killed hundreds

of the group's fighters. More than 100,000 civilians have been forced out of their homes on both sides of the border.

Israel's exploding pagers and handheld radios escalated the conflict with a particularly insidious and reckless attack that likely constituted a war crime. As Human Rights Watch and other groups noted, international humanitarian law forbids the use of booby traps, especially with objects that are commonly used by civilians.

The attack detonated thousands of bombs across a country roughly the size of Connecticut — in grocery stores, hospitals, sidewalk cafes and barber shops and at funerals. Children, medical workers and innocent bystanders were killed and maimed. In a statement after the first wave of explosions, Hezbollah noted that it had issued pagers “to employees of various units and institutions,” hinting that the devices were distributed not only to its fighters but also to civilian workers. The group is not only Lebanon's most dominant

military force but also its most powerful political party, and it runs an extensive social-service network including schools, hospitals, supermarkets and credit unions.

Over those two days, I made a round of phone calls to check on family and friends across Beirut, southern Lebanon and Dahiyeh, a densely populated, Shiite-dominated suburb of Beirut. During many of these calls, I could hear ambulance sirens wailing in the background. Hospitals were overwhelmed by an influx of thousands of trauma victims, many with life-changing injuries to eyes and limbs. One ophthalmologist told the BBC that in 25 years of practice, he had “never removed as many eyes” as he was forced to in one day last week.

Those who were not injured were left in shock and overwhelming paranoia about the most basic aspects of daily life. One of my cousins who lives in Dahiyeh had disconnected the solar-powered lithium batteries that provided electricity to his apartment for fear that they could detonate. He and his family were sitting in the dark. “What can we do?” my cousin asked. “We don't know what to believe anymore.”

The road to de-escalation and calm in the region must begin with a cease-fire in Gaza. As long as the Biden administration refuses to acknowledge and act on that reality, Lebanon and the Middle East will be overwhelmed by more bloodshed, fear and chaos.

MOHAMAD BAZZI is the director of the Hagop Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies and a journalism professor at New York University.



MARKUS SCHOLZ Picture Alliance via Getty Images

As coffee prices rise, wake up and smell the climate change

The coffee crop is hurt by rising temperatures and drought. Will that jolt Americans into acting?

LZ GRANDERSON

MOST AMERICANS don't think twice about leaving half a glass of water on the table as they leave a restaurant. It's only when we pay for it that we tend to leave no drop behind. Cost drives alcohol decisions too — ditch the cheap beer to beat traffic home but finish a \$20 pour even if it's made poorly.



Now it seems we'll be playing this game with coffee. Rising temperatures, prolonged summers and droughts — courtesy of climate change — have crippled crop production in many of the world's top coffee-producing nations. From there, you know the drill — high demand, low supply, higher costs. Doesn't really matter what your politics are, record heat has had an undeniable impact on agriculture and the global supply chain.

Vietnam, for example, produces most of the beans used for espresso and instant coffee in the world. This year, farmers spent parts of what is normally Vietnam's rainy season trying to save their crops from the worst drought in a decade. UNICEF reported that several provinces declared a state of emergency due to the lack of rainfall and saltwater intrusion into the freshwater Mekong Delta. Rice fields were lost; fish and shrimp died; and tons of robusta coffee beans were rendered unsalvageable, leading to a near 50-year high in price according to the

International Coffee Organization.

Coffee consumers paid for those lost beans — as well as arabica beans similarly lost in Brazil — with their cups each morning via price hikes. And by coffee consumers, I'm mainly talking Americans, as we are the industry's second-largest bean importer. This year the National Coffee Assn. reported daily consumption is at a 20-year high with 63% of Americans drinking more coffee each day than any another beverage.

That includes water, which can't be good for the skin. Anyway, the economics of coffee are changing alongside the weather.

Assuming this trend continues, there may soon come a time in restaurants when we're charged for that “one more cup with dessert” more often than not. If that threshold is reached, diners may treat coffee more like a pricey menu item — think cold-pressed juice — and less like the water we get when we first sit down.

One study estimates that roughly half of the regions where coffee beans are harvested most today won't be as viable by 2050 due to changes in climate. The good news is other parts of the world will become more favorable for coffee growing.

But there's more bad news: The regions that depend most on the coffee industry for their economy are already poor.

This is perhaps the most immoral aspect of watching members of Congress downplay the impact of melting polar caps or having presidential debates in which the topic of global warming is handled like an afterthought. Developing nations routinely suffer the most from the weather shifts caused by industrialized, wealthier nations like ours. It's only our distance from so many of the calamities we contribute to

that allows so many candidates for public office to adapt gaslighting as an effective political strategy.

Two summers ago in Pakistan, more than 1,700 people died, millions of homes were destroyed and acres of crops lost after flooding because of record rainfall and melting glaciers. In Panama, a 20-year drought forced trade delays because the Panama Canal didn't have enough water. Roughly 40% of global cargo traffic uses the canal, and at one point more than 160 cargo ships were in limbo because of the lack of water.

During harvest time for coffee plants in Costa Rica, nearly 60% of the pickers are migrants from neighboring countries such as Nicaragua. If this economic ecosystem collapses in Central America in large part because of man-made climate change, the ripple effect will far exceed the price of coffee at a restaurant.

It would exacerbate the region's humanitarian crisis that has already driven millions to our southern border, and polluted political rhetoric with racialized fearmongering. The World Bank estimates an additional 100 million people could face food insecurity by 2030 because of displacement and lost farmland. The United Nations predicts that in 30 years more than 140 million would be uprooted because of rising sea levels, droughts and other extreme weather conditions.

Amali Tower, who runs an advocacy organization for those displaced by weather, said, “One problem is just the complete lack of understanding as to how climate change is forcing people to move. We've got to approach climate displacement as a human security issue and not a border security issue.”

A tall task when only 37% of Americans believe climate change should be a top issue for the president and Congress, according to the Pew Research Center.

As usual, the economy tops the list.

It's as if that's an either/or when in fact one directly affects the other. The rising cost of coffee isn't the only example of that dynamic. However, given how much Americans love drinking it, there is hope that the high cost of coffee may be the thing that finally wakes us up.

@LZGranderson

Why reclassifying cannabis would make a bad situation worse

By **Leo Beletsky, Shaleen Title and Shanel Lindsay**

FOR THE FIRST TIME in decades, there are positive signs that the overdose crisis is finally slowing. What's behind this progress is subject to debate, but one of its likely drivers is policy reform.

Recent changes in our outdated laws have reduced barriers to life-saving drug treatment medications, improved access to the overdose antidote naloxone, and authorized other proven harm reduction measures.

One of the most notable reforms has been the rapid scale-up in effective drug treatment behind bars. Based on out-of-step policies, millions of people are still arrested on drug possession charges in the U.S. each year. Those reentering society after a period of incarceration are up to 130 times more likely to die of an overdose than the general public. The U.S. Department of Justice and others have been filing dozens of lawsuits to compel prisons and jails to address the catastrophic risk of fatal reentry, and they have been getting impressive results.

It may seem like progress, but shifting cannabis to Schedule III just adds another chapter to the long history of misguided and toxic drug regulation in the U.S.

At the same time, some states have substantially reduced their reliance on arrest and incarceration as an instrument of drug control.

Despite the positive news, we are nowhere near ending the crisis. As tens of thousands continue to die of overdoses, many other drug-related problems loom. This is why the reprieve from spiraling rates of fatalities should be treated as an opportunity to do more of what is working, while dismantling antiquated policies that have been toxic to the public's health.

The Biden administration's recent proposal to reclassify cannabis from a Schedule I drug (alongside heroin) to Schedule III (alongside Adderall) fails to meet this challenge. While this might seem like progress, it risks adding yet another chapter to the long history of misguided drug regulation in the United States.

Others have raised equity and practical concerns about this proposal. Schedule III drugs are very tightly controlled. In line with the chaotic design of American drug regulation, this category cov-

ers an incongruous assortment of medications.

This classification covers ketamine as well as Adderall, the life-saving opioid treatment drug Suboxone and — perhaps most strangely — testosterone used in hormone replacement and gender-affirming care. These drugs are legal, but their possession and distribution outside of the medical context is still highly criminalized by federal and state law.

The broader concern is that placing cannabis into Schedule III embeds it in the deeply flawed American pharmaceutical system. This system is notorious for high costs, chronic shortages and gaping disparities. Vital medications are too often out of reach, particularly for marginalized populations.

The pharmaceutical sector's handling of controlled substances is especially abysmal. Conceptualized during President Nixon's “war on drugs,” the Controlled Substances Act was designed to balance access and control for “dangerous” drugs. This regulatory framework has consistently failed to strike that balance, undermining public health.

The current overdose crisis is a clear illustration of this dysfunction. Lax regulation of Schedule III opioid painkillers sparked the initial wave of overdose deaths, while barriers to pain care and addiction treatment have intensified. Recently, shortages of stimulant medications such as Adderall have further highlighted the system's flaws in managing essential controlled medications.

The system's defects are so profound that it cannot manage even its most basic functions. Picture Schedule III as a rudderless, aging ship taking on water. Adding cannabis is like piling a whole bunch of new cargo onto this sinking vessel.

Keeping cannabis in the controlled substances framework also ignores its diverse uses outside of healthcare. This leaves the recreational market in legal limbo — a blind spot for cultural and spiritual practices that have long been part of cannabis use.

Most tragically, the Biden administration's current proposal is a failure of imagination. It attempts to replace one broken system with another inefficient regulatory regime, missing a critical opportunity to rethink our approach. With other Schedule I substances such as psilocybin and MDMA under consideration for rescheduling, and with marijuana use hitting record levels in recent years, there is growing urgency to build a modern regulatory structure that can steward our complex and diverse uses for psychoactive drugs into the 21st century.

LEO BELETSKY is a drug policy researcher at Northeastern University and UC San Diego. SHALEEN TITLE and SHANEL LINDSAY are members of the board at the Parabola Center for Law and Policy.

Public, officials at odds over whether bear deserved its fate

[Bear, from A1]

eyewitness said went down to the muscle, requiring several stitches. It also prompted a wildlife attack investigation by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

An officer was quickly dispatched to interview the 61-year-old woman and collect any DNA the bear may have left on her — then headed to the campsite for additional samples.

The woman told the officer that she believed you should not run from a bear. So when it approached, she clambered up the stump to appear larger and stayed put.

Complicating the situation further, this wasn't just any bear. Many people in town knew him as "Victor."

Reports of human-black bear interactions have been on the rise across the country for decades and Mammoth is far from alone in wrestling with how to live alongside ursine neighbors. It's now believed that about 65,000 black bears roam the Golden State — close to double the estimate from a decade ago.

The incident in Mammoth was one of four bear attacks the Department of Fish and Wildlife investigated in less than two weeks, including another attributed to Victor. Last year, a woman's death in Sierra County marked California's first fatal black bear attack.

"Black bears are not dangerous animals, but if they associate our homes or cabins or campgrounds as an easy source of food, they lose their natural fear of people and their actions get bolder and bolder," Fish and Wildlife spokesperson Peter Tira told The Times in the wake of 71-year-old Patrice Miller's death in her Downieville home.

In Mammoth, Victor was a well-known fixture in the Eastern Sierra mountain town, often spotted traipsing around scenic lake shores and campgrounds, frequently seizing food or fish. A V-shaped pattern of white and yellow fur adorned his chest — the inspiration for his moniker.

Steve Searles, a former wildlife specialist for the town and "bear whisperer," who appeared on an Animal Planet show of the same name, said for years Victor ignored the hikers, paddlers and campers drawn to the area.

But Searles alleged that local leaders have slacked off on bear management since he walked away from his post during the pandemic — a departure he said came in response to them saying he could work with the bears only for half the year and cutting his pay in half. (Town officials declined to comment for this article.)

"It's just packed with folks that aren't aware — they're nice people, they just do dumb ... stuff, and ... we're a tourist town and we're driven by the dollar," he said. "It's been very, very difficult to find a balance."

An estimated 2.8 million people visit the small town roughly 300 miles north of Los Angeles annually, and the lodging industry generates two-thirds of its gross revenue, according to a town document.

According to Searles, the town is no longer effectively carrying out nonlethal aversion conditioning, "teaching the bears right from wrong," or punishing tourists for baiting bears.

"So just in a very short period of time, it's gone sideways" he said.

When considering a course of action following a bear attack, investigators will try to determine whether the bear was baited into acting aggressively. Less than two weeks before the video, Victor caused minor injuries to a man who attempted to take a selfie with the bear. Officers determined that Victor was provoked and took no further action.

But things were different in the videotaped attack. Capt. Patrick Foy of Fish and Wildlife's law enforcement division said the campers had food out because they were cooking dinner. "It was all perfectly reasonable," he said. No state wildlife law was broken and no citations were issued.

Because Victor had attacked the woman unprovoked, the department now viewed him as a public threat.

The night after beginning their investigation, Fish and Wildlife staff members spotted a large bear at Coldwater Campground.

Kathy Spaulding, camp host, was on duty when she said a wildlife officer showed up around 9:30 p.m. as the bear was chowing down on a big bag of food he had taken from a bear box that was left open.

"And I said, 'What are you going to do?' He said, 'You know what we're going to do,'" Spaulding told The Times.

Spaulding said she begged the man not to move forward with their plans as he followed the



KATHY SPAULDING and her husband, hosts for Coldwater Campground, created a memorial for Victor at the site where he died. It has drawn people who share stories about the bear.



WILDLIFE officials said Victor, seen here at a Mammoth Lakes picnic this year, was too habituated to people.

bear's slow saunter past campsites, paying no mind to people.

"I said, 'See, he's not a danger, please, please.'"

Another car pulled up and two men wearing "camo gear" got out, she said.

They shot the animal with a tranquilizer dart. It jumped and dashed across a creek. It weaved, bobbled and stumbled. Then it was still.

At the campground, before the DNA was analyzed, the bear was given a lethal injection. "Unusual but deemed appropriate" because of the high confidence of the match due to his size and markings — including the V on his chest, Foy said. A DNA workup later confirmed it was Victor.

"This bear became too aggressive," said George Struble, assistant chief for Fish and Wildlife's Southern District, adding it had become habituated over time.

"If that was a 6-year-old child that was on that stump, we could be talking about a very different story," he said at a Mammoth Lakes Town Council meeting in early September. "And that is ... a reality that we weigh when we decide to put down the animal."

News of Victor's euthanasia was quickly met with outrage.

Hundreds of online comments have blasted the people in the video and wildlife officials and decried what they see as human shortcomings. Why, some asked, wasn't Victor moved to another area?

"You invite [Y]ogi to dinner[.] This dude is so lucky he wasn't de[s]sert. Bad things happen when you play with Mother Nature. Don't feed our Bears," one

commenter wrote on Facebook.

A Change.org petition calling for "justice" for Victor now has more than 70,000 signatures. It requests fines for "those that began this incident" and for such situations to be handled differently.

"If incidents like this continue to happen, it shows the lack of care for the community that our authorities have and creates a divide in our small town," the petition reads.

A woman who identified herself as the victim's daughter described the video through a Spanish interpreter — which was not taken by her family — as "circulating in a negligent way."

According to Araceli Contreras, who identified as Indigenous, she and her mother had just returned from a ceremony of "dancing with the bears" when Victor arrived and began picking over their neighbors' meal.

Once the investigation began, "My mom did tell them that she didn't want her brother bear to be hurt," she said via a video appearance at a Mammoth Town Council meeting.

Foy, who said he's investigated wildlife attacks for roughly 28 years, said the public's response is a familiar one. "One of the things that I have found in every single investigation, when it gets to the media, is victim blaming," he said.

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife has also said that relocation is rarely an option for aggressive bears.

"When a bear is causing problems in one area, especially when the bear causes injury to a human, it is uncommon for CDFW to relocate the bear to another area," the department said in a release.

"California is home to 39 million people. There is no longer such place as the 'middle of nowhere.'"

One of the aspects of Victor's death that has exacerbated the anguish among his fans was the manner in which his body was handled.

Victor's body was taken to the Bishop landfill, where people arrived to snap photos as it was being buried, Foy said. At least one of the photos of the deceased bear was posted online, fueling more outrage.

With the cocktail of lethal drugs and tranquilizers in its system, Foy said, the carcass couldn't be left in the forest for scavengers to ingest.

"Trash and people food is what got Victor killed, and ironically, they put him at the landfill, at the dump," Searles said.

Searles said he and members of the Bishop Paiute Tribe dug up the body several days later and transported it to tribal land for burial and a ceremony that included offerings, songs and prayers.

In a statement, the tribe said it was "grateful for the opportunity to provide Victor with a proper burial, recognizing the Pahabichi [bear] is sacred to their community and acknowledging their role as visitors on Pahabichi homelands."

Peter Alagona, an environmental studies professor at UC Santa Barbara and founder of the California Grizzly Research Network, said swiping a camper's leg "is not a natural black bear behavior."

He suggested such incidents are largely preventable.

In a June letter to state wildlife officials, Alagona said the revelation that there are so many more bears in California than previously thought "should be a call to action to increase education, infrastructure investments, community-based programs, tribal co-management and other tools to promote coexistence."

The letter was sent as a comment on a new draft bear management plan, which officials hope to finalize by the end of the year. None of his suggestions appear "with any apparent clarity or urgency" in the plan, Alagona wrote.

Russell Black, an environmental program manager for Fish and Wildlife, said he shared in the frustration over the Mammoth incident.

With just a handful of staffers handling bear issues across Inyo and Mono counties, he relies on reports made to the department — which he said they never received for Victor.

If they had known, he said, they would have taken action long ago.

"There's a lot that could have been done better early on," he said.

Searles said he'd been acquainted with Victor for about seven years. He knew where he slept and would often visit him at the lakes Victor frequented.

"Just to blow off steam, I ride my e-bike up there and hang out with Victor," Searles said.

Unlike other bears, who preferred to exist in the shadows, "Victor worked days," he said.

Known for his ursine wisdom — he co-wrote a memoir called "What the Bears Know" — Searles said hundreds of people have reached out with photos and stories of Victor.

(Foy, whose email was posted online by the Mammoth Lakes Police Department as the media contact, said he's received a deluge of hate messages coming from as far away as England.)

While Searles said he understands the community's pain, and believes tourists do all kinds of ill-advised things, he said he's not on board with "revenge and hate and fear."

He hopes people can learn from the experience and "do better in the future."

Working with bears "is just the most magical, wonderful thing," he said. "It also comes with the lowest of lows, and this is one of those times."

'This bear became too aggressive. If that was a 6-year-old child that was on that stump, we could be talking about a very different story.'

— GEORGE STRUBLE, California Department of Fish and Wildlife official



WILDLIFE expert Steve Searles said that for years Victor ignored the hikers, paddlers and campers drawn to the area. But he alleged that local leaders slacked off on bear management.

The morning after Victor's death, camp host Spaulding followed the fresh marks left when officials dragged the body through the dirt.

"I came back, and I told my husband, 'We have to do something. We have to mark where he took his last time in the — his forest,'" she said through tears.

They formed a heart with rocks, planted a log in the center and created a pathway.

The makeshift memorial has drawn people who say prayers or share stories about Victor.

Now, some fear history might repeat itself with other bears that may move into the vacant territory — including a cub some believe to be Victor's daughter in part due to a V-shaped marking on her chest. They call her Victoria.

CALIFORNIA

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Photographs by GENARO MOLINA Los Angeles Times
RUBY ROMERO, left, and Caitlin Molina set up their testing station in March 2023 as part of UCLA's Drug Checking Los Angeles project, which works with county public health officials to analyze illicit drugs.

Action urged to rein in illicit puppy trade

A Times inquiry leads to calls for legislation and for changes in handling of records.

By MELODY GUTIERREZ AND ALENE TCHEKMEDYIAN

Lawmakers and animal welfare advocates say California must address “disturbing” findings in a Los Angeles Times investigation into the state’s lucrative underground puppy resale market, and called on state officials to end the practice of destroying crucial pet import records.

Those veterinary records show where dogs entering California were imported from and their destination and affirm they are sufficiently healthy to travel.

By obtaining those records from other states, The Times was able to detail how some unscrupulous California resellers buy puppies in bulk from mass breeders in the Midwest and rebrand them as locally bred. As a result, some consumers are duped into buying puppies

from a commercial dog trade they may not support, and new pets have ended up sick and with costly veterinary bills, The Times’ investigation found.

State Senate Judiciary Committee Chair Sen. Tom Umberg (D-Orange) said he was “appalled” by what the investigation exposed about California’s puppy trade.

“We clearly need to enact legislation that closes this huge loophole,” Umberg said.

Umberg, who is a rescue dog owner, said the California Department of Food and Agriculture must stop purging import records that could help trace dogs back to puppy mills. The former prosecutor added that this is the first thing the state needs to do to ensure consumers and animals are protected.

A spokesperson for Gov. Gavin Newsom said California will take a hard look at the puppy resale market.

“The Los Angeles Times investigation raises serious alarms about the inhumane treatment of pets,” Newsom spokesperson Izzy Gardon said. “Gov. Newsom has long [See Puppies, B2]

An industrial chemical showing up in fentanyl raises questions, alarms

Scientists aren’t sure why BTMPS, which is used in making plastics, has suddenly become a main ingredient in illegal drugs in the U.S.

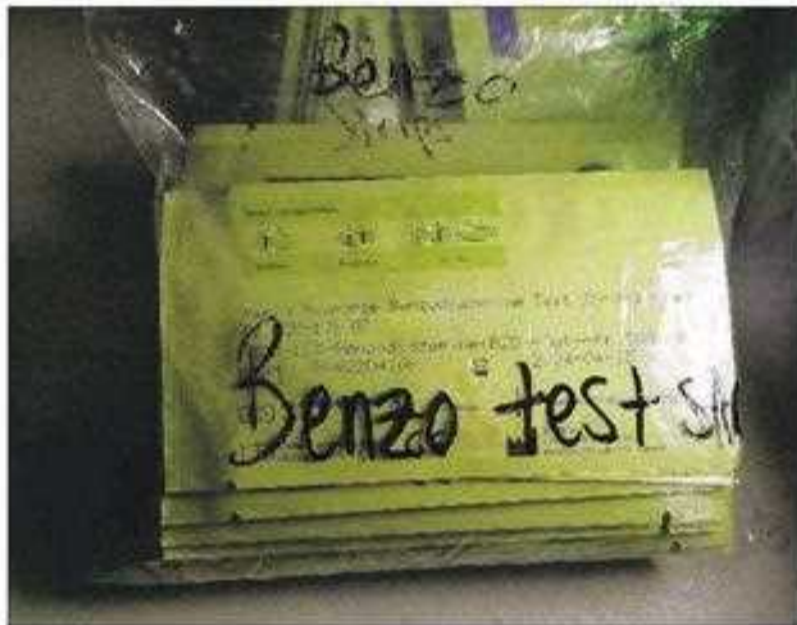
By EMILY ALPERT REYES

An industrial chemical used in plastic products has been cropping up in illegal drugs from California to Maine, a sudden and puzzling shift in the drug supply that has alarmed health researchers.

Its name is bis(2,2,6,6-tetramethyl-4-piperidyl) sebacate, commonly abbreviated as BTMPS. The chemical is used in plastic to provide protection against ultraviolet rays as well as for other commercial uses.

In an analysis released Sept. 16, researchers from UCLA, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and other academic institutions and harm reduction groups collected and tested more than 170 samples of drugs that had been sold as fentanyl in Los Angeles and Philadelphia this summer. They found roughly a quarter of the drugs contained BTMPS.

[See Fentanyl, B4]



TEST STRIPS are used to detect specific ingredients in drugs. There is as yet no test strip for BTMPS as there is for fentanyl.

Villanueva’s suit over ‘do not rehire’ notation is tossed

Judge grants county’s request to dismiss the case, but the ex-sheriff plans to refile it.

By KERI BLAKINGER

A federal judge has tossed a lawsuit brought by former Sheriff Alex Villanueva against Los Angeles County over a “do not rehire” notation that was placed in his personnel file after an oversight panel said he had discriminated against and harassed two county employees.

The federal lawsuit filed in June had, among other things, accused the county of defaming Villanueva and violating his due process rights when officials “se-

cretly” investigated him without giving him a chance to respond to the accusations.

Lawyers for the county said in court filings that Villanueva had been told of the investigations and refused to be interviewed for them unless he was given the questions in advance.

On Friday, U.S. District Judge Stephen V. Wilson granted the county’s request to dismiss the case, saying Villanueva hadn’t shown how the “do not rehire” designation had actually harmed him, as he hadn’t provided any evidence he’d been denied a job because of it.

Still, Villanueva’s attorney framed the decision as a win, pointing out that the judge addressed only some of the former sheriff’s claims and left open the possibility that Villanueva’s legal team could refile the case — which he said they planned to do.

“We are pleased with and fully respect Judge Wilson’s order from yesterday,” attorney Carney Shegarian wrote in an email to The Times. “Our client, former Sheriff Villanueva, is on the side of right and we are confident the law will provide remedies for the wrongs defendants committed against him.”

Jason Tokoro, a partner at the law firm Miller Barondess acting as outside counsel for the county, also framed the decision as a win.

“We appreciate the Court’s ruling and that it agreed with our arguments across the board in rejecting the allegations former Sheriff Villanueva made in his lawsuit,” Tokoro said in an emailed statement. “Although he accused the County of putting him on the ‘Do Not Rehire’ list unfairly, the facts showed otherwise, and it was for these reasons the Court dismissed the case.”

The allegations at the center of the suit date from early 2022, when Inspector General Max Huntsman accused Villanueva, who was still sheriff at the time, of making a “racially based attack” and “dog whistling to [See Villanueva, B5]

‘Small actions’ that ‘create a better world’

Newsom touts state’s efforts at Climate Week NYC, asking Californians to help fight global warming — whether by composting or taking public transit or planting trees

By NOAH HAGGERTY

Gov. Gavin Newsom’s office announced a new campaign Monday at Climate Week NYC to encourage 1 million Californians to take everyday actions to help combat climate change.

“Every day, Californians are taking small actions that collectively are helping us create a better world for our kids and grandkids,” Newsom said in a prepared statement. “The Climate Action Counts campaign will empower Californians to be a part of something big and impactful.”

The campaign encourages Californians to pledge that they will take “everyday actions” to fight global warming, such as composting, taking public transit instead of driving and planting trees or native plants. Details can be found at the new

Climate Action Counts website.

Officials unveiled the campaign as a kickoff to several California-focused events at Climate Week NYC. The gathering, which is held every year in New York, is intended to bring together climate leaders from government, industry and activism to seek and promote solutions to global warming.

The climate pledge is intended to help motivate Californians to live more sustainable lives, reduce their reliance on planet-warming fossil fuels and combat the feeling of anxiety and helplessness that can come with climate change.

The campaign builds upon the California Climate Action Corps, a volunteer program aimed at addressing climate change, which the governor’s office announced at Climate Week [See Climate, B5]



MEL MELCON Los Angeles Times

AS PART of Gov. Gavin Newsom’s Climate Action Counts campaign, Californians are being asked to reduce driving in favor of biking or public transportation.

State agency is destroying pet import records

[Puppies, from B1] been a champion of animal welfare and the administration is committed to exploring further efforts to close loopholes and address this issue in partnership with legislators, advocates and local authorities.”

Gardon declined to say whether the governor's office would instruct agriculture officials to stop destroying the veterinary records. The documents, called certificates of veterinary inspection, are required by most states when dogs enter for travel or sale. The Times requested those documents from all 50 states and received responses accounting for nearly 88,000 dogs imported into California since 2018.

California began mandating the records in 2014 to protect consumers from buying sick puppies and to track disease outbreaks. Importers are supposed to send the certificates to county health departments but rarely do so.

County officials seem unaware they are supposed to collect them, and most counties aren't doing so, The Times' investigation found.

Meanwhile, California's agriculture agency acknowledged routinely receiving the records from other states — and immediately destroying them with no review because the “sale and movement of household pets are outside of CDFA's jurisdiction.”

California Department of Food and Agriculture Secretary Karen Ross and State Veterinarian Annette Jones declined to be interviewed.

In a statement, the department said it “is reviewing its procedures when certificates of veterinary health are sent to the agency in error and is committed to exercising the entirety of its legal authority to hold the sickening and morally-reprehensible perpetrators of underground puppy mills accountable.”

The agency acknowledged that the current system “is confusing” since the state oversees health certificates for livestock and poultry imports but counties are



FRANCINE ORR Los Angeles Times

“WE CLEARLY need to enact legislation that closes this huge loophole,” state Senate Judiciary Chair Sen. Tom Umberg (D-Orange) said. Above, a dog is transported after an auction last year in Bentonville, Ark.

supposed to receive the same paperwork for dogs.

The agency said it notifies other states that the records should go to counties, but that it does not have dedicated staff to forward up to 50 health certificates it receives each day.

“We are taking a close look at any additional actions within our staff resources and legal authority,” the statement said.

The agency did not say whether the records continue to be deleted.

Veterinarian Jennifer Scarlett, who runs the San Francisco Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, said efforts to crack down on the underground puppy market exposed by The Times are hamstrung by the state's failure to keep the records.

“We can't prove illegal activity if we can't even look at the documents,” she said.

Assemblyman Brian Maienschein (D-San Diego), who authored the law re-

quiring health certificates, told The Times that the state and counties need to work together to ensure each record goes to the correct agency.

“Let's face it, the state [agriculture] department should not just be deleting the records,” he said, adding that doing so ensures that importers who violate the law aren't detected. “It gives protection to the sellers.”

Maienschein authored a bill this year that would have required refundable deposits to be offered for any dog sold to a person in California and, in cases that involve a broker, would have mandated that the name of the dog's breeder be disclosed to the buyer. Despite sailing through the state Legislature unanimously, it died last month in the Senate Appropriations Committee. The bill was sponsored by the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Maienschein said he was

given no reason why the bill was killed. Umberg said he's looking into whether he will take it up now that Maienschein is termed out and leaving the Legislature.

Brittany Benesi, a senior director for state legislation at the ASPCA, said in a statement that a similar bill is needed next year to “better protect consumers from these deceptive tactics that disguise the source of their animals.”

California became the first state in the nation to ban pet stores from selling commercially bred dogs beginning in 2019, a move intended to thwart shipments from puppy mills into the state. Lawmakers later strengthened the law to forbid all retail dog sales after finding that dubious rescues began selling purebred and designer puppies to pet stores. But in the years since, state and local agencies responsible for monitoring animals coming into California have failed to do so,

allowing middlemen to import hundreds of puppies with little oversight.

Gary Weitzman, head of the San Diego Humane Society, said it makes no sense that California's law puts the onus on importers, some engaged in deceptive practices, to submit records showing how many dogs they bring into the state.

“The state has to come in and demand that counties track these, that these records are actually audited, that they're actually being used to prosecute, and that the importers aren't driving the bus, basically, which they literally are,” said Weitzman, who called the findings from The Times' investigation “disturbing.”

The state requires that importers submit the records to county health departments regardless of whether they import one dog or hundreds.

That requirement surprised Assemblyman Heath Flora (R-Ripon), who

bought a cavapoo through a website in 2020. The Times found Flora's name on a veterinary record from Missouri for the puppy, prompting the lawmaker to say he had no idea he was required to share the document he had been given with San Joaquin County.

“I don't think the law is bad,” Flora said. “We want animals imported to be disease-free. With that said, when laws are passed and constituents don't know, how do we hold them accountable?”

Reality television star Evelyn Lozada said more must be done to ensure consumers are protected when buying a puppy. Lozada publicly accused a Southern California family of selling her a sick puppy in 2018 that she said had been dyed a chocolate brown so the dog could fetch a higher price.

Lozada was upset to learn that one of the people she said sold her the puppy, Trina Kenney, was listed on veterinary records reviewed by The Times as having imported 29 puppies from Michigan last year. The records were signed by a veterinarian in the weeks before and after a Los Angeles County Superior Court judge found that the Kenney family participated in a “heinous” scheme to sell sick puppies and barred them from selling dogs.

An attorney for the Kenneys told The Times the family has been complying with the order not to sell dogs and questioned the authenticity of the travel certificates. The attorney could not be reached for comment on Lozada's allegations.

Lozada's puppy, which she named Biscuit, was not found among the thousands of dogs in The Times' records. Lozada said after Biscuit was treated for parasites, he was healthy until recently. She said she had to put him down a few weeks ago due to his declining health. He was 6 years old.

“People really trust when they're purchasing a dog,” she said. “I wish there were stricter laws and that something would be done.”

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SPECIAL SOUVENIR

A Rams fan holds the football just presented to her by running back Kyren Williams after he scored one of his three touchdowns in Sunday's 27-24 victory over the San Francisco 49ers at SoFi Stadium.

UC is suppressing pro-Palestinian speech, faculty complaint alleges

Administrators are accused of violating labor laws in wake of campus protests.

By SUHAUNA HUSSAIN

Faculty across the state have accused the University of California system of carrying out a sweeping campaign to suppress pro-Palestinian speech and protests in violation of state labor law.

The Council of University of California Faculty Associations said UC administrators have threatened faculty for teaching about the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and launched disciplinary proceedings against faculty for supporting on-campus student encampments as well as backing a strike by student academic workers this spring.

The faculty group made the allegations in a 581-page complaint filed Thursday with California's Public Employment Relations Board, which oversees labor-management interaction for public employees in the state. The unfair labor practice charge was co-signed by faculty associations at seven UC campuses, including Los Angeles, Irvine, San Diego, Santa Cruz, Berkeley, Davis and San Francisco.

Faculty members gathered at UCLA on Thursday to announce the charge. At the news conference, Constance Penley, president of the Council of UC Faculty Associations, described the university's actions as a "relentless campaign to chill faculty's exercise of their academic freedom and to deter them from teaching about the war in a way that does not align with the university's position."

Faculty have also been investigated for pro-Palestinian social media posts, arrested for exercising their free speech rights and surveilled and intimidated by university representatives, the filing alleged.

The push from faculty highlights how, months after



ROBERT GAUTHIER Los Angeles Times

IN MAY, scores of law enforcement officers moved in to clear students, faculty and others protesting the Israel-Hamas war on the UC Irvine campus.

police cleared pro-Palestinian encampments at universities, the fallout has continued on various campuses, with university officials implementing new protest rules and students grappling with ongoing suspensions and administrative holds placed on their academic records.

The faculty claims build on an earlier charge filed by the UCLA Faculty Assn. in the aftermath of attacks and mass arrests faced by students and faculty participating in an on-campus encampment in April and May. And they parallel similar allegations made by unions representing UC employees, including United Auto Workers Local 481, which represents student academic workers and the University Council-American Federation of Teachers, which represents 6,500 librarians and teaching faculty across the university system.

The various charges, filed earlier this year with the state labor board, allege essentially that the university had failed to maintain safe working conditions, disregarded the free speech rights of its employees, and unlawfully made changes to working conditions in response to campus protests.

The university defends

its course of action. In response to a request for comment, UC spokesperson Heather Hansen pointed to a university statement previously filed with the state labor board in response to the UCLA Faculty Assn.'s charge.

The university stated that while it "supports free speech and lawful protests," it must also "ensure that all of its community members can safely continue to study, work, and exercise their rights, which is why it has in place policies that regulate the time, place, and manner for protest activities on its campuses."

"The University has allowed — and continues to allow — lawful protesting activities surrounding the conflict in the Middle East. But when protests violate University policy or threaten the safety and security of others, the University has taken lawful action to end impermissible and unlawful behavior," the university said.

The filing details instances of the university allegedly investigating and disciplining faculty.

Soon after the Oct. 7 attacks by Hamas on Israel, and the start of Israel's bombing siege of Gaza, the university began sending emails to faculty threatening

that they could be investigated and disciplined for teaching content outside the scope of their courses.

In November, UC San Diego investigated two lecturers for teaching about the history of the Palestinian territories, the filing said. A UC Irvine faculty member was sent a "letter of warning" for holding a vote on whether to conduct class at the on-campus encampment, with optional attendance.

In another example cited, a medical school lecturer at UC San Francisco who delivered a talk in April about trauma-informed care at a health equity conference was barred from participating in future educational activities after she devoted some six minutes of a 50-minute course to discussing the topic as it related to Palestinians' health challenges. A campus administrator informed the lecturer that administrators had received complaints that her talk was "biased and antisemitic," and took down an online video of the talk. The ban was eventually lifted, but the video remains offline.

The complaint says the university's "harsh crackdown against professors for expressing pro-Palestinian viewpoints stands in stark contrast to its treatment of vocal pro-Israeli faculty."

The university refused to initiate a formal disciplinary investigation into a pro-Israel faculty member at UC Irvine accused of harassing and physically intimidating an undergraduate student, the filing said, although video footage was provided of the faculty member "cornering, physically intimidating, and interrogating a visibly scared student."

After an unfair labor practice charge is filed, the Public Employee Relations Board will review and evaluate the case, and decide whether to dismiss the charge or proceed with having parties negotiate a settlement. If no settlement is reached, the case would be scheduled for a formal hearing before an administrative law judge.

Gasoline leak again forces evacuation of Ventura homes

About 150 are emptied because of 'potentially dangerous levels of hydrocarbon vapors.'

By NATHAN FENNO AND DAKOTA SMITH

Scores of residents in Ventura were ordered Sunday by city officials to leave their homes after gasoline leaked into a sewer line — the second time in three days that residents had to evacuate because of the problem.

Authorities ordered the evacuation of about 150 homes because of "potentially dangerous levels of hydrocarbon vapors" and placed an additional 2,600 homes under a warning. Both orders were lifted Sunday at 4:40 p.m.

Officials pinpointed the source of the leak as the Sinclair gas station at 2121 E. Harbor Blvd. The station's owner told authorities that at least 2,000 gallons of gasoline had gone into the ground at Monmouth Way and Harbor Boulevard, said Mack Douglass, emergency services manager for the Ventura Police Department.

The gasoline leaked from an underground facility, said Jennifer Buckley, a spokesperson for the city.

Sinclair Harbor said in a

statement Sunday that a potential leak was reported to the company on Friday. The affected pipes no longer contain gas, and the gas station has been shut down as a precaution, according to the statement.

"Additional testing and repairs are scheduled for early next week to ensure the issue is fully resolved," the statement said.

In their evacuation order on Sunday at 9:53 a.m., police urged residents along Bayshore Avenue to "leave the area as soon as you can."

The incident started Thursday after vapors were observed in the sewer line at Monmouth Way between East Harbor and Pierpont boulevards. That triggered evacuations and warnings that were lifted later that day.

Officials couldn't confirm at the time that it was gasoline, Buckley said.

An emergency alert update from the city Sunday said Ventura Water had repaired the leaking line, but "the extent of the leak continues to be investigated in the sewer system to mitigate the vapor caused by the gasoline."

Bayshore Avenue south of Peninsula Street remained closed Sunday evening because of open maintenance hole covers in the right of way. Officials warned the public to stay away from the area.



Ventura Police Department

CITY officials in Ventura ordered residents to leave their homes after gasoline leaked into a sewer line.

California man charged with providing fentanyl that killed Denver man

Officials say suspect also sold, mailed drug to undercover officers in a sting operation.

By ANDREW KHOURI

Denver authorities have charged a California man with distributing fentanyl that resulted in the death of a Colorado resident.

The Denver district attorney's office alleged in a news release this month that Jamal Gamal bore responsibility for the death of Denver resident Collin Walker by selling the 28-year-old man fentanyl in November that led to his death.

After Walker died, Denver police set up a sting operation.

Authorities said they were able to purchase more

than 14 grams of fentanyl from Gamal, who mailed undercover detectives the drug from California.

According to KDVR-TV in Denver, distribution of fentanyl resulting in death is a charge first created in Colorado in 2022 and the local district attorney has made a push to prosecute drug dealers.

"Collin Walker's death is yet another tragic example of the devastation that fentanyl continues to cause in our community," Denver Dist. Atty. Beth McCann said in a statement. "The charges against Mr. Gamal should send the message that people who are accused of selling this poison in Denver will be prosecuted by my office to the fullest extent of the law."

According to the district attorney's office, Gamal was arrested in San Francisco in late August.

Slain couple found in bunker died of blunt force trauma, authorities say

A neighbor at their nudist RV park in Redlands has been charged with murder.

By SANDRA McDONALD

A Southern California couple whose bodies were found under their neighbor's home after being reported missing died from "blunt force trauma to the head," the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department said.

Daniel Menard, 79, and his wife, Stephanie Menard, 73, had been reported missing in late August from their home on a nudist ranch in Redlands, sparking a search by police and concerns by their friends and family.

Less than a week later, police were tipped off that their neighbor, Michael Royce Sparks, 62, in Olive Dell Ranch had admitted killing the couple to a family member and was threatening to harm himself. Police surrounded the home and took him into custody



Menard family

DANIEL and Stephanie Menard were reported missing in August and found dead days later.

Aug. 29 and discovered the couple's bodies in a concrete bunker under the home.

Sparks was charged with two counts of murder Sept. 3. The couple's cause of death was confirmed last week by the county coroner.

The Menards and their pet shih tzu, Cuddles, were reported missing by a friend after the couple missed a church service. Their car was found unlocked down the road from their home, and Stephanie Menard's purse and their cellphones were found inside their

home.

A neighbor told local TV stations that Sparks hated the couple and that they feuded over a tree between their properties. The Redlands Police Department gave no comment when asked for an update on a possible motive last week.

At a candlelight vigil for the couple, friends and neighbors gathered under an Olive Dell Ranch sign with candles, flowers and music to celebrate the Menards' lives.

"It's disheartening, it's

uncomfortable," one neighbor said of the killings. "In a week, we as a community of Olive Dell Ranch lost three members of our family." He characterized Stephanie Menard, whom he played bingo with, as a spitfire. "She knew what she wanted, she meant what she said, but she always did it caringly."

Olive Dell Ranch is a residential RV park and "the ideal spot to enjoy the nudist/naturist lifestyle whether visiting for a day or an overnight stay," according to its website.

A new chemical additive detected in fentanyl raises questions, alarms

[Fentanyl, from B1]
 Researchers called it the most sudden change in the U.S. illegal drug supply in recent history, based on chemical prevalence. They found that BTMPS sometimes dramatically exceeded the amount of fentanyl in drug samples and, in some cases, made up more than a third of the drug sample.
 It was also a growing presence in fentanyl over the summer: In June, none of the L.A. fentanyl samples tested by the team contained BTMPS, the analysis found. By August, it was detected in 41% of them.
 "This is effectively unprecedented," said Morgan Godvin, one of the authors of the study and project direc-

tor for Drug Checking Los Angeles, a UCLA project that works in partnership with the L.A. County Department of Public Health to analyze illicit drugs.
 "We have no idea just how many people have been exposed," Godvin said, but if the high prevalence among drug samples tested so far is any indication, "that translates to tens of thousands of fentanyl users being exposed to BTMPS, sometimes at very high volume."
 The findings were publicly released as a preprint — research that has not been peer reviewed — on the website of Drug Checking Los Angeles and on medRxiv, a website where scientists share preliminary findings.
 BTMPS has been studied



Buena Park Police Department

POLICE SEIZED about 300,000 suspected fentanyl pills in a raid on a home in Fountain Valley in August. A new chemical additive known as BTMPS has been found at high levels in fentanyl in recent months.

in rats for its potential to reduce withdrawal symptoms from morphine and affect nicotine use, but it can be toxic and even deadly to rodents at sufficient doses, and health researchers say

there is an urgent need for more studies on its effects on the human body.
 The PubChem database lists a number of possible hazards associated with BTMPS, including skin irritation and eye damage. Godvin was alarmed by animal studies indicating dangers from inhaling BTMPS — such as tremors and shortness of breath — because smoking is now common in L.A. among people who use fentanyl.

Carolina program that tests drug samples from across the country had also found BTMPS in more than 200 samples from a dozen states stretching from the West Coast to Maine. UNC senior scientist Nabarun Dasgupta said the chemical began showing up in drug samples that it tested this summer, most often mingled with fentanyl, both in powder form and in fake pills.

product "at a high level in the supply chain," possibly to stabilize them from degrading from light or heat exposure as illicit drugs are made, stored and transported, they wrote.

Alex Krotulski, a director at the nonprofit Center for Forensic Science Research and Education in Pennsylvania, said the amount of BTMPS found in drug samples it has tested varies dramatically — sometimes making up a small amount, sometimes amounting to the "primary component" in the sample.
 Unlike other adulterants added to fentanyl for their psychoactive effects, "it's not like it's something that you go out and you use a bunch of to get high," Krotulski said. The UCLA and NIST team found that people who use drugs rated samples high in BTMPS as "bunk" — low in quality — and broadly saw it as "highly undesirable."

UCLA assistant professor Chelsea Shover added that the team had found BTMPS for sale on online platforms like Amazon and Alibaba with similar wording to what Chinese chemical companies had used in the past to market to fentanyl producers, with sellers touting their "experience getting through Mexican customs."
 "This is clearly implying that this is to be used to make illicit drugs," Shover said. "It's stuff you wouldn't expect to see if it was just selling an industrial chemical in a standard way."

People who use drugs have said that BTMPS can smell like bug spray or plastic and have reported blurred vision, nausea and coughing after ingesting it. One told researchers that "it smelled so bad I could barely smoke it."
 The UCLA and NIST researchers warned that "with such a sudden and sustained prevalence in the drug supply, users are at risk of repeated, ongoing exposures, which may compound health effects."

As it stands, there is no test strip that can quickly detect BTMPS as there is for fentanyl. Nor is the chemical routinely tested for by doctors or medical examiners, which means that if someone has been harmed by BTMPS they took accidentally, "clinicians would have no way of knowing," the UCLA and NIST team wrote.

When he took samples that were supposed to be fentanyl to Drug Checking Los Angeles to analyze, he learned that some contained the strange chemical. The man said he now tries to avoid BTMPS, but "a lot of people are just trying to get anything to keep from being sick" from opioid withdrawal.
 Whatever clandestine labs are doing, he said, "we're the guinea pigs."

The UNC Street Drug Analysis Lab likewise said that much remains unknown at this point, including whether BTMPS poses an overdose risk, although the lab cautions that "EVERY substance at some volume will be toxic."
 Dasgupta said the detection of BTMPS represents the first example of the burgeoning network of drug-checking programs working together to find a substance "before any health authorities or any law enforcement did." Godvin said that "just a few years ago, we wouldn't have even known about this" and urged Angelenos to get drugs analyzed through Drug Checking Los Angeles.

Stamos-Buesig, whose group helps analyze the contents of illegal drugs in San Diego to inform and protect people, said that "I've told people for a while — we can't hyper-focus on fentanyl" as if it were the only threat.
 "There's a lot of other stuff coming on board," Stamos-Buesig said.
 The UCLA and NIST analysis suggested one possible scenario: Illegal drug manufacturers might be adding BTMPS to fentanyl precursors or to the final

In a drug supply already riddled with threats like fentanyl and the animal tranquilizer xylazine, "this gives us a whole other thing to worry about," Godvin said.

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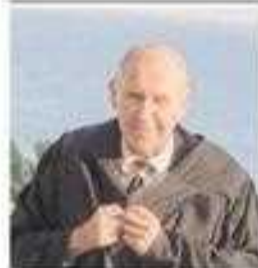
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Obituaries

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Richard Clegg Hubbell

July 10, 1931 - September 18, 2024

Richard Clegg Hubbell, a lifelong resident of Los Angeles, passed away peacefully on September 18, 2024, at the age of 93. Born on Long Island, New York, Richard moved to Los Angeles shortly after, where he grew up in the Beverlywood neighborhood and attended Hamilton High School.

A proud alumnus of UCLA, Richard was a passionate supporter of the Bruins and never missed a football game. His love for the university extended beyond the stands, as he spent many days playing golf at the Bel Air Country Club, where he could enjoy views of the campus that meant so much to him.

Richard dedicated much of his professional life to public service as a Superior Court Judge for Los Angeles. His distinguished career included presiding over several high-profile cases, most notably the landmark case of the Oakland Raiders vs. the NFL. His commitment to justice and integrity left a lasting impact on the legal community.

A true lover of animals, Richard's compassion was evident in his lifelong dedication to pets. He met his beloved wife, Lucy, while she was working as a veterinarian assistant at Doctor's Pet Hospital in Hollywood, when he brought his dog for a visit. They bonded over their shared love of animals, fine dining, and travel. They were longtime members of both the Bel Air Country Club and the Bel Air Bay Club, enjoying time on the golf course and with friends until Lucy's passing in 2021.

Richard is survived by his daughter, Chrissy Hubbell Braibanti, her husband, Mark Braibanti, and his adored granddaughters, Ella and Lucy Braibanti, all of Los Angeles. He was a devoted father and grandfather, whose warmth, guidance, and sense of humor will be deeply missed. He will be remembered for his kind heart, sharp mind, and unwavering spirit.

A memorial service will be held on Wednesday, September 25th from 11:30-1pm, at the Pierce Brothers Westwood Village Memorial Park and Mortuary, 1218 Glendon Ave, Los Angeles, CA. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to the UCLA Law Fund in Richard's memory. Please send tributes, condolences and memories @ www.pbwvmortuary.com to honor his life, celebrating one rich with love, laughter, and unwavering dedication to family, friends, and his passions.



Theron Lee Palmer

May 13, 1933 - September 17, 2024

Theron (Ron) Palmer passed away peacefully on September 17, 2024, at the age of 91. Born and raised in Glendale, California, Ron attended University of Redlands and had a career in communications and community relations in the defense industry. A Navy man aboard the USS Wasp (CV-18), Ron served in the South Pacific in 1956 and 1957 and then in the Naval Reserves. Preceded in death by his cherished wife of 58 years, Diana, Ron is survived by his daughters, Leslie Palmer (Chris Damore) and Laurie Spivak (Jason), his sister Sharon Mountford (Louis), and his two beloved grandchildren, Wes and Sylvie, who brought their "Papa" endless pride. He took joy in the simple pleasures: a challenging crossword puzzle, jazz especially Ahmad Jamal and Chet Baker, a good book, mahjong, So Cal sports teams, a triple-word score in Scrabble, and a well-tended vegetable garden, so it's appropriate that he passed away on the Harvest Moon. A man of steadfast integrity who lived with quiet restraint, choosing his words carefully, and rarely complaining, Ron believed in the importance of service and civic duty, volunteering and knocking on doors for candidates he believed in, and reading two newspapers daily. He was active in the Chamber of Commerce, Junior Achievement, and a number of LA City public transportation committees. Despite the odds, Ron persevered to see his grandson Wes off to college. While his presence will be deeply missed, Ron's lessons in resilience, integrity, and quiet strength live on. There will be a private family service and Ron's ashes will be spread alongside Diana's in the place they loved most, Santa Barbara. To honor Ron's memory, donations may be made to KJAZZ, a station that filled his life with music and meaning www.kkjj.org.

Tommy, a two time Doo Wop Hall Of Fame inductee, worked with Dick Clark Productions for 30+ years and is better known for writing and performing on 1965 hits such as "I'll Be Gone", "Lady" and also performed on the certified gold record by Jewel Akens entitled "The Birds And The Bees", a top 10 hit in the first quarter of 1965, reaching No.2 on the US Cash Box singles chart, No.3 on the US Billboard Hot 100 chart, and No.21 on the US Billboard Hot Rhythm & Blues Singles chart.

From the family: "Words can't describe how much we'll miss him. He lit up every room with his radiant smile, magnetic personality, and always knew how to make people laugh. Tommy touched many lives, he was well-loved, and will be missed by many."



Tommy "Thomas" James Turner, Jr.

Turner

Songwriter, Composer, Performer, and all out phenomenal showman, Thomas James Turner Jr, better known by his stage name 'Tommy Turner' sadly passed away on the evening of Thursday, September 12th, in the Hollywood area of Los Angeles, California, while surrounded by close friends and family.

Tommy, a two time Doo Wop Hall Of Fame inductee, worked with Dick Clark Productions for 30+ years and is better known for writing and performing on 1965 hits such as "I'll Be Gone", "Lady" and also performed on the certified gold record by Jewel Akens entitled "The Birds And The Bees", a top 10 hit in the first quarter of 1965, reaching No.2 on the US Cash Box singles chart, No.3 on the US Billboard Hot 100 chart, and No.21 on the US Billboard Hot Rhythm & Blues Singles chart.

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KNN News

CHP OFFICERS check a downed plane in Lancaster on Sunday after a Yakovlev Yak-52 and a Nanchang CJ-6A collided. The incident's cause remains unknown.

1 pilot is killed, another unhurt in midair collision over Lancaster

No passengers were on either aircraft, officials say. Details remain sketchy.

BY MATTHEW ORMSETH

A pilot was killed after two small-engine planes collided in midair over Lancaster on Sunday afternoon, officials said.

Federal authorities said they were looking into the crash, which a Los Angeles County sheriff's spokesperson said occurred about 12:50 p.m.

Firefighters arrived at the scene of a downed plane near 47th Street East and Avenue F about 1:20 p.m., said L.A. County Fire Capt. Sheila Kelliher-Berkoh. A second downed aircraft was near 60th Street East and Avenue G, Kelliher-Berkoh said.

One of the pilots was pronounced dead at the scene, but the other pilot was uninjured, she said. Although details of the incident remain scarce, it appears the two planes collided above Lancaster, Kelliher-Berkoh said.
 It wasn't known Monday afternoon what caused the crash, she said.

No passengers were on either plane.

The National Transportation Safety Board "is investigating the midair collision of a Yakovlev Yak-52 and Nanchang CJ-6A near Lancaster," the agency said in a statement Sunday afternoon.

The Yak-52 is a single-engine craft designed in the 1970s in the Soviet Union. The CJ-6A was originally produced in the 1960s for the Chinese military. Both are known to be used in aerobatics.

City News Service contributed to this report.

Villanueva suit against L.A. County is dismissed

[Villanueva, from B1] the extremists he caters to” when he repeatedly referred to the inspector general by his foreign-sounding birth name, Max-Gustaf. Not long after that, Villanueva also accused Huntsman of being a Holocaust denier. He did not provide any evidence for that claim, and Huntsman denied it.

Around the same time that Huntsman filed his complaint, Esther Lim — then a justice deputy for county Supervisor Hilda Solis — filed a complaint accusing Villanueva of targeting and harassing women of color.

Pointing to comments the former sheriff made on Facebook livestreams, Lim alleged a pattern of age discrimination and harassment of Asian women.

According to the county, Villanueva was notified in June 2022 that he was the subject of an investigation by the Sheriff’s Department’s Internal Affairs Bureau. A few weeks later, an investigator interviewed Huntsman and Lim.

After that, Villanueva alleged in court filings, the case was shelved because the Internal Affairs Bureau determined he hadn’t violated any policies. He said the inquiry wasn’t reopened until late 2023, after he’d been voted out of office as sheriff and announced his candidacy for county supervisor.



FORMER L.A. County Sheriff Alex Villanueva, shown in 2020, sued the county over a “do not rehire” notation placed in his personnel file after a panel said he had discriminated against and harassed two employees.

On Sunday, a lawyer for the county said the assertion that the case had been shelved was untrue. The county’s court filings describe a case that was still active in early 2023, when Villanueva emailed an investigator in response to certified letters she’d sent trying to reach him.

“I will ask you to submit your question in writing, after providing a brief description of what the allegations are,” he wrote, according to copies of the emails attached to court filings.

When the investigator told him that was not the standard practice, Villanueva questioned the op-

tics of investigating a former sheriff, said he was “not concerned” about standard practice and noted that he was “more than happy” to cooperate but only on his own terms. The two went back and forth by email for several weeks before Villanueva sent the investigator a final email asserting

that she had “no jurisdiction” to interview him and calling her terms “unethical and unacceptable.”

The department went on to complete its investigation and sent it to the County Equity Oversight Panel, which met in October of last year and sustained some of the complaints in both cases, ul-

timately recommending the former sheriff be deemed ineligible for rehire.

Then, Villanueva said, he heard nothing further from the county about the complaints or their outcome until The Times published an article about them early this year. Afterward, according to his court filings, he reached out to a former Sheriff’s Department chief who allegedly told him the case had been shelved and later reopened.

In May, he filed a claim letter notifying the county he planned to sue for \$25 million and asking officials to rescind the “do not rehire” designation. When he filed suit in June, the complaint accused the county of defamation, intentionally causing him emotional distress and violating his free speech and due process rights.

According to Friday’s decision, Villanueva and his legal team have two weeks to refile their case.

Though Lim did not offer comment on the outcome, Huntsman said the case showed the need for robust oversight of the Sheriff’s Department.

“The court opinion speaks for itself,” he told The Times. “The fact that Villanueva was able to suppress any response to his conduct while sheriff demonstrates that LASD will always need strong external investigations to prevent corruption.”

Newsom’s climate initiative asks residents to change daily habits

[Climate, from B1] NYC four years ago. Since then, the program has grown to 400 members and has become a model for other states and the White House’s American Climate Corps.

“We’ve already engaged tens of thousands of volunteers,” said Josh Fryday, chief service officer with the governor’s office. “What we’re hoping to do now is to supercharge our efforts to mobilize Californians by engaging 1 million people to take these simple, everyday actions that add up to real impact.”

In order for California to reach its ambitious climate goals, large swaths of the population must drastically reduce their emissions by transitioning to electric vehicles and replacing natural gas heating in their homes, said Christopher Jones, a carbon footprint researcher and director of the CoolClimate Network at UC Berkeley.

The pledge itself probably won’t make much of a dent in emissions, Jones said, but with state policies already effectively eliminating the use of fossil fuels in the coming decades, Climate Action Counts could help warm up Californians to climate action and the needed lifestyle changes.

“The reality is, the big actions are not on this list,” he said. But the pledge can get Californians to realize “this is who we are — Californians are cool. Californians care about the environment. Californians identify as leaders in this area.”

The campaign focuses not only on lowering emissions but also on reducing waste and pollution, and encouraging people to connect with nature and their communities.

However, experts say convincing individuals to take up new habits through communication and pledges alone can be a challenge.

Based on research, “it’s very clear that stronger incentives are going to work better than simply communicating,” said Seth Wynes, a professor at the University of Waterloo in Canada who studies the effects of individual actions on the climate. “People are not going to just give up their car and bike to

work if it’s extremely dangerous to bike.”

This is not the first time officials have called on Californians to change their habits. In 2008, the state launched a campaign encouraging Californians to upgrade the energy efficiency of their homes and conserve electricity. While the campaign may have moved the needle, it fell short of its initial goals. During the 2012-16 drought, the state aimed to curb water use habits with public messaging, water use restrictions and incentives to increase water efficiency. Although per-capita water use increased when restrictions were lifted, it has remained lower than pre-drought levels — an indication that many Californians had permanently changed their habits.

The governor’s office also plans to work with local partners to reach Californians in their own communities, which experts say can boost the effectiveness of campaigns like these.

“Together, we can create collective impact,” said Fryday, “and our partners, by organizing people on campuses and in the workplace and in their cities, are going to demonstrate that we can do this.”

The announcement of a California campaign at Climate Week NYC is in keeping with the gathering’s ethos. Organizers ask participants to come ready to share a problem or vulnerability they need help addressing, and they put some pressure on attending organizations and governments to announce new goals and efforts.

“It’s always a competition, too. ... We instigate it all the time,” said Angela Barranco, the executive director for North America at Climate Group, the charity organizing the event. “There’s a pressure to show up with something actually delivered, and I think we have to keep that pressure going.” Climate Week started in 2009 as a series of smaller panel discussions, aimed at encouraging global leaders at the nearby United Nations General Assembly to talk about climate issues.

Since then, the focus has shifted from talking about

the problem to inspiring action. California has taken on a leading role in those efforts, and now represents North America as a co-chair for a group of governments committed to reaching net zero emissions by 2050.

“California shows up and really puts resources behind much of the ambition they have,” Barranco said. “So they’ve become experts at the table — for not just the United States.”



BIKE RIDING is an everyday activity that could help reduce use of fossil fuels.



MYUNG J. CHUN Los Angeles Times

INCREASED use of public transit is a key recommendation of Gov. Gavin Newsom’s climate pledge.

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Los Angeles Times

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(CITACION JUDICIAL)

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Erik Ludwick

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501 S. 1st Street
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JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

RYOTF

UCTHH

GHLAEG

HLYIQL

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(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday’s Jumbles: CARRY ROBOT DEFECT BICKER
Answer: Germany’s railway company, Deutsche Bahn, has had a reliable — TRACK RECORD

THE WEATHER

Today in Southern California

Brief warmup in store: High pressure in place across the western U.S. will support continued warm to hot weather across Southern California today, especially in areas away from the immediate coast; otherwise, patchy low clouds along the coast will clear up for afternoon sunshine. Conditions will remain hot across the interior Wednesday, though there will be relief from the heat at the coast.

5-day forecasts

High/low temperatures are average forecasts for entire zone.

Table with 5 columns: L.A. Basin, Valleys, Beaches, Mountains, Deserts. Rows: Today, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday. Columns show high/low temps and weather conditions.

Air quality



Surf and sea

POINT CONCEPTION TO MEXICO Inner waters: West wind 5-10 knots, becoming 10-20 knots in the afternoon. Seas 2 feet with a west swell of 2 feet at 5 seconds.

Surf zone: The risk for strong rip currents is expected to be moderate at Ventura County beaches and low elsewhere.

Table with 5 columns: County, Height, Period, Direction, Temp. Lists surf conditions for Santa Barbara, Ventura, Los Angeles, Orange, and San Diego.

Tides table for L.A. Outer Harbor, showing high and low tide times for today, Wednesday, and Friday.

UV index table showing minutes to burn for sensitive people in Las Vegas, Phoenix, and Los Angeles.

California cities*

Large table listing weather forecasts for various California cities including Anaheim, San Diego, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Sacramento.

Sun and moon

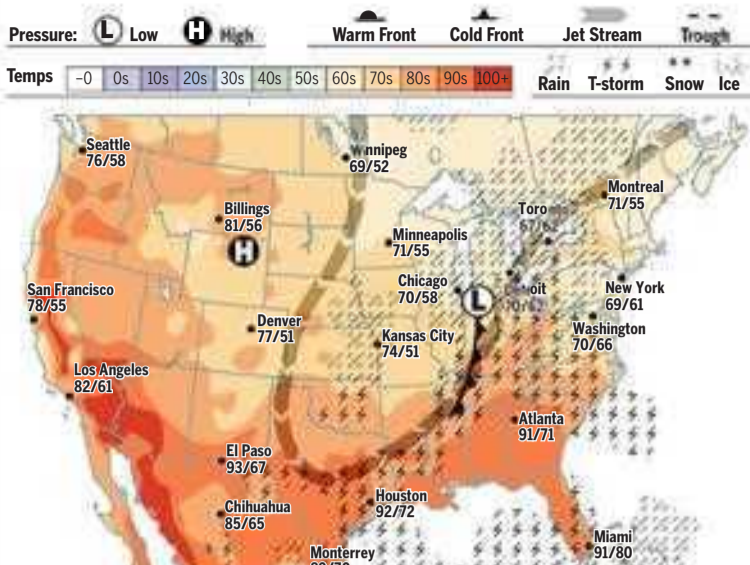
Today's rise/set for Los Angeles Co., Orange Co., and Ventura Co. Includes sunrise and moonset times.

Almanac

Almanac table with columns for Temperature, Precipitation, and Humidity for Los Angeles, Fullerton, and Ventura.

Today in North America

Storms in the Ohio Valley: Severe thunderstorms will spread across the Ohio Valley, bringing the risk of damaging winds, downpours and a few tornadoes. Across the West, heat will continue to expand north into the Pacific Northwest and the northern Rockies.



U.S. cities

MONDAY'S EXTREMES AS OF 2 P.M. FOR THE 48 CONTIGUOUS STATES High 107 in Palm Springs, Calif. Low 22 in Walden, Colo.

Table of U.S. city weather forecasts for Monday, today, and Wednesday, including high/low temps and precipitation.

THE DAY IN SPORTS

Pac-12 reportedly in talks to add Gonzaga and others

WIRE REPORTS The Pac-12 is in discussions with basketball powerhouse Gonzaga to join the rebuilding conference in 2026, three people with knowledge of the talks told the Associated Press on Monday.

The Pac-12 is also targeting Mountain West schools Nevada Las Vegas and Utah State, two of the people said, as it pivots away from a group of American Athletic Conference schools that announced they remain committed to their current league.

The people spoke on condition of anonymity because the Pac-12's strategy is not being made public. Meanwhile, the Mountain West received a commitment from Air Force to stay put in the conference after the school had drawn interest from the AAC, a person with knowledge of the AFA's decision told the AP on condition of anonymity.

Memphis, Tulane, South Florida, Texas San Antonio and the American Athletic Conference released a statement that made no mention of the Pac-12, but several people with knowledge of those talks told the AP the rebuilding conference had targeted those schools as potential new members.

"While we acknowledge receiving interest in our institutions from other conferences, we firmly believe that it is in our individual and collective best interests to uphold our commitment to each other," the schools said. "Together, we will continue to modernize the conference, elevate the student-athlete experience, achieve championship-winning successes, and build the future."

The Pac-12 began to re-stock for a 2026 relaunch two weeks ago by landing Boise State, Fresno State, San Diego State and Colorado State from the Mountain West to join Washington State and Oregon State, the



AARON GASH Associated Press

MANAGER David Bell was fired after the Reds' 2-0 loss to the Pirates.

only two Pac-12 schools left after a dramatic round of realignment took effect this summer. The Pac-12 needs at least two more members in all sports to reach the eight required to be a recognized conference with access to NCAA championships and the College Football Playoff in 2026.

Nebraska men's basketball coach Fred Hoiberg is scheduled to undergo a medical procedure Friday to have his pacemaker replaced, the athletic department announced. ... Louisiana State coach Brian Kelly confirmed that star linebacker Harold Perkins Jr., an AP preseason All-America selection who'll be eligible for the 2025 NFL draft, has an anterior cruciate ligament tear that has ended what was widely expected to be his final college season.

ETC. Reds fire Bell after six seasons

The Cincinnati Reds fired manager David Bell on Sunday night after six seasons. The team announced the move hours after a 2-0 loss to the Pittsburgh Pirates, and

named bench coach Freddie Benavides as interim manager for the final five games of the season. With a week left in the season, the Reds are 76-81 and in fourth place in the NL Central, 13 1/2 games behind division champion Milwaukee.

Boston Red Sox closer and four-time All-Star Kenley Jansen will miss the final six games of the season after being placed on the 15-day injured list because of a sore right shoulder.

Paul Broadhurst finished off his second PGA Tour Champions victory of the year with a few nervous moments Sunday, closing with an even-par 72 at Pebble Beach for a three-shot victory in the Pure Insurance Championship. Broadhurst was staked to a five-shot lead going into the final round and expanded that to as many as six shots. But the lead shrank to two shots when Alex Cejka shot a 64, and the Englishman held his nerve to the end.

Cleveland Browns defensive end Myles Garrett didn't sustain any further injuries to his feet while continuing to play in Sunday's loss to the New York Giants and is still listed as "day to day." Coach Kevin Stefanski said Garrett underwent an MRI on Monday. ... Minnesota quarterback Sam Darnold has a bruised left knee from a late and low hit that sidelined him for one play, a relief to the undefeated Vikings after an MRI revealed no structure damage. Darnold was hurt when Houston defensive end Danielle Hunter took him to the turf after a completion during Minnesota's 34-7 victory.

The United States will play its home leg of a CONCACAF Nations League quarterfinal in St. Louis on Nov. 18, the Americans' first competitive match under coach Mauricio Pochettino.



MATT FREED Associated Press

DEFENSIVE END Joey Bosa has a hip injury and is among four starters injured.

Chargers shorthanded for Chiefs

[Chargers, from B10] right ankle sprain that left him in a walking boot, the Chargers (2-1) enter an AFC West matchup with the Kansas City Chiefs with concerns about both starting offensive tackles Rashawn Slater (pectoral) and Joe Alt (knee) and defensive end Joey Bosa (hip).

Alt's injury could be the most significant, as media reports indicated the rookie right tackle suffered a sprained medial collateral ligament on the Chargers' final offensive play Sunday. NFL Network's Ian Rapoport reported Alt likely will miss time, but won't require surgery.

Alt, the No. 5 pick in last spring's draft, was off to a strong start to his pro career, including a rare perfect performance against the Las Vegas Raiders' Maxx Crosby in pass protection in the season opener. "Joe's been incredible," Harbaugh said Sunday in Pittsburgh. "It's like he's been playing five, six years. ... He's gone right out of the shoot against some of the best in the game."

By the time Alt limped off the field Sunday, the Chargers already were scrambling on the offensive line after Slater missed almost the entire second half. The Chargers tried to handle the All-Pro left tackle's injury by shifting right guard Trey Pipkins III from right guard to left tackle

while subbing in backup Jamarree Salyer at guard early in the third quarter. The protection broke down quickly, however, leading to Herbert re-aggravating the ankle injury on a sack on the second drive of the second quarter.

Unlike when he initially suffered the injury against the Panthers, Herbert was unable to finish the game Sunday, suggesting he could be further behind than when he started. It will be something to monitor, the quarterback said Sunday, but he noted he was "hopeful" he could play against the Chiefs, who have won five consecutive games against the Chargers.

Harbaugh said he expected that Herbert, whose postgame X-rays were negative Sunday, would go through a similar regimen this week as the previous week to determine his availability.

Herbert missed two of three days of practice with only limited participation in the other session before testing his ankle out during walk-through Saturday and warmups Sunday.

"The other [option] would be, no, you can't play, we're gonna take it out of your hand, we're going to let a warrior not be a warrior," Harbaugh said Monday. "That doesn't resonate with me. And it's Justin Herbert. They don't make them like him."

NFL STANDINGS

NFL National Conference standings table with columns for West, North, South, and East divisions.

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

NFL American Conference standings table with columns for West, North, South, and East divisions.

MONDAY'S RESULTS Jacksonville at Buffalo, late Washington at Cincinnati, late THURSDAY'S GAME Dallas at N.Y. Giants, 5:15 p.m. SUNDAY'S GAMES Rams at Chicago, 10 a.m. Kansas City at Chargers, 1:25 p.m. Cincinnati at Carolina, 10 a.m. Denver at N.Y. Jets, 10 a.m. Jacksonville at Houston, 10 a.m. Minnesota at Green Bay, 10 a.m. New Orleans at Tampa Bay, 10 a.m. Philadelphia at Atlanta, 10 a.m. Pittsburgh at Indianapolis, 10 a.m. New England at San Francisco, 1:05 p.m. Washington at Arizona, 1:05 p.m. Cleveland at Las Vegas, 1:25 p.m. Buffalo at Baltimore, 5:20 p.m. MONDAY'S GAMES Tennessee at Miami, 4:30 p.m. Seattle at Detroit, 5:15 p.m.



WALLY SKALIJ Los Angeles Times

ROOKIE KICKER Joshua Karty boots the Rams' go-ahead field goal with two seconds left to beat the 49ers.

RAMS TAKEAWAYS

No injuries? A victory in itself

BY GARY KLEIN

Sean McVay braced himself.

After receiving bad news about player injuries the day after the first two games of the season, the Rams coach arrived at the team facility on Monday confident but also wary.

On Sunday, immediately following the Rams' 27-24 victory over the San Francisco 49ers, team medical personnel indicated players suffered no major injuries. But McVay, perhaps shell-shocked from the previous weeks, stole himself for a possible change.

"If you're asking if that was something that I was holding my breath about," McVay said during a video-conference with reporters, "well, hell yeah."

As it turned out, no news was entirely welcome news for McVay, who said Reggie Scott, the Rams' vice-president of sports medicine and performance, confirmed the initial postgame report.

"A couple little nicks and bruises but nothing that's going to keep anybody out," McVay said.

That is a stark departure from the first two weeks, when the Rams lost six significant players because of injuries.

In the season-opening defeat by the Detroit Lions, receiver Puka Nacua (knee) and offensive linemen Steve Avila (knee) and Joe Noteboom (ankle) went down. All are on injured reserve. The earliest they can return is for an Oct. 20 game against the Las Vegas Raiders.

In a rout by the Arizona Cardinals, the Rams lost receiver Cooper Kupp (ankle), offensive lineman Jonah Jackson (shoulder) and safety John Johnson III (shoulder). Kupp remains out indefinitely - he will not play against the Chicago Bears on Sunday, McVay said - and Jackson and Johnson are on injured reserve. Jackson and Johnson cannot return until an Oct. 27 game against the Minnesota Vikings.

No new injuries means the Rams can prepare for the Bears with a semblance of continuity. The offensive line and quarterback Matthew Stafford and receivers could benefit most.

"We talk about a process: there hasn't been a process when we can't work together," McVay said, adding, "I'm very glad that we came out of this clean and now I want to see us continue to improve."

Karty handles the pressure

The Rams, bedeviled by kicking woes in 2023, used a sixth-round draft pick to select Joshua Karty.

Karty came through with a field goal that pulled the Rams within seven points in the fourth quarter, a game-tying extra point and a 37-yard winning field goal.

Karty had been listed as questionable because of a groin strain suffered against the Arizona Cardinals. The Rams were so unsure of his status, they signed kicker Tanner Brown to the practice squad at the beginning of last week.

Karty said he "kind of Googled" himself Sunday morning and discovered he was still listed as questionable but he got through pregame warmups and felt better than expected.

"As the game wore on, I think my kicks got a lot better and better," Karty said. "The extra point at the end, and field goal at the end, those were my best two kicks."

Karty said that before his final kick, he thought about former Stanford teammate Emmet Kenney, who Friday kicked a game-winning field goal against Syracuse.

"As soon as that happened on Friday, I knew like, 'How cliché would that be if both of us got game-winning kicks in the same week?'" Karty said. "And it turned out to happen."

Other special teams players also contributed.

Running back Ronnie Rivers kept alive a first-half scoring drive when he

rushed for a first down on a fake punt. Xavier Smith, promoted this week from the practice squad, returned a punt 38 yards to help set up the game-winning field goal.

Atwell, Stafford on the same page

Receiver Tutu Atwell caught four passes from Matthew Stafford for 93 yards, including one for 50 yards that set up the game-tying field goal.

"He was telling me all week, he's like, 'I got you. I got you,'" Stafford said.

Atwell, a second-round draft pick in 2021, came through.

"When the ball's in the air, it's like radar - I'm going to get it," the speedy Atwell said. "Stafford threw a hell of a ball, a great ball, and that's one of my abilities - to track the ball."

Atwell also drew a pass-interference penalty that resulted in a 48-yard gain and tossed a 36-yard pass to receiver Demarcus Robinson that was overturned upon review of the reception.

"It makes you realize he probably should have gotten other opportunities" in previous games, McVay said, adding: "I think this is a stepping stone for him. ... Happy for Tutu. He deserves that."

Offensive line improved

After giving up five sacks against the Cardinals, the Rams yielded three against the 49ers.

Stafford escaped pressure several times, and there were spans when McVay appeared to call running plays in obvious passing situations to protect the 36-year-old quarterback.

Left tackle Alaric Jackson (who returned from a two-game suspension), left guard Logan Bruss (making his first career start), rookie center Beaux Limmer, right guard Kevin Dotson and right tackle Rob Havenstein helped Kyren Williams rush for 89 yards and score three touchdowns.

Williams really in a rush to save desperate Rams

The running back shows he has a nose for the goal line with his three touchdowns.

SAM FARMER
ON THE NFL

Script, flipped. The Rams finally beat the San Francisco 49ers in a meaningful regular-season game.

Kyren Williams flipped too.

If you haven't seen it, you soon will. It's an Instagram instant classic, a bit of in-your-Facebook flair. The Rams running back ran what's called an arrow route through the middle of the 49ers defense, caught a beautifully timed pass from Matthew Stafford - one that required the precision of throwing into an open car window passing on the freeway - and punctuated the 15-yard touchdown with an impromptu front flip into the end zone.

Williams wound up on his tush instead of his toes.

"He didn't stick the landing," needled rookie running back Blake Corum from the locker next door. "I teased him about that."

That's about the only valid critique of Williams in the 27-24 stunner, an ultra-rare upset of the NFC West bullies by the Bay. He scored all three touchdowns, adding a pair of scoring runs to his gem of a catch and carry.

"We haven't gotten to use him as a pass catcher enough," Rams coach Sean McVay said. "I thought he did a great job of breaking off man coverage and then he was able to have the swag to flip in was pretty cool."

The Rams were in a desperate spot, in danger of dropping to 0-3 and losing a second division game on the heels of a dispiriting blow-out defeat at Arizona.

"Obviously there was a sense of urgency to this week about our preparation and the mentality of what we were going to do and how we were going to play," Williams said. "But I think it was something that was kind of unspoken, something that we knew we had to do. An 0-3 start is not good. We prepared this week to make sure that didn't happen."

The game was a battle of the backups on both sides, with the Rams missing receivers Cooper Kupp and Puka Nacua, as well as tight end Tyler Higbee, who's still recovering from a severe knee injury from January. The 49ers were without running back Christian McCaffrey, receiver Deebo Samuel and tight end George Kittle.

All the more reason that sturdy starters such as Williams needed to step up. And the Rams didn't scrap the running game, even



WALLY SKALIJ Los Angeles Times

THE RAMS' Kyren Williams gained 89 yards in 24 carries in the win.

when they trailed by as many as 14 points and the game appeared to be slipping away.

The run threat created opportunities in the passing game and helped the Rams move the ball effectively in the red zone, something they couldn't reliably do in road losses at Detroit and the Cardinals.

Williams didn't put up stratospheric numbers - 89 yards in 24 carries - but he was a hammer near the goal line, scoring on runs of three and four yards.

Just before the winning 37-yard field goal by Joshua Karty, Williams had a six-yard run that helped consume 31 seconds from the clock and turned a gut-check kick into a layup.

"We got some really tough, hard-earned yards in some crunch-time situations," said McVay, whose offensive line included guard Logan Bruss, making his first career start. "Some short yardage, some third down and two or less. I thought our guys did a good job of removing the line of scrimmage."

This didn't show up in the statistics, but he was instrumental when it came to chip blocking pass rusher Nick Bosa coming off the edge, helping keep Stafford upright.

Williams also was concerned about keeping something else in check: his emotions.

"I don't really try to get too excited," he said. "I try to stay even-keeled because I know when you get excited and you start expecting things those things don't come."

No one saw this ending coming. And Williams didn't pay much attention to the 49ers fans going, either.

They were in the vast majority, painting every SoFi Stadium section red. Did Williams hear the crowd?

"Naw, I didn't hear it," he said, finishing the interview. "Play ball, baby."

Maybe he did stick the landing after all.

SUNDAY'S SUMMARY

RAMS 27, 49ERS 24

San Francisco	14	0	7	3-24
RAMS	0	7	7	13-27

First Quarter
SF-Jennings 13 pass from Purdy (Moody kick), 11:23.
SF-Jennings 4 pass from Purdy (Moody kick), 1:56.

Second Quarter
Rams-K.Williams 15 pass from Stafford (Karty kick), 1:15.

Third Quarter
SF-Jennings 31 pass from Purdy (Moody kick), 7:11.
Rams-K.Williams 3 run (Karty kick), 3:56.

Fourth Quarter
SF-FG Moody 26, 11:57.
Rams-FG Karty 33, 6:15.
Rams-K.Williams 4 run (Karty kick), 1:51.
Rams-FG Karty 37, :02.

TEAM	SF	LAR
First downs	24	19
Total Net Yards	403	296
Rushes-Yards	34-137	26-98
Passing	266	198
Punt Returns	1-9	1-38
Kickoff Returns	0-0	0-0
Interceptions Ret.	0-0	0-0
Comp-Att-Int.	22-30-0	16-27-0
Sacked-Yards Lost	1-4	3-23
Punts	2-45-0	3-42-333
Fumbles-Lost	2-1	0-0
Penalties-Yards	8-110	8-75
Time of Possession	33:23	26:33

Individual Leaders
RUSHING: San Francisco, Mason 19-77, Purdy 10-41, Guerendo 5-19, Rams, K.Williams 24-89, Rivers 2-9.
PASSING: San Francisco, Purdy 22-30-0-270, Rams, Stafford 16-26-0-221, Atwell 0-1-0-0.
RECEIVING: San Francisco, Jennings 11-175, Aiyuk 5-43, Saubert 2-24, Mason 2-10, Bell 1-12, Juszyk 1-6, Rams, Atwell 4-93, Whittington 3-28, Parkinson 3-21, T.Johnson 3-20, K.Williams 2-27, Robinson 1-32.
FIELD GOALS MISSED: San Francisco, Moody 55.

Rams' win was the football version of a walk-off homer

[Plaschke, from B10] and so even during their darkest moments Sunday, Reeder sensed only light.

"I was walking up and down the sideline and I just felt like everybody was confident that at some point, we would get a momentum swing," he said.

It was a swing that resulted in the football version of a walk-off homer. It was a swing that saved a season.

On the verge of falling to 0-3 and having just a 2% chance of eventually making the playoffs, the Rams outfought a tough Niners defense, outshined a nifty Niners quarterback, and outplayed the Niners with a late 13-0 run to steal a 27-24 victory with two perfect endings.

First, Joshua Karty kicked a 37-yard field goal with two seconds remaining to give the Rams their only lead.

Second, during those final two seconds, the Rams' video board showed shots of all those red-clad fans scurrying to the exits. One man was screaming. Another group of fans scowling. They were no longer erupting in the sort of Niners cheering that had permeated the entire afternoon.



WALLY SKALIJ Los Angeles Times

XAVIER SMITH'S 38-yard punt return set up the Rams' winning field goal.

It was a beautiful thing. It was the appropriate closure for one of the most important regular-season victories of the McVay era.

"They kept competing," said McVay. "They kept fighting."

It was won with six receivers catching passes in place of injured Cooper Kupp and Puka Nacua. It was won with a makeshift offensive line blowing open enough holes for Kyren

Williams to run for 89 yards and two touchdowns. He added a third score through the air.

And in the end, fittingly, it was won with the tying touchdown set up by a 50-yard pass to the much-maligned Tutu Atwell, and the winning kick set up by a 38-yard punt return from a guy just called up from the practice squad named Xavier Smith.

"It took everybody," said

quarterback Matthew Stafford.

This being a Hollywood team built on stars, folks forget that McVay's culture is fueled by everybody.

"I think people always mistook some of the flash for the glue, the connective nature of the locker room, the way Sean is," said team president Kevin Demoff while standing in a jubilant locker room. "This is, to me, one of the best organiza-

tional wins we've had in a really long time."

It was one of the best wins because, since 1990, only four of the 162 teams that started 0-3 made the playoffs, a startling 2.5%. The Rams lose, they're cooked.

It was also one of the best wins because McVay had been 1-9 against Niners coach and rival Kyle Shanahan.

Finally, it was a win that came one week after one of the most disappointing losses of the McVay era, a 41-10 embarrassment by the Arizona Cardinals.

Is it any wonder that, when the Rams quickly fell behind 14-0 Sunday to a Niners team that was missing key skill players Christian McCaffrey, Deebo Samuel and George Kittle, many folks had them written off?

Well, not everybody. "A group that never wavered, just kept plugging away," said Stafford.

After the Rams scored on Williams' end zone somersault late in the second quarter, Byron Young forced a Brock Purdy fumble to end the half and set the tone for a late push.

The Niners led by 10 early in the fourth quarter, but

then Stafford took over, leading two long drives and a quick strike to set up the winning field goal after the defense held the Niners to 15 yards on their final drive.

"No doubt down in the fourth quarter with the ball in my hand, I've got a little extra heartbeat going," said Stafford. "I want to be in those moments. I feel like the guys on our team know that, and hopefully they feed off that."

The Rams won despite being outgained by more than 100 yards. The Rams won despite Purdy scrambling forever in a backfield they rarely penetrated. The Rams won despite being a touchdown underdog in a game that, after last week's desert debacle, most surely thought wouldn't be that close.

"They kept competing, they kept fighting," said McVay. "I see better than I hear, I saw a team respond after a really humbling week last week."

What everyone saw Sunday was a team resurrected.

What everyone heard were the echoes of a message that could last the rest of the season.

Holy hope.

STANDINGS

Through Sunday NATIONAL LEAGUE West z-DODGERS 93 63 .596 - 6-4 San Diego 90 66 .577 3 8-2 Arizona 87 69 .558 6 5-5 San Francisco 77 79 .494 16 5-5 Colorado 60 96 .385 33 6-4 Central W L Pct. GB L10 x-Milwaukee 89 67 .571 - 5-5 Chicago 80 76 .513 9 5-5 St. Louis 79 77 .506 10 5-5 Cincinnati 76 81 .484 13 1/2 5-5 Pittsburgh 73 83 .468 16 3-7 East W L Pct. GB L10 z-Philadelphia 92 64 .590 - 4-6 New York 87 69 .558 5 7-3 Atlanta 85 71 .545 7 6-4 Washington 69 87 .442 23 4-6 Miami 57 99 .365 35 3-7

AMERICAN LEAGUE West Houston 85 71 .545 - 7-3 Seattle 80 76 .513 5 6-4 Texas 74 82 .474 11 4-6 Oakland 67 89 .429 18 3-7 ANGELS 63 93 .404 22 3-7 Central W L Pct. GB L10 x-Cleveland 90 67 .573 - 6-4 Detroit 82 74 .526 7 1/2 7-3 Kansas City 82 74 .526 7 1/2 7-3 Minnesota 81 75 .519 8 3/4 3-7 Chicago 36 120 .231 53 3/4 3-7 East W L Pct. GB L10 z-New York 92 64 .590 - 8-2 Baltimore 86 70 .551 6 3-7 Boston 78 78 .500 14 4-6 Tampa Bay 78 78 .500 14 7-3 Toronto 73 83 .468 19 4-6

Today's games Dodgers vs. San Diego 7 p.m. Angels at Chicago (AL) 4:30 p.m. Chicago (NL) at Philadelphia 3:30 p.m. Cincinnati at Cleveland 3:30 p.m. Milwaukee at Pittsburgh 3:30 p.m. Tampa Bay at Detroit 3:30 p.m. Kansas City at Washington 3:45 p.m. Baltimore at New York (AL) 4 p.m. Boston at Toronto 4 p.m. New York (NL) at Atlanta 4:15 p.m. Miami at Minnesota 4:30 p.m. Seattle at Houston 5 p.m. St. Louis at Colorado 5:30 p.m. San Francisco at Arizona 6:30 p.m. Texas at Oakland 6:30 p.m.

Roberts challenges team to raise intensity

[Dodgers, from B10] pivotal three-game set against the Padres this week at Dodger Stadium that kicks off Tuesday night, Roberts not only highlighted the dynamic — but challenged his team to offer a response.

"I think it's pretty easy to see that when we've played them, I think 10 times this year, they came out more intense than we did," Roberts said. "And that's got to change. I expect it to change. Playing those guys — in certainly very, very meaningful games — will bring out the best in us."

Or so Roberts can only hope. Meaningful might be an understatement for what's at stake this week.

If the Dodgers win the series, they'll clinch their third straight NL West title and 11th in the past 12 years, and very likely assure themselves of an all-important first-round bye.

By winning one of the three games, the Dodgers would still control their own destiny entering the season's final weekend — though they'd have work remaining with a magic number of two going into their closing series against the Colorado Rockies.

And if the Dodgers get swept by the Padres, they'd suddenly be on the back foot: Technically tied for the division lead with three games to go, but knowing they'd lost any end-of-season tiebreaker for the division title because San Diego has already clinched the edge in head-to-head record (the first time they've done that against the Dodgers since 2010).

"Obviously they get up to play us, and they've played well," Roberts said of the Padres earlier this season.

And how can the Dodgers combat this week?

"For us, I just want the mindset to be, stay on the attack," Roberts said. "We're not chasing anyone. And you can't go into careful, defense mode."

To Roberts, that mentality hasn't always taken shape in the Dodgers' previous meeting with the Padres this season.

After beating San Diego 5-2 on opening day in an international trip to Seoul, South Korea, the



DENIS POROY Associated Press

SHOHEI OHTANI and the Dodgers were swept by the Padres in a two-game set at the end of July.

Dodgers lost the second leg of the series in a sloppy 15-1 defeat, one marred by Yoshinobu Yamamoto's disastrous MLB debut.

A few weeks later, the Padres came to Los Angeles and won just their third series at Chavez Ravine in the last five years.

Two subsequent visits to San Diego didn't go much better for the Dodgers, who were walked off and shut out in a series loss at Petco Park in May, then swept in a two-game set at the end of July.

"I think the chaser always seems like they have a little extra incentive, so I think that's part of it," Roberts said of the intensity gap he's observed at times between the clubs. "But the talent being equal, there's no reason why our fight, our intensity, focus shouldn't match theirs or best theirs."

While the Dodgers haven't pitched great against the Padres (they have a 4.62 team ERA against San Diego this season), the club's biggest problem in the rivalry this year has come at the plate.

The Dodgers' .602 OPS against Padres pitchers is their lowest mark against any team this season. And on multiple occasions this year, Roberts and others have alluded to the idea that the Padres aren't intimidated by the Dodgers'

star-studded lineup, familiar enough with them to know how to avoid danger and collect outs.

"We have to be proactive and continue to stay on the attack," Roberts said on Sunday afternoon, of the team's general mindset entering the season's final stretch. "So that's kind of my message."

The fact this week's series matters to the standings at all is a testament to San Diego's second-half resurgence, in which it has posted the best record in baseball (40-17) since the All-Star break.

As a result, the pressure is on the Dodgers to hold them off now, and avoid the added complications that would come with squandering the division crown and taking the long route through the playoffs — especially for a team already short on pitching.

"It'll be fun, a lot of energy," outfielder Mookie Betts said. "I'm sure a lot of emotions and whatnot. These are the games we dream of playing."

And ones that, at this point, could lead to a nightmare scenario if they lose.

"Those guys are playing great," Roberts said. "But ... I feel like we can still continue to be aggressive and go out there and try to win a series."

SUNDAY'S BOX SCORE DODGERS 6, COLORADO 5

Colorado AB R H BI Avg. Dodgers AB R H BI Avg. Blackmon dh 3 0 0 .249 Ohtani dh 5 2 4 1 .301 Tovar ss 5 1 2 .267 Betts rf 4 1 2 .295 McMahin 3b 5 1 2 .246 Freeman 1b 4 0 2 1 .283

No outs when winning run scored. Walks—Colorado 5; Blackmon 2, Toglia 1, Hilliard 1, Cave 1. Dodgers 6; Betts 1, T. Hernandez 1, Smith 1, Lux 1, Rojas 2. Strikeouts—Colorado 17; Blackmon 1, Tovar 3, McMahon 2, Toglia 4, Rodgers 1, Hillard 2, Jones 2, Cave 1, Goodman 1. Dodgers 5; Betts 1, T. Hernandez 2, Smith 1, Rojas 1. LOB—Colorado 8, Dodgers 6. 2B—Rodgers (28), McMahon (26), Goodman (9). HR—T. Hernandez (31), off Senzela; K. Hernandez (11), off Hill; Ohtani (4), off Halverson; Betts (15), off Halverson. RBIs—Rodgers (2) (54), Jones 2 (25), Goodman (36), T. Hernandez (9), K. Hernandez (2), Crown, Freeman (8), Ohtani (12), Betts (7), SB—Ohtani (2), H. Hernandez (3). Runners left in scoring position—Colorado 5; Riggs 2, Hillard, Cave 2; Dodgers 4 (T. Hernandez 2, K. Hernandez 1, Williams 1). BGS—Cruz 3 for 11; Dodgers 1 for 9. Runners moved up—Jones, Hillard, Freeman, Edman, GIDP—Rodriguez, Edman, Freeman. DP—Colorado 3 (Rodgers, Tovar, Toglia); Dodgers, Tovar, Toglia; Tovar, Toglia; Dodgers 1 (K. Hernandez, Lux, Freeman).

Colorado IP H R ER BB SO NP ERA Senzela 5 1 1 2 2 73 3.38 Crowell 1 0 0 1 1 21 2.16 Hill 2 3 3 1 1 18 1.80 Peralta, H. 1 0 0 0 1 8 0.00 Chivillit, H. 7 1 0 0 2 22 3.18 Halverson, L. 2-1, BS, 1-2 2 2 2 0 7 1.86

Dodgers IP H R ER BB SO NP ERA Yamamoto 3 5 4 4 3 4 79 2.96 Kelly 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0.00 Brasier 1 0 0 0 3 19 3.33 Casparius 3 1 2 5 59 22.55 Treinen, W. 7-3 1 0 0 0 1 4 2.01

Inherited runners scored—Peralta 11. WP—Peralta, Yamamoto. U—Alea MacKay, Jim Wolf, Bruce Drackman, Jeremie Rahak. T—253. Tickets sold—50,730 (56,000).

BASEBALL: SUNDAY FLASHBACK

ANGELS 9, HOUSTON 8

Angels AB R H BI Avg. Houston AB R H BI Avg. Ward rf 4 1 1 .249 Alvarez 2b 4 2 1 .295 Neto ss 5 2 3 .248 Alvarez lf 2 0 2 .308 Drury 1b 5 0 0 .167 Dufkin lf 2 1 0 .268 Wagnin 3b 5 0 0 .229 Tucker dh 3 1 0 .286

PITTSBURGH 2, CINCINNATI 0

Pittsburgh AB R H BI Avg. Cincinnati AB R H BI Avg. Gonzalez ss 4 0 0 .269 India dh 4 0 2 .247 O.Cruz cf 3 1 1 .268 DeLoach 3b 4 0 0 .261 Bart c 3 0 1 .262 Stephans c 4 0 0 .262

DETROIT 4, BALTIMORE 3

Detroit AB R H BI Avg. Baltimore AB R H BI Avg. Meadows of 4 0 0 .234 Henderson ss 3 1 1 .283 Mayorga lf 3 2 2 .290 Westburg 2b 4 0 1 .269

BOSTON 8, MINNESOTA 1

Minnesota AB R H BI Avg. Boston AB R H BI Avg. Buxton cf 3 0 1 .274 Ja.Duran lf 4 1 1 .285 Margot lf 1 0 0 .239 Gonzalez 3b 5 1 2 .273

BOSTON 9, MINNESOTA 3

Boston AB R H BI Avg. Minnesota AB R H BI Avg. Buxton cf 5 0 1 .273 Ja.Duran lf 4 2 1 .285 Lamich dh 4 1 2 .252 Gonzalez 3b 4 1 1 .273

ATLANTA 5, MIAMI 4

Atlanta AB R H BI Avg. Miami AB R H BI Avg. Harris cf 5 2 2 .261 Edwards ss 5 0 0 .311 Abbes 2b 5 1 1 .253 Norby 3b 5 1 1 .271

TAMPA BAY 4, TORONTO 3

Toronto AB R H BI Avg. Tampa Bay AB R H BI Avg. Lukes rf 5 0 1 .317 Carlson lf 3 0 1 .200 Clement ss 5 1 3 .265 B.Lowe dh 4 1 1 .242

MILWAUKEE 10, ARIZONA 9

Arizona AB R H BI Avg. Milwaukee AB R H BI Avg. Smith rf 4 1 1 .281 Houder lf 4 1 2 .173 Walker 1b 0 0 0 .252 Perkins dh 3 0 2 .245

SAN FRANCISCO 2, KANSAS CITY 0

San Francisco AB R H BI Avg. Kansas City AB R H BI Avg. Nystrom lf 4 0 0 .232 Pham lf 4 0 1 .241 Ramos lf 4 0 0 .265 Witt ss 3 0 1 .334

ST. LOUIS 2, CLEVELAND 1

Cleveland AB R H BI Avg. St. Louis AB R H BI Avg. Martinez 3b 4 0 0 .240 Winn ss 3 1 1 .267 Schenn 2b 3 0 0 .220 Burleson lf 4 0 0 .267

CHICAGO CUBS 5, WASHINGTON 0

Washington AB R H BI Avg. Chicago AB R H BI Avg. Crews lf 4 0 1 .264 Tauchman rf 3 1 1 .249 Wood lf 4 0 2 .206 Saumon ss 2 1 1 .241

TEXAS 6, SEATTLE 5

Seattle AB R H BI Avg. Texas AB R H BI Avg. Rodriguez cf 5 1 1 .233 Semien 2b 4 1 2 .234

N.Y. METS 2, PHILADELPHIA 1

Philadelphia AB R H BI Avg. New York AB R H BI Avg. Schwarber dh 4 0 0 .249 Iglesias 2b 4 0 2 .337 Megill lf 4 1 1 .265 Kimura lf 4 1 1 .251

SAN FRANCISCO 20, CHICAGO WHITE SOX 2

Chicago AB R H BI Avg. San Diego AB R H BI Avg. Vargas 3b 4 1 2 .223 Profar lf 3 1 2 .285 Robert cf 4 1 1 .222 Tofis lf 3 1 1 .287

N.Y. YANKEES 7, OAKLAND 4

New York AB R H BI Avg. Oakland AB R H BI Avg. Torres 2b 5 1 2 .254 Butler lf 5 0 0 .296 Soto rf 3 2 0 .287 Roaker dh 5 0 0 .285

a-struck out for Yeger in the 8th. b-grounded out for Chapman in the 8th.

Two outs when winning run scored. a-grounded out for Moore in the 9th.

Arizona 107 000 010-9 9 3

a-struck out for Grossman in the 7th. b-hit by pitch for Garcia in the 8th.

San Francisco 020 000 000-3 3 0

a-struck out for Yeger in the 8th. b-grounded out for Chapman in the 8th.

Washington 100 000 000-5 8 0

San Francisco 020 000 000-3 3 0

Chicago 001 001 000-2 5 0

San Diego 000 100 030-4 5 0

Washington 000 000 000-5 8 0

Chicago 000 100 030-4 5 0

Chicago 001 001 000-2 5 0

San Diego 000 100 030-4 5 0

San Diego 000 100 030-4 5 0

L.A. Kickers players finally get their due

Members of club that won U.S. Open Cup titles in the 1950s and '60s will be honored.

KEVIN BAXTER
ON SOCCER

The last time Lothar Pospich, Manfred Norstadt and Eberhard Herz lifted the U.S. Open Cup trophy together, there were just a few thousand people in the quiet stands at Wrigley Field, a largely abandoned minor league baseball stadium in South L.A.

That was 1964, when the tournament, the oldest national soccer competition in the country, was played by largely amateur teams representing mostly ethnic clubs and neighborhoods. The players were immigrants or the sons of immigrants, playing a game that was considered a national pastime in the old country but little more than a waste of time in the new one.

"It was not like now," said Pospich, 91. "America was in the beginning stages to play soccer."

Sixty years later the U.S. Open Cup is back in Los Angeles, giving Pospich, Norstadt and Herz, former teammates on the L.A. Kickers, a chance to hoist the trophy once again Wednesday. They have been asked to accompany the tournament trophy onto the field at BMO Stadium — less than two miles from where Wrigley Field, which was demolished in 1969, once stood — before this year's final between LAFC and Sporting Kansas City.

And this time the stands are expected to be loud and full with more 22,000 people.

"I have to make it one more time," said Herz, 90. "This may be the last time, I guess."

The tribute is fitting because Herz, Norstadt and Pospich helped build the foundation upon which soccer, ranked by a Gallup Poll as the fourth-most-popular sport in this country, now rests.

"Soccer was not highly rated at that," Norstadt said. "But the Kickers, they



Los Angeles Soccer Club

THE LOS ANGELES Kickers won the Open Cup in 1958, took second two years later and won again in 1964.

'The Kickers, they were a level higher than every other team in the United States.'

— MANFRED NORSTADT

were a level higher than every other team in the United States. We had some good players on that team."

Herz and teammates Al Zerhusen and Helmut Bicek played for the U.S. national team; Zerhusen was inducted into the National Soccer Hall of Fame. But those stars mostly shone in anonymity with the Kickers, who played regular weekend double- and triple-headers before "crowds" of family and friends at Daniels Field in San Pedro and Jackie Robinson Stadium on the Westside.

"But we brought up the soccer," Pospich said. And that changed everything.

When the three German-born players last lifted the trophy, the U.S. was an international soccer backwater, 26 years from its next World Cup appearance.

In 21 months, the country will play host to that tournament for the second time.

When Herz, Norstadt and Pospich last lifted the Cup, the launch of MLS was 28 years away. Today, MLS is the largest first-division league on the planet and its average attendance is seventh-best in the world.

The team they played for, the L.A. Kickers, is gone now, having been absorbed by the Los Angeles Soccer Club. Same with the Greater Los Angeles Soccer League, in which the Kickers played. But in the days before a competitive national team and a healthy professional league, the Kickers and the GLASL were as good as soccer got in Southern California.

The Kickers were founded in 1951 by six German ex-pats and played in a highly competitive league against other immigrant teams with names such as the Swiss Soccer club, the Los Angeles Scots, the San Pedro Italians and Austria F.C.

At the time the U.S. Open Cup was the biggest prize in the country, but until 1955, when the Los Angeles Danes lost to Herz and the New York-based S.C. Eintracht, no team west of St. Louis had ever played in the final. In an

effort to change that, Albert Ebert, one of the Kickers' founders, began recruiting players around the country to come to L.A. and play for his team.

Herz, who came to the West Coast after being drafted into the Army, and Pospich and Norstadt, who played in Toronto, were among those who answered the call. All three got their start in soccer in Germany, and when they arrived in Los Angeles they set about transforming the sport.

The Kickers, with Herz, won the Open Cup in 1958 and finished second two years later, part of a streak that saw L.A. or Orange County teams make the final 21 times over the next 28 years, winning eight times.

Maccabee Los Angeles, a team of Jewish immigrants, Holocaust survivors and at least one player whose father was a Nazi party member, is one of three teams to win five titles, reaching the final seven times in its 11-year history.

Yet few teams have a better two-year span than the 1963-64 Kickers of Herz, Norstadt and Pospich who, in 1963, became the first American soccer club to go on a world tour, playing top teams in New Zealand, Australia, Iran and Germany. In his Glendale home,

tucked among his other trophies, Norstadt, the youngest of the three at 87, has a framed copy of the full-page L.A. Times article announcing the tour.

The team then came home to win four championships in 1964, including its final U.S. Open Cup.

The last Southern California team to win that tournament was the Galaxy, which won the second of their two titles in 2005. That was also the last time the final was played here. For LAFC, which made it to the semifinals before losing on penalty kicks in its first season, 2018, a title would bring the club its first piece of hardware since the 2022 MLS Cup and end a drought that has seen it go winless in its last four finals, including last month's Leagues Cup.

Yet they almost didn't get the chance. Although the Open Cup, which is contested by approximately

200 professional, semi-pro and amateur teams at all levels of the U.S. Soccer pyramid, survived two global pandemics and two World Wars in its 110-year history, it was nearly killed by MLS commissioner Don Garber last winter. The addition of the Leagues Cup, a Garber creation that MLS largely controls and profits from, had so crowded the MLS calendar that Garber pulled his teams out of the Open Cup, which is run by U.S. Soccer.

U.S. Soccer pushed back, blocking Garber's request to use MLS Next Pro developmental teams in the tournament, and a compromise was struck that would see eight MLS teams, including LAFC, joining the tournament in the round of 32. That helped preserve the history and importance of one of the world's oldest domestic cup competitions.

Sixty years after winning his last title, Norstadt, a former engineer, walks with a cane. Eberhard, who owned a liquor store, bar and restaurant, broke his leg twice playing soccer before retiring in Woodland Hills not far from Pospich, who owned an automobile dealership and played in old-timers games into his 60s and now lives in Calabasas.

On Wednesday they're reunite for a final bow at BMO Stadium, where they'll finally get the applause and acknowledgment they've long deserved.

"I won't be able to sleep tonight," Eberhard said. "Soccer's always been good to me. I'm like a little kid already."

And it's partly because of him that other little kids can still dream of playing in a U.S. Open Cup final of their own.

Preller's skills give Padres hope

[Shaikin, from B10] Padres' high-budget flop last year, all eyes turned to Preller, and not unreasonably: Amid three controlling owners, five managers, three interim managers, Preller was the constant over the last decade.

In the Padres' first season since the passing of beloved owner Peter Seidler, the payroll was slashed by one-third. The Padres lost their three best players last season: Cy Young winner Blake Snell and their only 2023 All-Stars, outfielder Juan Soto and closer Josh Hader.

It would be insulting to the players on a talented roster to say Preller executed a successful rebuild. Manny Machado was still around, and so were Fernando Tatis Jr., Yu Darvish, Joe Musgrove, Xander Bogaerts, Jake Cronenworth and Ha-Seong Kim.

And it would be silly to say the Padres anticipated an All-Star season from Jurickson Profar, signed during spring training because, well, someone had to play left field. The Padres did expect big things from center fielder Jackson Merrill, eventually, but he opened last season at Class A, opened this season as a 20-year-old major leaguer and could close the season as NL rookie of the year.

But it would be fair to say that Preller deserves a fair share of the credit for the Padres winning 90 games for the first time since 2010. The Padres are playing .702 ball since the All-Star break (40-17, the best in the major leagues).

In March, he traded for starting pitcher Dylan Cease. In May, he traded for infielder and two-time batting champion Luis Arraez. In July, his deadline trades netted star relievers Jason Adam and Tanner Scott and veteran starter Martin Perez.

In those four trades, Preller gave up 15 minor leaguers. In the trades for the relievers, he gave up six of his top 12.

The skeptical fan might say: "Of course Preller did,



DENIS POROY Associated Press

IT WOULD BE FAIR to say that Padres general manager A.J. Preller deserves most of the credit for the team winning 90 games for the first time since 2010.

because he was trying to save his job." The sympathetic fan might say: "Of course Preller did, because this is what he always does. He traded Trea Turner and Max Fried as prospects."

But, really, what Preller did is what more of his colleagues should be doing, and more owners should be demanding from their baseball operations leader. No fan paying ever-higher ticket prices wants to hear about a five-year plan. In an era when 40% of teams make the playoffs, is it asking too much for a team to try to win?

If you are an owner, do not hire someone who seduces you with jargon like "financial flexibility," hoards minor leaguers and confuses you into believing "prospect" is synonymous with "minor leaguer." Hire someone who can separate the prospects from the other minor leaguers, can learn from a mistake rather than refuse to take a risk, and can hire talented scouts and coaches to replenish a farm system.

In 2018, halfway between now and the time the Guggenheim ownership infused the Dodgers with cash and smarts, the Dod-

gers' top five prospects were pitchers Walker Buehler and Mitch White; catcher Keibert Ruiz; and outfielders Yusniel Diaz and Alex Verdugo.

The Dodgers identified Buehler as the must-keep prospect and traded the other four. The returns included Mookie Betts, Machado, Turner and Max Scherzer.

Oh, and do not fall for the binary of "we are buyers" or "we are sellers." The best teams do both, all the time. When Preller traded Soto, he acquired Michael King, a New York Yankees reliever who has blossomed into the Padres' most effective starter this season, as measured by ERA+.

King (12-9, 3.04 ERA) starts Tuesday against the Dodgers, followed by Cease on Wednesday and Musgrove on Thursday.

The trick here is that, while you do not want someone shy about making moves, you also do not want someone who, as John Wooden would have said, mistakes activity for achievement. Baseball is all about winning in October.

Baseball is a business too, and customer satisfaction is an essential barometer of

the success of any business. The Padres set an attendance record last year, even as they bombed on the field, but so many fans believed that the Padres set another attendance record this year, selling 3.3 million tickets and selling out two-thirds of their home games.

I spoke with Preller the other day, but he didn't want to say too much. The Padres have not won anything yet, after all.

The city of San Diego awaits its first championship parade in any major sport. The Padres, the team that did not flee San Diego for Los Angeles, keep hope alive.

"Peter Seidler always would say, 'The baseball gods have to smile on you to win that World Series,'" Preller told me. "But we were in the playoffs in '20, in the playoffs in '22, and we're hoping to go again this year."

"What we've tried to build is an organization where every single year, a fan can start the season and say, 'If things go right and the baseball gods smile upon us, we can win the World Series this year.' We feel like we have that type of team this year."

PRO CALENDAR

	TUE 24	WED 25	THU 26	FRI 27	SAT 28
DODGERS	SAN DIEGO 7 SNLA	SAN DIEGO 7 SNLA	SAN DIEGO 7 SNLA	at Colorado 5 SNLA	at Colorado 5 SNLA
ANGELS	at Chicago White Sox 4:30 BSW	at Chicago White Sox 4:30 BSW	at Chicago White Sox 11 a.m. BSW	TEXAS 6:30 BSW	TEXAS 6:30 BSW
RAMS	NEXT: SUNDAY AT CHICAGO, 10 A.M. PDT, CHANNEL 11				
CHARGERS	NEXT: SUNDAY VS. KANSAS CITY, 1:25 P.M., CHANNEL 2				
GALAXY	NEXT: OCT. 2 AT COLORADO, 6:30 PDT, APPLE TV+				
LAFC		KANSAS CITY* 7:30 Apple TV+			at Cincinnati 4:30 Apple TV+
ANGEL CITY				WASH. 7 Amazon Prime	

Shade denotes home game. *U.S. Open Cup

TODAY ON THE AIR

TIME	EVENT	ON THE AIR
BASEBALL		
4 p.m.	Baltimore at New York Yankees	TV: TBS
4:30 p.m.	Angels at Chicago White Sox	TV: BSW R: 830
7 p.m.	San Diego at Dodgers	TV: SNLA R: 570, 1020
BASKETBALL: WNBA PLAYOFFS		
4:30 p.m.	Game 2, Atlanta at New York	TV: ESPN
6:30 p.m.	Game 2, Seattle at Las Vegas	TV: ESPN
FUTSAL: FIFA WORLD CUP		
8 a.m.	Round of 16, Netherlands vs. Ukraine	TV: FS2
5:30 a.m. (Wed.)	Round of 16, Spain vs. Venezuela	TV: FS2
HOCKEY: NHL PRESEASON		
4 p.m.	Washington at Boston	TV: NHL
7 p.m.	Seattle at Vancouver	TV: NHL
LACROSSE: WORLD BOX CHAMPIONSHIP		
1:30 p.m.	England vs. Haudenosaunee	TV: ESPNU
5 p.m.	Canada vs. U.S.	TV: ESPNU
SOCCER		
10 a.m.	Spain, Sevilla vs. Real Valladolid	TV: ESPN+
10 a.m.	Spain, Valencia vs. Osasuna	TV: ESPN+, ESPND
11:45 a.m.	English League Cup, AFC Wimbledon vs. Newcastle United	TV: Paramount+
11:45 a.m.	English League Cup, Chelsea vs. Barrow	TV: Paramount+
11:45 a.m.	English League Cup, Manchester City vs. Watford	TV: Paramount+
11:45 a.m.	English League Cup, Walsall vs. Leicester City	TV: Paramount+
Noon	English League Cup, Wycombe vs. Aston Villa	TV: CBSN, Paramount+
Noon	Spain, Real Madrid vs. Deportivo Alavés	TV: ESPN+, ESPND
TENNIS		
7 p.m.	ATP Tokyo; WTA, Beijing, early rounds	TV: Tennis

SPORTS EXTRA

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SPORTS

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2024 :: LATIMES.COM/SPORTS

N.L. WEST SHOWDOWN :: DODGERS VS. PADRES

TUESDAY-THURSDAY AT DODGER STADIUM, ALL GAMES AT 7 P.M. | TV: SPORTSNET LA

They're making it a point to step up



ROBERT GAUTHIER Los Angeles Times

MOOKIE BETTS says he expects a lot of energy for the series against San Diego, which has won seven of 10 against L.A.

Roberts wants Dodgers to match Padres' urgency as L.A. eyes West crown.

BY JACK HARRIS

There has been a running belief around some people within the Dodgers organization in recent seasons, a theory about their Southern California rivals that sprouted two Octobers ago and has been crystallized in a tightly contested division race this year.

When the Dodgers play the San Diego Padres, they seem to typically get the Padres' best.

And when the rivalry ratchets up, the Padres' intensity tends to go highest.

It was certainly true in the 2022 playoffs, when the underdog Padres stormed to a four-game National League Division Series win over an ill-win juggernaut Dodgers squad.

It manifested more subtly last year, with the Dodgers forced to grind out a number of close rivalry game wins despite finishing well ahead of the Padres in the standings.

And it has been undeniably clear so far this season, one in which the Padres have taken seven of 10 head-to-head matchups and trimmed a once nine-game division lead for the Dodgers down to just three entering the season's final week.

"They've had their way with us up to this point," manager Dave Roberts said Sunday. So, ahead of a [See Dodgers, B8]

Preller's hard work is source of Padres' hope

BILL SHAIKIN ON BASEBALL

This may surprise you, but A.J. Preller has run the San Diego Padres for longer than Andrew Friedman has run the Dodgers.

Not by much. The Padres hired Preller in August 2014, the Dodgers hired Friedman two months later, and since then the Dodgers have dominated the National League West.

For the Dodgers: eight division championships, three NL championships, one World Series championship.

For the Padres: zero, zero and zero.

The three-game showdown series that starts Tuesday at Dodger Stadium could be cause for mutual celebration. The Padres could clinch a wild-card playoff berth during the series, and the Dodgers could clinch another division championship. If the Padres win the series, they would extend the division race into the season's final weekend.

In the year the Padres hired Preller, they finished 17 games out of first place. They have not finished any closer between then and now, excepting the pandemic-shortened season of 2020.

In the wake of the [See Shaikin, B9]

DOWN TO THE WIRE

Riding a wave of second-half momentum, San Diego has pulled within three games of the first-place Dodgers in the National League West — the closest it's been since April 25. Comparing the two teams since the All-Star break (National League ranking):

	Record	Batting avg.	Runs	OPS	ERA	WHIP	HRs yielded
DODGERS	37-22 (3rd)	.258 (4th)	324 (2nd)	.790 (2nd)	4.27 (8th)	1.31 (9th)	81 (11th)
SAN DIEGO	40-17 (1st)	.272 (2nd)	291 (4th)	.781 (3rd)	3.30 (1st)	1.12 (1st)	50 (1st)

Instead of zeroing out, Rams homed in against the 49ers

BILL PLASCHKE

"Holy —!" Sean McVay began his postgame news conference like a slack-jawed sailor, but he spoke the truth.



Holy rebound. Holy resilience. Holy Rams.

They began this stomach knot of a Sunday afternoon flat on their backs, trailing the San Francisco 49ers by two touchdowns in the first 15 minutes — winless and hopeless.

SoFi Stadium was blanketed in red. Niners fans owning the building, the defending NFC champs owning the moment, the 0-2

locals riddled with injuries and on the statistical brink of extinction.

"It would have been easy for guys to say, 'It's not looking good,'" said Troy Reeder.

Except, holy comeback, these are the Rams.

This is the organization with the strongest culture in Los Angeles sports. This is a group so connected, so single-minded, so sturdy, they never feel that greatness is beyond their reach.

They reached a Super Bowl with Jared Goff. They won a Super Bowl with no running backs. They most recently turned a 3-6 season into a playoff berth.

They're the Rams, McVay's Rams, and they believe they can do anything. [See Plaschke, B7]



ADRIAN KRAUS Associated Press

JUSTIN HERBERT didn't finish Sunday's game but said he was "hopeful" to play against Kansas City.

James suspended as injuries mount on ailing Chargers

Safety is banned one game and the status of four starters, including Herbert, is unclear.

BY THUC NHI NGUYEN

The Chargers could soon need a bigger injury tent. And safety help.

After four starters, including star quarterback Justin Herbert, missed the end of the Chargers' 20-10 loss to the Pittsburgh Steelers, coach Jim Harbaugh deflected all questions about the mounting injuries Monday, deferring until the team is required to release an injury report after practice Wednesday.

Harbaugh does know he will be without star safety Derwin James Jr., however. He was suspended one game for "repeated violations of playing rules intended to protect the health and safety of players," the NFL announced Monday.

James, who was flagged for unnecessary roughness against the Steelers, received a letter from NFL vice president of football operations Jon Runyan, who wrote James "had an unobstructed path to [Steelers tight end Pat Freiermuth] and the illegal contact could have been avoided."

Meanwhile, that injury list will be long and star-studded.

In addition to Herbert's [See Chargers, B6]

After 60 years, finally getting their due

L.A. Kickers players who won U.S. Open Cup titles in the 1950s and '60s will be recognized Wednesday. B9

McVay relishes injury-free victory

The Rams coach says his team, aside from typical bumps and bruises, came out of Sunday healthy. B7

Williams in a rush to save the Rams

The running back steps up in crunch time, scoring three touchdowns — including one through the air. B7

SPORTS EXTRA

A TIMES E-NEWSPAPER EXCLUSIVE ■ TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2024



ASHLEY LANDIS Associated Press

THE DODGERS' Shohei Ohtani greets the Angels' Mike Trout before a spring training game. Their seasons — and those of their teams — have been wildly divergent.

Ohtani, Trout and a tale of two franchises

BY STEVE HENSON

As Major League Baseball enters the final week of its regular season, let's identify the rarefied and the rotten, those teams, players and managers who over six months separated themselves from the pack, some heroically, others horrendously.

Up

1. Shohei Ohtani: 50-50 already seems so rear-view mirror. The Dodgers' designated-hitter deluxe has 53 home runs and 55 stolen bases only four days after he became the first player in history to reach 50 of each. Is 60-60 attainable?

"This guy is doing things no one can believe, and for all we know, he could end up at 60-60," former Dodgers slugger Shawn Green told The Times.

Ohtani seems to steal second or

third base any time he pleases, so pilfering five more is entirely plausible.

But hitting seven home runs in the Dodgers' last six games — they host the San Diego Padres in a three-game series beginning Tuesday, then travel to Denver for a three-game series against the Colorado Rockies — is unlikely even for the expected runaway National League Most Valuable Player.

But Ohtani is going to hit at home-run happy Coors Field, so anything is possible.

Going into Monday, Ohtani leads the NL in home runs, runs batted in (123), runs scored (128), slugging percentage (.640), on-base-plus-slugging percentage (.886), total bases (391) and plate appearances (703).

2. Wild-card races: In the American League, the Baltimore Orioles have all but clinched the top wild card, but the second and third spots are a scramble among

the Royals, Detroit Tigers and Minnesota Twins from the Central and the Seattle Mariners from the West.

Detroit has the hot hand, having made up five games in little more than a week to catch Kansas City, which has lost seven in a row. Minnesota is one game back, and Seattle is one game behind the Twins.

In the National League, the Padres hold a three-game lead over the Arizona Diamondbacks and New York Mets for the top wild-card berth. Lurking two games behind Arizona and New York are the Atlanta Braves, and they begin a three-game series against the Mets on Tuesday.

3. Dodgers attendance: Sell-outs are all but certain for the Dodgers' three remaining home games, which would bring the season total to approximately 3,945,000, their second-highest attendance (they drew 3,974,309 in 2019).

Down

1. The Angels: Granted, they aren't Chicago White Sox bad, but the Angels are on pace to post the worst record in franchise history. That is very bad. They are 63-93 with six games to play, and rock bottom for these perennial under-achievers is 95 losses in 1980 and 1968.

The Angels need to win two games this week to avoid becoming the first in the 64-year history of the franchise to post a winning percentage under .400.

2. Mike Trout: For a player who became a Hall of Fame lock before age 30, Trout suddenly seems awfully old. He's played in 29 games this season and only 319 in the last five years because of injuries. His lifetime batting average has dipped to .299, and milestones such as 500 home runs and 3,000 hits that once seemed a cinch are now long shots or downright impos-

sible.

He has six years left on a 12-year, \$426.5-million contract that includes a no-trade clause. He's gone from three-time MVP and three-time MVP runner-up to albatross.

Yet there is reason for hope. Trout, 33, is only one year older than Aaron Judge and is one year younger than Freddie Freeman. He told reporters a week ago that he's willing to move from center field to a corner spot, with days as designated hitter sprinkled in, to keep him as healthy as possible.

3. The White Sox: The best thing the Angels have going in their quest to avoid the worst record in franchise history is that they play the worst team in baseball history in a three-game series beginning Tuesday.

The White Sox equaled the benchmark for futility Sunday when they dropped their 120th game, the same number of defeats endured by the 1962 Mets.

Emslie forges a draw and Thompson stays on tear for Angel City

WIRE REPORTS

Claire Emslie's goal in the 76th minute pulled Angel City into a 2-2 draw with the Portland Thorns on Monday night.

Emslie one-timed in a loose ball at the goal line after teammate Jasmine Spencer sent a cross that was deflected by Thorns goalie Mackenzie Arnold. It was Emslie's seventh goal of the season.

Alyssa Thompson also scored for Angel City, which avoided a third straight loss with the tie in front of a sellout crowd of 22,000 at BMO Stadium.

Morgan Weaver and Olivia Moultrie both scored for the Thorns, who had lost their previous four matches. Portland (8-9-4) fell to seventh place in the standings but still remains above the playoff line.

Angel City (6-11-4) is in 10th place and currently out of the playoff picture with five games remaining.

Thompson scored her fifth goal in five games in the 10th minute, with a right-footed shot that she sent just inside the near post.

Weaver, making her first start since returning from a knee injury, tied it for the Thorns with a goal in the 49th minute.

Sophia Smith, who leads the Thorns with 11 goals in 17 matches, was not available for the game be-

cause of an ankle injury.

Portland coach Rob Gale was not on the sidelines because of illness.

NFL

Daniels near perfect in Commanders' win

Rookie Jayden Daniels threw for two touchdowns and ran for a score in a remarkably efficient performance, and the Washington Commanders stunned Joe Burrow and the host Cincinnati Bengals 38-33.

Daniels finished 21 of 23 for 254 yards, with the Cajon High alum setting an NFL rookie record for completion percentage at 91.3%. The Commanders (2-1) scored on every possession except for kneeldowns at the end of each half and have not punted or turned the ball over in their last two games.

Neither Washington nor Cincinnati punted or turned it over, the first time that's happened in the Super Bowl era.

Burrow threw for 324 yards and three scores, but the Bengals (0-3) simply couldn't keep up. Cincinnati is off to its worst start since dropping its first 11 games on the way to a 2-14 finish in 2019.

Daniels' first career touchdown



RONALD MARTINEZ Getty Images

CLAIRE EMSLIE leaps to convert a loose ball near the goal line to give Angel City a 2-2 draw with the Portland Thorns at BMO Stadium. Angel City avoided a three-game losing streak.

pass was a one-yard toss to eligible tackle Trent Scott to start the second half, the second straight game in which the Bengals gave up a touchdown to a lineman. And Daniels stayed in the pocket, took a hit and connected with Terry McLaurin from 27 yards out with 2:10 remaining for the game-sealing score.

at Bills 47, Jaguars 10: Josh Allen threw four touchdown passes in the first half and host Buffalo scored on each of their first five drives in a win over a misfiring Trevor Lawrence and unraveling Jacksonville.

Allen went 22 of 28 for 247 yards

in the first 30 minutes alone, with completions to nine receivers. He only attempted two passes after halftime, finishing 23 of 30 for 263 yards before Mitchell Trubisky replaced him.

Safety Damar Hamlin contributed to the rout with his first career interception. He easily picked off Lawrence's overthrown pass intended for rookie Brian Thomas Jr.

The four-time defending AFC East champion Bills are off to their first 3-0 start since 2020 and third since coach Sean McDermott took over in 2017. They have topped 30 points in each game.

The Jaguars last opened 0-3 in 2021 under coach Urban Meyer.

NHL

Kings fall in OT to Utah Hockey Club

Clayton Keller scored 19 seconds into overtime to give the Utah Hockey Club a 3-2 preseason win over the Kings at the Delta Center.

Keller grabbed a turnover on the right side and beat Kings goalie Carter George five-hole. Jeff Malott and Alex Turcotte scored second-period goals for L.A. Malott converted a loose puck and Turcotte lifted in a backhand on a two-man advantage.

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Los Angeles Times

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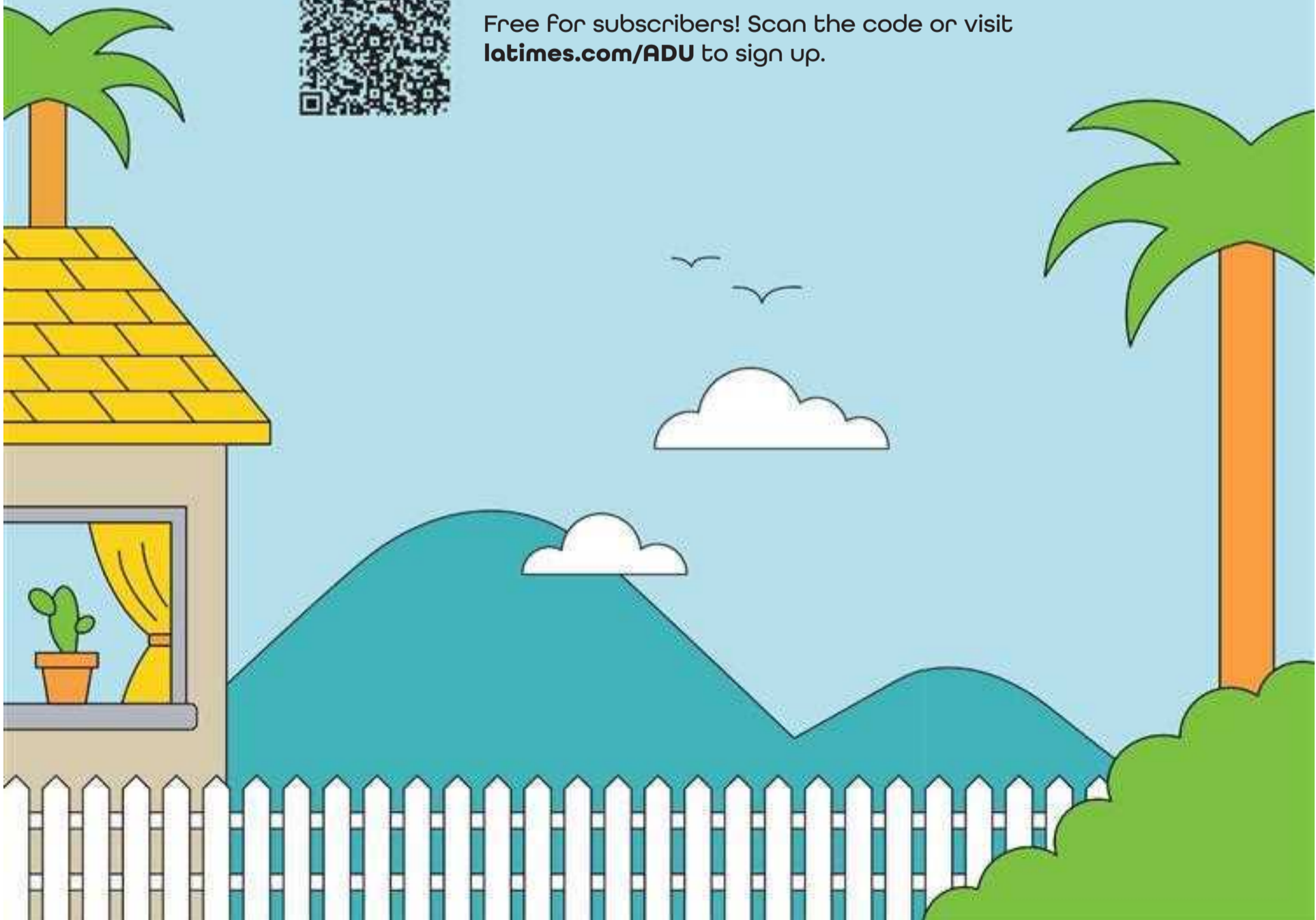
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ENTERTAINMENT

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2024 :: LATIMES.COM/ENTERTAINMENT



JENNIFER MCCORD For The Times

FOR HER SECOND album, Suki Waterhouse wanted a title that evoked joy, which led her to “Memoir of a Sparklemuffin.”

The wild life, fun times of a ‘Sparklemuffin’

When Suki Waterhouse discovered the Sparklemuffin, it was as if she had caught wind of one of the juiciest pieces of gossip of all time. She was in the midst of a late-night internet search binge when she came across a fuzzy peacock spider that dances. “I was really attracted to looking at him,” the blond-banded multihyphenate says over the phone from London. “He’s very wildly colored and also sort of self-destructive in a way because they eat their partners if they don’t like the dance that they’re doing.”

At that moment, an awestruck Waterhouse thought everyone needed to know about this vibrant creature whose orange-

Musician, model and actor Suki Waterhouse on her new album, performing with Taylor Swift and her arachnid obsession.

By ILANA KAPLAN

and-blue-hued abdomen resembled a Pendleton blanket. Naturally, she began firing off messages and DMs to friends and flooding her family’s WhatsApp chat with Sparklemuffin content. Before she knew it, her mild fascination began to dominate her world.

But at that point, it was solely a personal obsession — not even remotely an album title. She had been fixated on calling her second LP “A Yellow Rose for Bobby Peru,” an homage to one of her favorite movies, “Wild at Heart,” and the Victorian-era notion that yellow roses “were associated with slightly unhappy relationships.” But Waterhouse craved a title that incited joy — something that was the antithesis of her headspace when she created her debut album, “I Can’t

[See Waterhouse, E6]

A space where AI turns into art

Refik Anadol picks L.A. for world’s first museum dedicated to ‘generative reality.’

By JESSICA GELT

Refik Anadol, the artist who projected the history of the Los Angeles Philharmonic as a piece of algorithmic video onto the curving steel walls of Frank Gehry’s Walt Disney Concert Hall in 2018, announced Tuesday that he will open the world’s first museum of AI arts across the street next year.

It’s no coincidence that Anadol picked the Gehry-designed Grand L.A. development as the location for his new museum, called Dataland, so close to the venue that helped push his career to new heights. He has emerged as a leader in the field of AI-generated art, with commissions that include a piece at L.A.’s new Intuit Dome. Coming full circle just makes sense, he said. As does launching a museum in L.A. dedicated to technology poised to change practically everything about the way we live.

“We are blending Gehry’s building with AI’s infrastructure and technology, and this never-seen-before art form,” Anadol said with animated intensity during an interview on the 31st floor of the Grand’s residential tower, which has a bird’s-eye view of Disney Hall. “And I’m calling this new art form not AR, not VR, not XR — so we are still finding a name for it. The best name so far, and people love it, is generative reality.”

Nicholas Vanderboom, chief operating officer of the Grand’s developer, Related California, said Dataland will serve as the \$1-billion mixed-use development’s anchor. Two years after opening, its 45-story apartment tower is almost fully leased, he said, but retail tenants have been more difficult to attract. The original vision for the Grand, [See Dataland, E6]

Bing Crosby’s widow dies

Kathryn Crosby, who appeared in “Anatomy of a Murder” before marrying her singer husband, was 90. E3

5 mysteries to read this fall

A new Michael Connelly cold-case saga and a Hanukkah noir anthology are among the picks. E3

Comics E4-5
Puzzles E5

MUSIC REVIEW

Sphere lets the Eagles’ songs soar

Beloved band’s music is the real special effect at Las Vegas’ state-of-the-art venue.

MIKAEL WOOD
POP MUSIC CRITIC

LAS VEGAS — Not a guy known for understating his own importance, Don Henley took in his surroundings on Saturday night and acknowledged that the Eagles — the hit-making, money-minting, fake-band-in-“Almost Famous”-inspiring Eagles — weren’t entirely what the thousands of people before him had turned up to see.

“We’ll be the house band



RICH FURY Sphere Entertainment
SPHERE morphs into a jukebox at Eagles show.

for this evening,” he said, one of nine tiny-looking men on-stage beneath the cavernous illuminated dome of Sphere. “Remember the old black-

[See The Eagles, E2]

Comedy pours out of Josh Johnson

‘Daily Show’ writer relishes the challenge of constantly coming up with new material.

By STUART MILLER

In 2023, Josh Johnson found himself running toward a ledge, hoping that when he leaped he’d reach the other side safely instead of crashing down.

No, the stand-up comic was not actually in any danger, nor had he traded in his “Daily Show” gig for an action-hero role. This ledge and leap were strictly metaphorical, a move he was making in his mind.

That’s a place where Johnson spends much of his day musing. In fact, his ledge-jump moment came

[See Johnson, E2]



CHRISTINA HOUSE Los Angeles Times

“WHEN YOU’RE excited to share what you’ve created with people, it’s the most exciting thing in the world,” says comedian Josh Johnson about his creative drive.

The Eagles' songs are the real standout

[The Eagles, from E1] and-white silent movies, they had the organist down there performing music to the film? That's what we are — we're the organist."

With two concerts over the last weekend, the Eagles became the fourth act to play this state-of-the-art venue — after U2, Phish and Dead & Company — just behind the Venetian resort on the Las Vegas Strip. By now you've heard about Sphere's 160,000-square-foot video screen and its seatback haptics and the \$2 billion the building's mastermind, Madison Square Garden Entertainment Chief Executive James Dolan, spent to bring it all to life almost exactly a year ago.

But if 12 months of TikTok and Instagram clips arguably have diminished the initial shock of the place, Henley was right in surmising that Sphere-goers are still coming here to be wowed. On Saturday night, the second of 20 Eagles gigs scheduled through January, folks were ooh-ing and aah-ing before the music even started as they were met upon entering by an enormous photorealistic mural jamming together dozens of landmarks from the band's Los Angeles hometown, including Chateau Marmont, Griffith Observatory, Paramount Pictures' Melrose

gate and, of course, the Troubadour, where Henley and Eagles co-founder Glenn Frey famously met in the early 1970s as members of Linda Ronstadt's road band. (Inevitably, a painstaking mock-up of the Troubadour inside the Venetian is now where you can buy Eagles hoodies and backpacks.)

The group's two-hour show delivers plenty of additional eye candy, not least a scene set to "In the City" in which you lift out of a kind of grimy tenement-building panopticon to soar over a verdant landscape rendered in almost lurid greens and blues. "Hope you brought your Dramamine," Henley said to big laughs from the mostly middle-aged crowd. Then he joked that next weekend he might have the venue replace the floor seats with recliners.

Yet the Eagles' Sphere production is for sure a less elaborate visual spectacle than its predecessors, with quite a few songs — "One of These Nights," "Witchy Woman," "Lyn' Eyes," "Tequila Sunrise," "Seven Bridges Road" — accompanied by variations on a windswept desert vista or a mossy forest or a starry night sky. The result was more vibe-setting than storytelling: Sometimes you felt like you were watching a

band perform in front of the world's highest-resolution screensaver; other times, as during an underwater ballet set to Henley's "The Boys of Summer," you wondered whether the Eagles had repurposed footage from some lost '80s perfume commercial.

Which as an approach makes all kinds of sense. For Sphere, the Eagles' relatively low-key show demonstrates that the venue can host acts that don't necessarily want to spend oodles of time and money (as U2 and Dead & Co did) to reinvent the live concert experience. For the Eagles, the show is in keeping with a long-established focus on the music beyond all else — a mindset Henley nodded to when he welcomed the audience by pointing out with genuine-seeming excitement that Sphere houses 164,000 speakers.

"We've been playing these songs for you for 52 years now," he added, and you understood that, more than the splendor on Sphere's wraparound screen, what the Eagles have really become the house band for is the cherished memories of the band's fans, which contain an emotional power no special effect could ever match.

Indeed, this Vegas residency comes amid a so-



CHLOE WEIR

THE EAGLES performed over the weekend at Sphere in Las Vegas, part of the long-running band's 20-concert residency scheduled through January.

called farewell tour the Eagles launched in late 2023 and which they've promised to keep extending for as long as audiences show up. Following Frey's death in 2016, 77-year-old Henley is the only original member still in the group, which also includes bassist Timothy B. Schmit and guitarist Joe Walsh (both Eagles since the mid-'70s) and a pair of fill-ins for Frey in country star Vince Gill and Frey's 31-year-old son, Deacon. Last week, J.D. Souther, who co-wrote several of the Eagles' signature tunes, died at 78; Randy Meisner, another founder known for his lead vocal in "Take It to the Limit," died last year at 77.

Onstage, Henley introduced Deacon Frey as "one reason we've been able to keep this legacy alive," and if

the weight of that intro spooked the younger musician, you couldn't tell: Frey's singing in "Peaceful Easy Feeling" and especially "Take It Easy" was warm and soulful, even if it lacked the hint of an edge that his late dad brought to the Eagles' rich-hippie country-rock sound.

As always, the Eagles' playing was masterful throughout the night: crisp and strummy in "New Kid in Town," tense yet cooled-out in "I Can't Tell You Why," extravagantly supple in "Hotel California," which they opened with in case anybody came in doubting the band's ample supply of hits. Every time the players arranged themselves in a line to blend their voices in five- or six-part harmony, Sphere's crystal-clear sound system

let you hear each part both on its own and as a component in the whole — just the kind of tech breakthrough you can bet drew Henley to Vegas (in addition to the chance to charge a premium for tickets).

On Saturday, Henley took a minute at the very end of the show to toast Souther, whom he called "a great man — smart, funny, witty" and who he said "loved a good meal and a good martini, loved to laugh, loved the pretty girls." Souther co-wrote the next song, Henley added, which would also be the Eagles' closer, and as the band revved up "Heartache Tonight," Sphere transformed into a giant jukebox that seemed to pull the audience — and seemed to pull the Eagles — deep inside it. Cool trick. Apt one too.

Comedy becomes a constant for Josh Johnson

[Johnson, from E1] last year shortly after the premiere of his Peacock special, "Up Here Killing Myself," in which he riffed on topics he had discussed in therapy (the lasting effects of poverty, his father's death, encounters with the police) and which he sprinkled with interstitials of him talking to an unseen therapist.

"After that I just botched out and felt a little lost," Johnson recalls over pizza in Brooklyn, where he lives.

When he hit that "low moment" his career was going well. He'd graduated college after growing up relatively poor in small-town Louisiana and by his mid-20s had appeared on and was writing for "The Tonight Show" before joining "The Daily Show's" writing staff in 2017. He'd sharpened his stand-up voice opening for host Trevor Noah and then created two well-received specials. Still, he felt like he was treading water.

"Things were fine, just fine, but I was not fulfilled," he says. "I needed to change things up and try something scary, even knowing if I jump from this ledge I may not make it to the next level."

Johnson, who likes reading biographies because he's inspired by seeing all the failure that comes before the success, had always written quickly and written a lot of material. But he was playing it safe, not putting it all out there; like most comedians, he was honing his best jokes for the next one-hour special.

"I have a lot of opinions on things, which in normal

life is annoying, but a friend said, 'I like your insights and take on things and you should put it out there for people,' " he recalls.

And so he just went for it. He'd perform new material constantly and release it online almost immediately. While most comedians aspire to that hour of new material each year, Johnson has posted more than 22 hours of new material on YouTube since mid-2023, including five hours in just one month this summer.

He relishes the challenge of constantly creating, saying he can tell when a comic has told a joke so often they're just reciting it. "With my new material it feels fresh, like I have this secret to tell you," he says. "When you're excited to share what you've created with people, it's the most exciting thing in the world. You feel giddy."

Much of his new material is observations about his life or about American culture, but he is also responding to the news of the day — whether it's Simone Biles at the Olympics or the assassination attempt on former President Donald Trump — that he is writing "pretty much in real time."

Some bits are sharp and polished, while some timely jokes sound more like the thoughtful musings of your smart and funny neighbor. "People don't have to agree with me, but I want to make them laugh no matter what," he says. "Joy and happiness aren't partisan."

He's comfortable talking about big ideas and ideals but doesn't pretend to have solutions at the policy level.



CHRISTINA HOUSE Los Angeles Times

STAND-UP comedian and "The Daily Show" writer Josh Johnson says, "I have a lot of opinions on things."

"I'm usually wrong about things in a way that's scary," he says. "I'm working on a joke about how I believe in climate change, but I know so little about it that if I explained it to you, you'd say, 'That sounds so dumb I don't think it's real.'"

Johnson clearly is getting something right. In February "The Daily Show" promoted him from writer to correspondent, filling an opening created when the show's senior correspondents began rotating behind the host desk, according to executive producer Jennifer Flanz.

"Josh is a rising star," she says. "He has his own voice and as a writer for the show

he knows how his voice fits into the 'Daily Show' lens."

Johnson's personality and his prodigious output have both impressed his elders. "Josh Johnson is the future," says Roy Wood Jr., who left "The Daily Show" last year after eight years. Wood and two other long-time correspondents, Michael Kosta and Ronny Chieng, who now share co-hosting duties, say Johnson deserves his success. "He is effortlessly funny and a joy to be around," Kosta says.

"He brings friendship and good nature to the show, plus he has a very funny comedic voice and he makes it look easy," Chieng adds.

Johnson is calm and self-effacing by nature, with the same low-key charm and thoughtfulness that he brings to his stand-up. He's happy to ruminate about life or talk politics, but he's equally at home discussing his penchant for still playing the same video games he loved when he was a kid (yes, he still plays Sega's Madden 93 football), the oddball sports he watches over mainstream ones ("I'm not huge into football but I'll watch darts — someone is the best at the world at throwing a needle into the wall exactly where they want to hit it and I can't help but be impressed") or how his Shiba Inu prefers his girlfriend to him. "When I unlock the door, he runs out past me to jump on her and only after they walk in he comes up to me," he says. "If I'm by myself, he looks behind me and only then jumps on me as if I won't catch it."

Chieng says Johnson's low-key, calm voice works well for social and comedic political commentary, especially in contrast to more amped-up performers. Johnson agrees.

"Sometimes I'll get pretty wild, but I'm usually talking about pot pie or something,"

Johnson says. "But I try to approach these topics as if I'm talking with friends. And I think satire and commentary work best when they are the opposite tone from the events and times."

Chieng and Kosta say Johnson is ahead of the curve in comedy trends when it comes to a barrage of content.

"That's the new algorithm for the path to success for comics in America, but that doesn't work for everybody," Chieng says. "Josh's style is very conversational and 'The Daily Show' helped him build the muscle of making topical jokes and of not being too precious with his material."

Kosta, who runs a New York comedy club for comedians to hone their material, agrees. "There's never enough content, so I think we'll see more comedians following what Josh is doing and being less precious about their material, but they may not be as good as Josh at it," says Kosta. "I don't think the public understands how difficult it is to be that prolific. I know I'd be fearful if I tried it."

Johnson says perfectionism is impossible in any art form. He can write a joke that seems technically perfect, but it's up to the audience to decide. "I've started to accept the things that I can't control and I've stopped being so hard on myself."

The audience is deciding they like him. His exposure from the steady stream of YouTube videos and his new TV role has increased his fan base. "The perception of me has definitely changed," he says, which is the closest he can bring himself to being inmodest. But it doesn't last. "It's partly because this show is an institution and with Jon [Stewart] back and an election year, there's a different energy."

The more material he posts, the more he attracts an audience coming specifically to see him, as opposed to the days when he was just another 10-minute slot in a night's lineup. "I'm finding myself and my people at the same time," he says, but he doesn't let himself get comfortable knowing the crowd is inclined to like him. "You're always new to someone there and you want to give it your best effort every time."

He has become popular enough that next year he'll be playing in theaters, but he sees any pressure as "an enormous privilege."

"It's better than when there's no pressure because you barely sold any tickets and they have to move everyone down to the front," he says. "I'm thankful because there were whole years where no one really cared what I did."

Johnson, who loves doing meet-and-greets after his shows, says his biggest concern is losing his connection to, and sense of community with, the audience he has built, but he is seeking ways to do that with the bigger shows. He's also worried about keeping shows affordable and helping fans avoid scammers and scalpers. "I feel that responsibility," he says, explaining that he created an email list for his website so people can find out about extra shows and can link to tickets at the price he set for them. "I'm still learning the business side."

Writing and performing, writing and performing, writing and performing at this clip can't last forever. "It's not sustainable over time because I don't have time for thinking about or doing much else," Johnson says. "But I love it so much that I don't feel like I'm working all the time. And I'm definitely enjoying the moment. So I am thankful I listened to that little voice in my head."

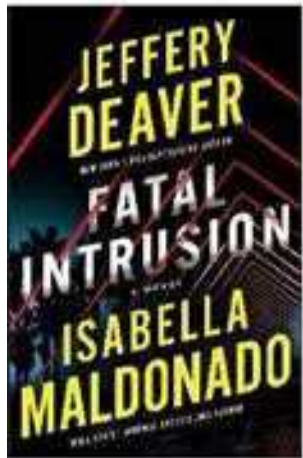
Info Line 310.478.3836

NOT AFRAID OF SUBTITLES

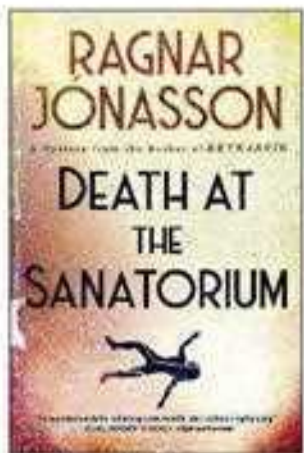
www.LAEMMLE.com

ROYAL	TOWN CENTER	GLENDALE	NoHo 7
<p>11523 Santa Monica Blvd. West L.A.</p> <p>IN THE SUMMERS 1:10 4:10 7:00</p> <p>WHAT WE FIND ON THE ROAD NR 4:00 PM</p> <p>THE FALLING STAR 1:10 4:20 7:20</p> <p>A BOLT FROM THE BLUE NR 7:30 PM</p> <p>SHORT FILM PROGRAM DEATH BY NUMBERS 3:10 PM</p> <p>THE GOLDMAN CASE 1:00 PM</p> <hr/> <p>1332 Second Street Santa Monica</p> <p>A MISTAKE 4:20 PM</p> <p>THE SUBSTANCE NR 1:00 4:00 7:00</p> <p>THE CRITIC NR 4:10 PM</p> <p>WILL & HARPER NR 7:10 PM</p> <p>BEEBLEJUICE BEEBLEJUICE PG-13 1:30 4:30 7:20</p> <p>BETWEEN THE TEMPLES NR 1:20 4:10 7:10</p> <p>MAYA AND THE WAVE 7:30 PM</p> <p>SHORT FILM PROGRAM BOTTLE GEORGE 3:30 PM</p> <p>SHORT FILM PROGRAM SHORTS BY THE SEA VOL. 6 - CODA 1:00 PM</p> <p>TOKYO UBER BLUES 1:00 PM</p> <p>WHO'S AFRAID OF NATHAN LAW? 1:00 3:10 5:15 7:30</p>	<p>17200 Ventura Blvd. Encino</p> <p>A MISTAKE 1:00 7:20</p> <p>THE SUBSTANCE NR 1:00 4:00 7:00</p> <p>WHIPLASH - 10TH ANNIVERSARY RERELEASE NR 1:20 4:00 7:10</p> <p>THE CRITIC NR 1:30 7:30</p> <p>WILL & HARPER NR 4:20 PM</p> <p>BETWEEN THE TEMPLES NR 7:10 PM</p> <p>24 HOURS TO D-DAY 4:30 PM</p> <p>THE GOLDMAN CASE 4:10 PM</p> <p>TOKYO UBER BLUES 1:00 PM</p> <hr/> <p>22500 Lyons Ave. Santa Clarita</p> <p>THE SUBSTANCE NR 1:00 4:00 7:00</p> <p>TRANSFORMERS ONE PG 1:30 4:30 7:30</p> <p>WHIPLASH - 10TH ANNIVERSARY RERELEASE NR 1:00 4:10 7:10</p> <p>SPEAK NO EVIL NR 1:20 4:15 7:10</p> <p>THE KILLER'S GAME NR 1:20 7:20</p> <p>WILL & HARPER NR 4:20 PM</p> <p>BEEBLEJUICE BEEBLEJUICE PG-13 1:30 4:20 7:30</p> <p>REAGAN PG-13 1:10 4:00 7:00</p>	<p>207 N. Maryland Ave Glendale</p> <p>OMNI LOOP 1:10 PM</p> <p>THE SUBSTANCE NR 1:00 4:10 7:15</p> <p>WHIPLASH - 10TH ANNIVERSARY RERELEASE NR 4:00 7:00</p> <p>WILL & HARPER NR 7:00 PM</p> <p>BEEBLEJUICE BEEBLEJUICE PG-13 1:20 4:10 7:10</p> <p>BEEZEL 4:30 PM</p> <p>LUMINA 1:10 4:15 7:20</p> <p>SHORT FILM PROGRAM SISTER WIVES 3:15 PM</p> <p>TOKYO UBER BLUES 1:00 PM</p>	<p>5240 Lankershim Blvd. No. Hollywood</p> <p>THE SUBSTANCE NR 1:00 4:10 7:15</p> <p>WHIPLASH - 10TH ANNIVERSARY RERELEASE NR 1:10 4:00 7:00</p> <p>SPEAK NO EVIL NR 1:30 4:30 7:30</p> <p>WILL & HARPER NR 1:00 7:10</p> <p>BEEBLEJUICE BEEBLEJUICE PG-13 1:30 4:20 7:20</p> <p>RED ROOMS 1:10 PM</p> <p>DIDI NR 4:10 PM</p> <p>BASQUIAT NR 4:00 PM</p> <p>UNFIGHTABLE 1:20 4:20 7:20</p> <hr/> <p>450 W. 2nd Street Claremont</p> <p>THE SUBSTANCE NR 1:00 4:00 7:00</p> <p>TRANSFORMERS ONE PG 1:20 4:20 7:10</p> <p>SPEAK NO EVIL NR 1:00 4:20 7:10</p> <p>WILL & HARPER NR 7:20 PM</p> <p>BEEBLEJUICE BEEBLEJUICE PG-13 1:30 4:10 7:30</p> <p>DIDI NR 4:30 PM</p> <p>TOKYO UBER BLUES 1:00 PM</p>

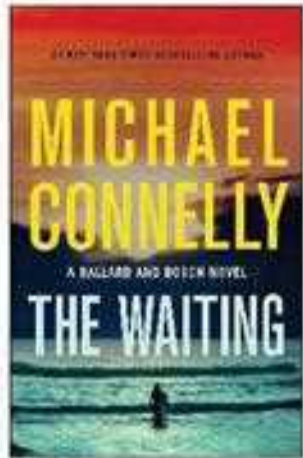
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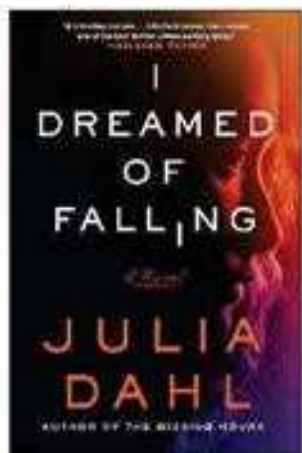
Thomas & Mercer



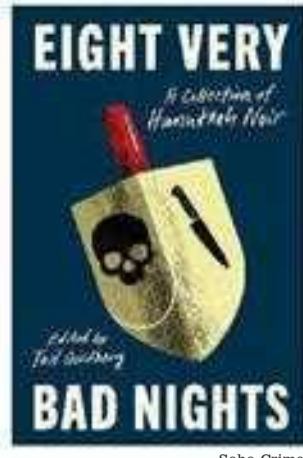
Minotaur



Little, Brown and Co.



Minotaur



Soho Crime

Why was Roman Grady a pivotal character in the novel and for you as a writer and journalism professor?

As I tell my students constantly, I am a journalism evangelist. I think being a reporter is one of the most important jobs in the world. For democracy to function, the people must be informed. It's not a coincidence that our democracy is in peril just as our news ecosystem is crumbling. Since moving to a small town in 2019, I've become acutely aware of how the death of local news impacts communities. The people in power are still making all kinds of decisions about our lives, but suddenly no one is watching them and reporting back to the residents.

EIGHT VERY BAD NIGHTS: A COLLECTION OF HANUKKAH NOIR

Edited by Tod Goldberg
Soho Crime: 304 pages, \$28
Oct. 29

Goldberg, a UC Riverside writing professor and author, notes in the foreword of this stellar collection, "Sure, it's a festive time, but after eight nights with the family, almost any exit sounds appealing, even those from this life." His assembled group of writers — including Los Angeles Times Book Prize winner Ivy Pochoda, acclaimed horror writer Gabino Iglesias and screenwriter Stefanie Leder — makes good on that observation by delivering multiple takes on those exits in ways that are poignant, dark and often hilarious. Among the standouts: Alta books editor David L. Ulin's "Shamash" — its title taken from the little candle used to light others in the menorah — is a devastating story about a dutiful son and caregiver faced with a fateful choice. San Diego resident and frequent Times contributor Jim Ruland's "The Demo" manages to be a magical history tour of L.A. independent record companies and a story of revenge intertwined with the holiday's festivities. And Goldberg's title story as well as brother Lee's "If I Were a Rich Man" — the latter involving a Jewish ex-con, now a dementia patient in a retirement home in Merced — bring on the funny while being wildly observant.

Which story surprised you?

James D.F. Hannah's story "Twenty Centuries" blew me away. Writing an actual procedural mystery in the space of a short story is exceptionally difficult and to make it layered, topical and character-driven all at once? Masterful. The other big surprise was how hard it was to edit my own brother's work. Particularly since I told him the story couldn't be more than 25 pages and he sent me 45.

In your story, you again tap that rich vein of Jewish gangsters and wannabes I got to know in the "Gangsterland" novels and the short-story collection "The Low Desert." Was Jack Katz based on any real-life newscasters you knew in the Coachella Valley?

My father's side of the family were all in the furniture business. After losing his network job in Portland, my dad ended up doing some time working for his father, a position he was ill-suited for, to say the least. So the furniture business is in my blood a bit, as well as local TV news, and you mix that with my proclivity for exploring Jewish organized crime and, well, you've got yourself a recipe for a (long) short story.

THE AUTUMN SOLUTION

Who knew fall could be so deadly? Seasonal reads include police procedurals, Connelly's new Ballard-Bosch, a reporter-fueled tale and a Hanukkah anthology.

By PAULA L. WOODS

FATAL INTRUSION

Jeffery Deaver and Isabella Maldonado
Thomas & Mercer:
444 pages, \$29
Out now

This first-time collaboration starts with some brilliant misdirection in introducing Dennison Fallow, who viciously kills a man in San Diego. He is thwarted by his next victim, Selina Sanchez, a quick-thinking young student he attacks in Perris. She learned her self-defense and perp-identification skills from her big sister, Carmen, an agent with Homeland Security Investigations who takes a leave to get to the bottom of the attack. For off-the-books assistance, she calls a man with whom she has a complicated past. Jake Heron is a university professor and "intrusionist," "an academic who worked to safeguard private companies and governments and individuals." When these two team up, the fun really starts as the layers of red herrings and types of intrusion Jake advises his clients to avoid are peeled back to reveal a conspiracy much larger than the serial killer trope that jump-starts the novel.

Deaver and Maldonado have crafted a white-knuckle ride, although its forward momentum is undercut at times by over-explaining in clumps of exposition rather than allowing the reader to catch up more organically. Even so, the insider's look at an unfamiliar agency, its intricate plotting and complex Latina agent make "Fatal Intrusion" one that thriller readers will relish.

Given your experiences as bestselling authors in your own rights, plus Isabella's long career policing inside the Beltway, how did the two of you join forces? And how did you divide the writing duties?

Maldonado: We met at a writers conference a few years ago and immediately connected. Since we both write fast-paced thrillers with complex characters and layered, twisty plots, we thought, "Let's give it a shot."

Deaver: We devised the concept, extensively outlined, picked chapters to write and then — and this is essential — declared a no-go zone and vigorously edited each other's work. It was a true 50-50 collaboration.

Crime fiction is filled with serial killer tropes. What

makes Dennison Fallow different?

Deaver: Dennison is a multifaceted character with sociopathic tendencies, but he's not a clichéd bad guy. He's true to the maxim "the villain is the hero of his own story," which makes him fascinating to write as readers are given a peek into the inner workings of his mind. Without spoilers, while he roams the streets of Los Angeles, Riverside and Orange counties as an apparent serial killer, his actions are the springboard to the roller coaster and misdirection that follow.

DEATH AT THE SANATORIUM

Ragnar Jónasson
Minotaur Books:
320 pages, \$29
Out now

At the heart of next-gen Nordic star Jónasson's latest (after "Reykjavik") is criminology graduate student Helgi Reykdal, who in 2012 has returned to Iceland from the U.K. to work on his dissertation. His subject: the Reykjavik police department's investigational procedures related to the 1983 slaying of an elderly nurse in Iceland's isolated north. The suicide of the chief physician at the former tuberculosis sanatorium shortly there after tied up that investigation with a neat bow for neophyte detective Hulda Hermannsdóttir and her boss. Decades later, Reykdal's interviews with a small circle of those involved in the long-ago deaths gets smaller when one of them is killed, and his dissertation morphs into an all-consuming investigation. As Reykdal takes the investigative reins in the days leading up to his new job replacing Hermannsdóttir, his penchant for classic crime novels and a messy home life make him an endearing and relatable hero readers will be hungry to see again.

Was it always your plan to write a Helgi Reykdal novel?

This idea came to me after I had finished writing the Hulda trilogy. I started wondering, "Who is this young man who took over Hulda's office? What type of a person is he?"

How did Agatha Christie inform the creation of Helgi Reykdal?

Since I started translating her at age 17, Christie has been a great influence on me, with her incredible plotting and sense of setting. I've also been a keen reader of other Golden Age writers,

including American authors such as Ellery Queen and S.S. Van Dine, who created some of the most brilliant mysteries of the genre. As soon as I created Helgi, I decided that he would be someone who loved books, in particular Golden Age detective stories. This is, of course, a reflection of my interests, but I also simply thought it might be a somewhat unusual trait for a detective. It also gave me an opportunity to introduce some of my favorite titles to readers and give the story a Golden Age feel.

THE WAITING

Michael Connelly
Little Brown and Co.:
416 pages, \$30
Oct. 15

The LAPD's Open-Unsolved Unit's Det. Renée Ballard is moving forward with her ragtag team of volunteers and a caseload ranging from the sexual assault and killing of a South Los Angeles Black woman that got little attention under the leadership of Chief Daryl Gates to the "Pillowcase Rapist," who went dormant almost two decades ago. Meanwhile, Ballard's trying to quietly recover her badge, gun and wallet containing her police ID, the theft of which could be a career-limiting disaster should her superiors find out. She's also juggling appointments with a therapist to cure her insomnia, which leads to exploring her abandonment issues and the effects of vicarious trauma. "You were a sin eater," her therapist says. "You took in all of the horrors you saw on the job and kept them inside, and they came out in these symptoms we are seeing."

Ballard is relieved when Maddie Bosch, now an LAPD patrol officer working in the Hollywood division, volunteers in the unit. Ballard could use another sworn officer, but retired Det. Harry Bosch's daughter has a bigger agenda: She hopes to get fast-tracked to detective by pursuing a clue she believes is related to one of L.A.'s most notorious unsolved homicides. To say more would be to spoil the joys of watching Connelly meticulously guide Ballard and a young Bosch in cracking the case of a lifetime.

"The Waiting" blends exceptional crime-solving with law and order politics while furthering not only the development of Ballard's and Bosch's characters but also refreshing the series by providing a succession plan for the ailing Harry. The

waiting is well worth it in this satisfying new direction for the Ballard-Bosch universe.

Why was telling this story at this point in the series important to you?

Just really love Renée Ballard and feel the need to fill in some of the blanks in her life. Maybe this happens when you know most of your writing days are behind you. You get this urgency. It also was dictated by some true events, like the fires last year in Maui. There have been prior references to Ballard's mother being somewhere in Maui and not in contact with her daughter. That kind of spurred me to include references to that and how they would come up in therapy brought on by Ballard's insomnia. [Ballard's Hawaiian heritage] was something I knew I had a duty to pursue in terms of presenting a full picture of this character. But I've put it off; call it author laziness. But the fires in Maui last year motivated me to finally get into it. I also have to admit I learned a lot reading my own daughter's papers that she wrote for her master's degree in psychology. After that, I was off to the races.

Without giving away the surprise, rookie cop Maddie Bosch stumbles upon clues related to one of the most infamous murders in L.A. history. Why was tackling such an iconic mystery a good one for the Open-Unsolved Unit?

Until this year when she retired, Det. Mitzi Roberts ran LAPD's volunteer cold case unit. Mitzi is the direct inspiration for Ballard, and as such, my research for the character amounts to an ongoing conversation with Mitzi. So I was quite aware of the filing cabinet containing the old files, the suitcase that belonged to the victim and so forth. What I was hoping to do was take the real aspects of that horrible unsolved case and come up with a story that fit the known details but ultimately would add to the mythos of it being unsolvable at this point.

I DREAMED OF FALLING

Julia Dahl
Minotaur: 352 pages, \$29
Out now

Neophyte reporter Roman Grady's life partner, Ashley Lillian, has overcome life-threatening childbirth and a long bout of postpartum depression and wants to resume teaching yoga and caring for her 4-year-old son,

Mason. But the mothering role has been usurped by Roman's mother, Tara, with whom the couple lives in Adamsville, N.Y., a small town undergoing a post-COVID gentrification. Dahl deftly shows the toll the young mother's depression has taken on the family. Meanwhile, Tara, trying to make amends for the inadequate parenting of her only child, fears that Roman is depressed. A recent NYU J-school graduate, Roman deferred a prestigious fellowship with the L.A. Times to parent his and Ashley's baby. Dahl shows how Roman's skills are underused as the sole reporter for his Hudson Valley local paper that was purchased by a billionaire and led by an editor-publisher who just doesn't get the mission. "Although his boss had to pretend to embrace the family-friendly nature of the town whose newspaper he ran," Roman observes, "privately he was a man with a heart as atrophied as his calf muscles." Roman's also resentful and feeling somewhat slighted by Ashley, with whom he's always had a sexually open relationship. Then Ashley doesn't come home one night after attending a drug-fueled party at her former girlfriend's house. When Grady finds Ashley's body the next day, the subsequent quest for answers sets off a chain reaction of recrimination and revelations.

What are the challenges in presenting your characters' points of view while also advancing the plot and underlying mystery?

Balancing the two things that matter in a crime novel — creating a vivid world and set of characters and keeping the reader guessing about whodunit — is always a challenge. I love a good mystery, but I write books because I want to tell people's stories and explore themes I think are important. In this case, the story I wanted to tell was of a nontraditional family. I knew my main characters were deeply flawed, but it was important to me that their messiness not be mistaken for poor character. I wanted to write from inside each of their heads so I could let their perspectives reveal that.

KATHRYN CROSBY, 1933 – 2024

Actor, widow of singer Bing Crosby

She appeared in movies such as '7th Voyage of Sinbad' before marrying.

By BETH HARRIS

Kathryn Crosby, who appeared in such movies as "The 7th Voyage of Sinbad," "Anatomy of a Murder" and "Operation Mad Ball" before marrying famed singer and Oscar-winning actor Bing Crosby, has died. She was 90. She died of natural causes Friday night at her home in the Northern Cali-

fornia city of Hillsborough, a family spokesperson said Saturday.

Appearing under her stage name of Kathryn Grant, she appeared opposite Tony Curtis in "Mister Cory" in 1957 and Victor Mature in "The Big Circus" in 1959. She made five movies with film noir director Phil Karlson, including "Tight Spot" and "The Phenix City Story," both in 1955.

Her other leading men included Jack Lemmon in "Operation Mad Ball," James Darren in "The Brothers Rico" and James Stewart in "Anatomy of a Murder," directed by Otto

Preminger.

Born Olive Kathryn Grandstaff on Nov. 25, 1933, in West Columbia, Texas, she graduated from the University of Texas with a degree in fine arts. She came to Hollywood and began her movie career in 1953.

She met Bing Crosby while doing interviews for a column she wrote about Hollywood for her hometown newspaper. They were married in 1957, when she was 23 and he was 54.

Crosby curtailed her acting career after the wedding, although she appeared often with Crosby and their three children on his Christmas

television specials and in Minute Maid orange juice commercials. She became a registered nurse in 1963.

In the 1970s, she hosted a morning talk show on KPIX-TV in Northern California.

After Bing Crosby's death at age 74 in 1977, from a heart attack after golfing in Spain, she appeared in stage productions of "Same Time, Next Year" and "Charley's Aunt."

She co-starred with John Davidson and Andrea McArdle in the 1996 Broadway revival of "State Fair."

For 16 years ending in 2001, she hosted the Crosby National golf tournament in



CARLOS RENE PEREZ Associated Press

MARRIED FOR TWO DECADES

Kathryn Crosby met her famous husband, Bing, while doing interviews for a Hollywood column she wrote.

Bermuda Run, N.C.

She is survived by children Harry; Mary, an actor best known for the TV show "Dallas"; and Nathaniel, a successful amateur golfer.

She was married to Mau-

rice Sullivan for 10 years before he was killed in a 2010 car accident that seriously injured her.

Harris writes for the Associated Press.

COMICS

LA CUCARACHA By Lalo Alcaraz



PICKLES By Brian Crane



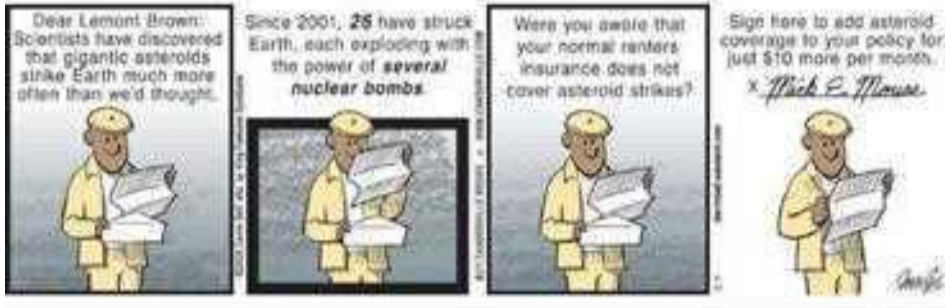
CRABGRASS By Tauhid Bondia



BABY BLUES By Jerry Scott & Rick Kirkman



CANDORVILLE By Darrin Bell



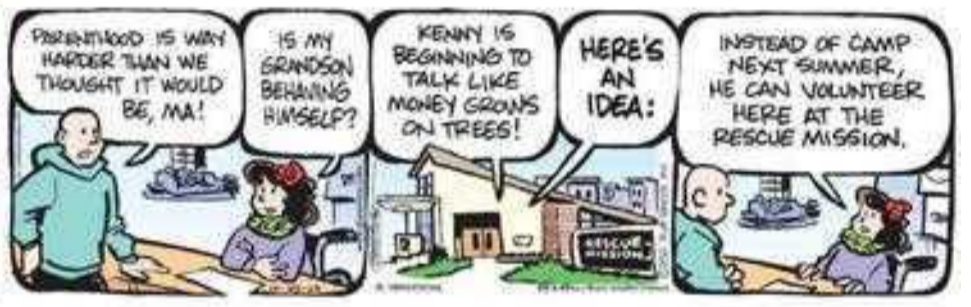
CRANKSHAFT By Tom Batiuk & Chuck Ayers



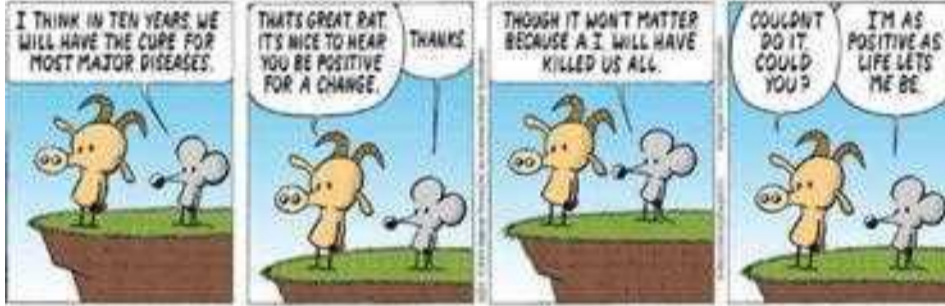
LOOSE PARTS By Dave Blazek



JUMP START By Robb Armstrong



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE By Stephan Pastis



MACANUDO By Liniers



LIO By Mark Tatulli



BLONDIE By Dean Young & John Marshall



ZITS By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman



BETWEEN FRIENDS By Sandra Bell-Lundy



TUNDRA By Chad Carpenter



BIZARRO By Wayno and Piraro



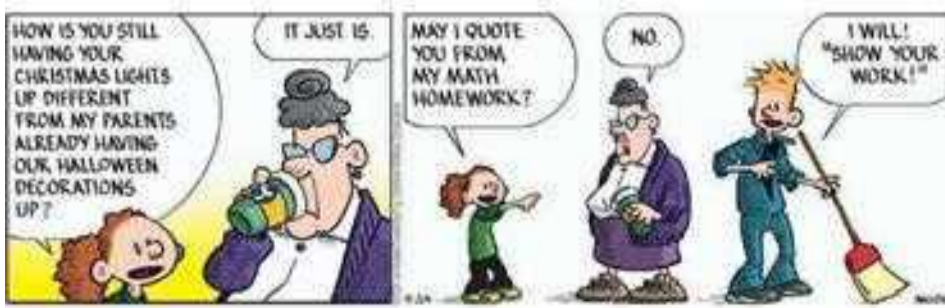
SIX CHIX By Bianca Xunise



DRABBLE By Kevin Fagan



FRAZZ By Jef Mallett



MUTTS By Patrick McDonnell



NON SEQUITUR By Wiley



PEANUTS By Charles M. Schulz



COMICS

SUDOKU

9 3 6 2
4 5 9
1 8 6
7 3 1 5 9 6
8 7
2 8 9
5 6 1
1 7 4 2

Level: Gentle

6 4
3 5 6
1 5 4

Level: Gentle

Solutions to Monday's puzzles

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 or 2-by-3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 (or 1 to 6 for the smaller grid). For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit www.sudoku.org.uk.

KENKEN

Every box will contain a number; numbers depend on the size of the grid. For a 6x6 puzzle, use Nos. 1-6. Do not repeat a number in any row or column. The numbers in each heavily outlined set of squares must combine to produce the target number found in the top left corner of the cage using the mathematical operation indicated. A number can be repeated within a cage as long as it is not in the same row or column.

1- 4x 3 9+
8+ 2- 2-
11+ 3+ 2- 2-
30x 3- 2-
4 1- 3- 2-
6 4 2 3 1 5
2 5 6 1 4 3
1 6 4 5 3 2
3 2 1 6 5 4
5 1 3 4 2 6
4 3 5 2 6 1

9/24/24

HOROSCOPE

BY HOLIDAY MATHIS

Aries (March 21-April 19): It can take a little work to find the note that harmonizes best. You're willing to change your tone until it resonates in a pleasing way with what's around you.

Taurus (April 20-May 20): It might seem like your inner voice is dragging you down. You can turn it around with the simple decision to be nice to yourself.

Gemini (May 21-June 21): Your generous spirit will draw in those who would take advantage of any opportunity to get more of a good thing. Keep your heart open but protect your peace.

Cancer (June 22-July 22): A natural attraction is a door. It might be locked or just tricky to open, but worth it to figure out. The effort it takes to explore feels more like play than work.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22): You'll earn trust with your

straightforwardness. You deliver with compassion and focus on topics people are ready and open to share on.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You crave change but only to a degree. There's an art to inviting just the right excitement. Some forms are a slippery slope best avoided.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23): You'll notice what needs improvement and figure out how to rearrange things to support you better. Put changes on the schedule while motivation is high.

Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21): Sometimes those who seek your attention do it in a way that feels a tad antagonistic. Your sense of humor and quick responses turn things around to the best outcome.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Instead of parroting the opinions of others in your group, you'll make a concerted effort to try to see things differently.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Relationships are full of

lovely nuance. Subtle details speak to you, though some subconsciously. True connections are born.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You're the artist of your life, determined to make a masterpiece of it. It sometimes means tearing off the clay and reworking it.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20): You drop in as an agent of clarity. You soothe and brighten the situation.

Today's birthday (Sept. 24): "Work first, assess later" is your frequent motto in this year of making things happen. Fear is squeezed out by the momentum of your action. Highlights: Brushes with fame, collisions with love, and you'll profit from your talent for accurately calculating risk. Pisces and Sagittarius adore you. Lucky numbers: 2, 20, 13, 5, 7.

Mathis writes her column for Creators Syndicate Inc. The horoscope should be read for entertainment.

CROSSWORD

Edited By Patti Varol
By Norman M. Aaronson

- ACROSS
- Flat-topped landform
 - South Pacific island group
 - Wraparound dress in Hindi cinema
 - Nutrient in leafy greens
 - St. ___ Girl beer
 - Like most Olympic years
 - Super-vision?
 - Enthusiastic
 - Mr. Peanut accessory
 - Congressional helper
 - More frightening
 - "No seats" B'way sign
 - Sch. near Hollywood
 - Eggy brunch dish
 - Store with printing services
 - Small quibble
 - Under the covers
 - Coarse woolens
 - Chem. in some plastics
 - Cayenne automaker
 - Sniffer's boxful
 - Approx. affected by weather
 - "Be that as it may"
 - Online bidding site
 - Downtime, briefly
 - Like content that can be revised
 - Tater Tots brand
 - "Ouch!"
 - "___ the games begin!"
 - Harmonica ancestor
 - Smeller
 - Sitting on
 - "Who knew!"
 - "NFL Primetime" network
 - Aggravate
 - Makeup mishap
 - Ballet skirt
 - Pond croaker
 - ___ down: softens
 - Tiff
- DOWN
- Stir
 - Be off the mark
 - Melodramatic series
 - Taylor-Joy of "The Menu"
 - Professional who helps correct communication disorders
 - Duracell size
 - Coffee holder

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- Fútbol cheers
 - Summer coolers
 - Hidden
 - To no ___ without success
 - "Girls5eva" co-star ___ Elise Goldsberry
 - Dormant
 - Director Van Sant
 - Not quite correct
 - Garlic stalk available at springtime farmers markets
 - Automaton
 - Home Depot rival
 - Mimic
 - Fabric store meas.
 - Piano practice piece
 - Rises to the top, or what can be found in this puzzle?
 - Writer Norman Vincent
 - Thus far
 - Singer Lauper
 - Mediterranean ___
 - "Queen ___": pop music nickname
 - Very muscular
 - Pair
 - Visually stimulating images
 - Quantitative comparison
 - Sherlock's teen sister
 - Red resident of Sesame Street
 - Gels
 - Actor Cariou
 - Sweetie
 - Sch. support group
 - Pecan or cashew
- ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE
- ACROSS: 1. GOLF, 2. SOWS, 3. READ, 4. ALARM, 5. AVO, 6. ISLE, 7. NOUNA, 8. DALE, 9. SATE, 10. TOP, 11. SHELL, 12. LIQUOR, 13. BOOT, 14. TAU, 15. ABCNO, 16. ELEM, 17. IN, 18. WFT, 19. ANDER, 20. ARI, 21. LADY, 22. TIOA, 23. SYLN, 24. LUC, 25. GIKRT, 26. STEAK, 27. REPAIRTEE, 28. BURSTS, 29. DEC, 30. BASE, 31. FASHION, 32. FORWARD, 33. LUCA, 34. GURU, 35. AMOKC, 36. STAB, 37. EDEN, 38. YEMEN, 39. GONT, 40. FELD, 41. HEID
- 9/24/24

BRIDGE

BY FRANK STEWART

Declarer can often disrupt defenders' communication with a "hold-up" play: refusing his first chance to take a winner. But it is rarely correct to hold up at the cost of a trick or when another suit poses a bigger threat.

Against today's 3NT, East put up the king on the first spade; declarer played low. East then led the queen of hearts; he judged it unlikely West had established spades plus an entry.

South won and lost a diamond to West's ace. South won the heart return but had only eight tricks. When he let the nine of clubs ride, East took the king — and two hearts. Down one.

South held up at the wrong time. He should win

the first spade and force out the ace of diamonds. If West leads a second spade to East's 10, then South holds up.

South wins the next spade and finesses in clubs. When East wins, he has no more spades, and South is safe. If East did have a spade left, South would lose only two spades, a club and a diamond.

You hold: ♠ J9854♥ 9765♦ A2♣ 72. The dealer, at your left, opens one heart. Your partner doubles, you respond ("advance") one spade and he raises to two spades. What do you say?

Answer: Partner has a big hand. With an average hand such as K Q 6 2, 10 4, K 8 7 6, A J 3, he would pass one spade; you were obliged to bid and might have a bust. Since you actually have a

South dealer
N-S vulnerable

NORTH
♠ 62
♥ A83
♦ J875
♣ AJ103

WEST
♠ J9854
♥ 9765
♦ A2
♣ 72

EAST
♠ K107
♥ QJ104
♦ 963
♣ K85

SOUTH
♠ A Q3
♥ K2
♦ K Q 10 4
♣ Q 9 6 4

SOUTH 1 NT
WEST Pass
NORTH 3 NT
EAST All Pass

Opening lead — ♠ 5

Tribune Content Agency

ASKING ERIC

Dear Eric: My husband and I have been married for 11 years. When we got married, he was slightly hard of hearing. The past few months his hearing has gotten worse to the point that I have to raise my voice and repeat several times for him to hear me. He then accused me of shouting at him and said if I didn't mumble he could hear me.

I did finally get him to go to a hearing specialist who tested him for hearing loss, which was determined he has for female and children's voices. He refuses hearing aids. I know this is a serious problem and a sensitive issue. However, it's very nerve-racking for me. I love him very much. I just want to help him. I don't want him to be embarrassed when out in public. Could it be that I am a mumbler?

ACCUSED MUMBLER

can either sit in silence or you can take steps together to fix this. And then ask him what he wants to do.

If you're in a bargaining mood, you can promise to try to speak up if he promises to wear his hearing aid. But whatever happens, he's got to stop taking his frustration out on you.

Dear Eric: We have a 39-year-old son who works in commercial real estate but has been out of work for 10 months. He has told us he is depressed and has been for years. He ran out of health insurance and refuses to get any further therapy.

He has told us that it will take at least a year for him to find another job. He has not communicated with me for at least nine months and will not return any communications when I reach out to him. He has only talked to his mother three times since then. My wife and I are at loggerheads with regard to how much financial support we should give him. We are supporting him to the tune of \$5,000 a month. This will, over time, erode our retirement funds. We are both 75.

I have offered to continue to support him, but he must seek therapy, which we will gladly pay for. He also needs to let us know whether he plans to stay with this profession, look at another field, or further pursue more education, which we will be

happy to pay for.

My wife thinks we should continue to support him even though he will not speak to us about his intentions. I don't agree. Your thoughts would be helpful.

SUPPORTIVE PARENT

Dear Parent: You're being incredibly generous and it's hard to fault you for doing everything in your power to help your son. However, your son's actions show an unwillingness to participate in his own recovery; at what point does support become enabling?

Your son's depression may be so intense that he feels there are no options for him, but you and your wife are providing a plethora of options. He might resent your input, but that resentment hasn't stopped him from cashing your checks.

Hold the next payment until he sits down for a frank conversation. Be clear with him: you love him, you're concerned for him, you want to help him. He can't keep accepting your money and not communicating with you.

If you and your wife decide it's worth it for your peace of mind to continue supporting your son, I strongly encourage you to reduce it to a level that won't endanger your futures.

Email questions to eric@askingeric.com.

FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil Keane



DENNIS THE MENACE By Hank Ketcham



FREE RANGE By Bill Whitehead



MARMADUKE By Brad & Paul Anderson



BLISS By Harry Bliss



SPEED BUMP By Dave Coverly



Musician is set to shine

[Waterhouse, from E1] Let Go." Still, Waterhouse couldn't shake her fascination with the sparklemuffin chic arachnid. After all, it was "silly and ridiculous." So it was fitting that she landed on the name "Memoir of a Sparklemuffin" for her sophomore album. "That title just felt much more celebratory," she asserts.

Indeed, the 32-year-old musician has had lots to celebrate lately. Last year, Waterhouse starred in the popular musical drama series "Daisy Jones & the Six," the adaptation of Taylor Jenkins Reid's bestseller, which created an insatiable fandom. In April, she and fiancé Robert Pattinson welcomed their first child — a daughter — and just days before this conversation, she made her debut as an opener at Taylor Swift's Eras Tour at London's Wembley Stadium.

Following her Coachella performance in April, Waterhouse received a call asking her to perform on the Eras Tour. "I freaked out and was completely obviously overjoyed that would be happening," she recalls. But she was hesitant to tell that many people in her life because she was afraid of how many people would ask for tickets. "I kept it pretty close to the heart," she laughs. On the day of the show, Waterhouse was nervous to walk the stage's "intimidating" catwalk, but Swift provided some encouragement. "She was like, 'You have to go for it and walk down that and have that fun moment,'" Waterhouse recalls.

But largely, the magnitude of the performance didn't really sink in for the singer. "I was trying to stay very cool and casual about it before it happened and during, so I could get through my set and really enjoy it, but reflecting on it now, I'm so glad that I'd actually soaked it all up," she says. Luckily she was able to enjoy the performance, where her

entire family attended and her friends in her hometown were watching, because "it was such a jump of a crowd to go from playing for a couple of thousand people to looking out on a stadium that size." During Paramore's Eras Tour set that night, she and Pattinson also received a surprise shout-out from the band, which went viral.

Before Paramore performed "Decode" — a song from the "Twilight" soundtrack — bandleader Hayley Williams told the crowd, "I would like to dedicate this next song to Mr. Waterhouse," a cheeky nod to Pattinson's brooding vampire Edward in the "Twilight" franchise. Waterhouse thought it was hilarious, but her dad was confused. "[He] didn't really understand what was going on because she said 'Mr. Waterhouse,' so he was already having this very excited, prideful moment, and then his brain couldn't compute what was happening," Waterhouse says. "He definitely doesn't understand those references." Pattinson was blissfully unaware of what was happening, but that's because he was on set. Waterhouse, of course, informed him of Williams' shout-out: "It was very sweet."

Performing at the Eras Tour may have been a landmark moment for Waterhouse, but she's been cutting her teeth as a creative for half her life. The London-born actor-singer began modeling at 16 for brands like Burberry, Tommy Hilfinger and Ferragamo. She graced the covers of Vogue and Elle before pivoting to acting in 2012 with roles in films including "The Divergent Series: Insurgent," "Assassination Nation," "Detective Pikachu" and "Misbehaviour." By 2016, Waterhouse released her debut single — the dreamy breakup ballad "Brutally" — which she followed the next year with the lovestruck



JENNIFER MCCORD/The Times

APART from her musical career, Suki Waterhouse starred in the popular series "Daisy Jones & the Six."

retro-pop number "Good Looking" (it earned a viral boost from TikTok in 2022).

After sporadically sharing singles over the years, she released her debut album, "I Can't Let Go," in 2022. Later that fall, she shared a compilation of her singles over the years with her EP "Milk Teeth." In 2023, she expanded her musical talent further, learning to play piano for her role as ambitious keyboardist Karen Sirko in "Daisy Jones & the Six." The "band," she revealed in a vlog from May, was actually supposed to surprise perform at Lollapalooza last year but plans were halted due to the writers' strike. They tried to play shows a few times, she says, but each time something got in the way. "I think everyone's too busy now," she says of a prospective performance, but she's leaving it up in the air: "Who knows?"

Right now, she's fully immersed in sparklemuffin world. For Waterhouse, the discovery of the arachnid wasn't just throwaway internet fodder — it became a metaphor for her own memoir and, in turn, "Memoir of a Sparklemuffin," out now on

Sub Pop. The introspective project is "a turbulent journey, tangled in self-destructive choices and relationships," which mirrors the life cycle of the arachnid. "It's all about enchantment and entrapment," she says. But the 18-track album allowed Waterhouse to reflect on her identity and values. "I thought about the emergence from despair as the spider leaves its cocoon and the caution of opening up to possibilities of genuine love," she explains.

While Waterhouse says she didn't have the opportunity to collaborate with as many people on her first album, but "Memoir of a Sparklemuffin" allowed her to join forces with executive producer Eli Hirsch, as well as artists including Foxygen's Jonathan Rado (Weyes Blood, Father John Misty, Beyoncé), Cigarettes After Sex's Greg Gonzalez, Rick Nowels (James Blake, Lana Del Rey) and Natalie Findlay and Jules Apollinaire of the band Ttrruuce. She also teamed up once again with Brad Cook (Waxahatchee, Snail Mail), who produced her debut album. With this team of creatives,

she was able to "expand genres" — to woozy doo-wop ("OMG"), '90s mall-core ("Supersad") and Americana ("Think Twice") — while making the project sound cohesive. That wider sonic palette also stemmed from inspiration Waterhouse found in artists like Sharon Van Etten, Garbage, the Magnetic Fields and Sheryl Crow.

For instance, Waterhouse wanted a "head-banging car song" on the record that was a nod to Paramore and Garbage. That ended up being the '90s-alt-tinged opener, "Gateway Drug," which is a bait-and-switch thanks to her soft vocals and some heavy guitar riffs. "I wanted to do something that lulls you into a sense this is going to be a slow, romantic song and have something that really explodes and has a wild abandon to it," Waterhouse says of the track.

On the cinematic "Model, Actress, Whatever," Waterhouse evokes Lana Del Rey and "grapples with aspiration and the reality of superficiality," which stemmed from her own experience of being written off as an aspiring artist. "All of my dreams came true, the bigger the ocean, the deeper the blue / Call me a model, an actress, whatever," she sings with her honeyed lilt.

"With my first album, I did struggle for quite a long time to get labels to even open my email and read it," she recalls. "All the feedback I kept getting was like, 'No, we don't listen to albums from models.'" She also found she was referencing the arc of an ingénue in a Jennifer Blowdryer book she nabbed in Silver Lake. "In Hollywood, you're a model and then you're an actress and you become a big thing, and then you're just torn down," Waterhouse says, then pauses. Perhaps, she says, she was inserting herself into that character. "What will it be like when it's all over? Does that sound really dark?" she laughs nervously.

Hollywood is also the focal point of "Lawsuit," which Waterhouse insists she thought was a "tongue-in-cheek" word to have in a song and not specific. "I could write a book about the ways you took advantage, yeah / You think it's bad, but

it's about to get worse," she taunts on the R&B-meets-pop track. Waterhouse transfixes with the garage-y "Big Love," which was inspired by stories she heard from "Frozen Oranges" author Violet Paley about her manic episodes at a New York City bar. The book stuck with Waterhouse, particularly the sentiment that "you're just running into self-destruction and there's this huge hole in your heart that you're trying to fill with love and nothing's working to fill it."

Despite being in a committed relationship for several years, Waterhouse found inspiration for the melancholic breakup song "Everybody Breaks Up Anyway" in an overheard conversation at a party. The line stuck with her, but it became more emblematic of "more tragic circumstances that could happen." "Love never lasts, but I'm gonna stay on your mind forever / 'Cause everybody breaks up anyway," Waterhouse solemnly sings over lush strings. "It is left open-ended," she says of the track.

With the sweeping album closer, "To Love," which evokes the aching slide guitar of Mazzy Star's "Fade Into You," Waterhouse took the stems of her viral hit "Good Looking" and stripped it down. "It's about two people acknowledging a past and being able to fully experience the depth of a new love," she explains.

Waterhouse hopes that "Memoir of a Sparklemuffin" opens up new opportunities. She'd love to collaborate with Rosalía even though admittedly she'd "be super freaked out because she has the best voice probably in the world. After I saw her live in concert last year, I was completely speechless about her, just the energy and her presence," Waterhouse beams. Also on her list of dream collaborators: Aimee Mann, Cat Power, PJ Harvey and Sophie B. Hawkins.

But for now, Waterhouse is just grateful to be making the music she's always wanted to create. She knows it's taken time to earn "respect," as a "model, actress, whatever." "You can't just sail into a new position," she says. "You just have to hope that you keep getting opportunities."

Los Angeles Times PRESENTS
SCREEN GAB LIVE

Watch the 'Bad Monkey' Q&A.

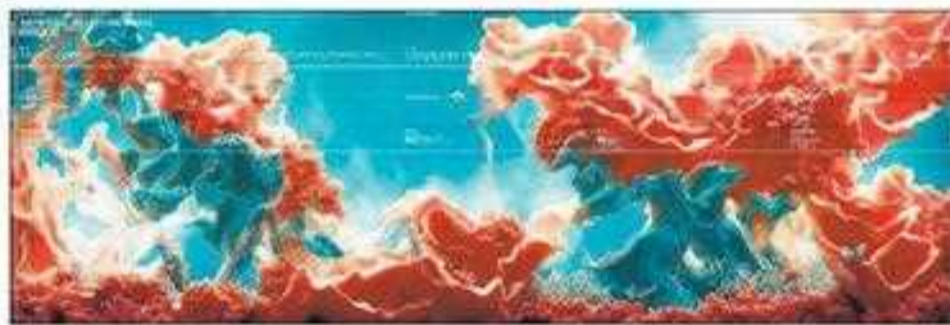
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Check out the **Screen Gab Live** post-screening Q&A with the producers and cast of "Bad Monkey." Go behind the scenes of the Apple TV comedy series in our discussion with **Charlotte Lawrence, Meredith Hagner, Bill Lawrence** and **Matt Tarses**, moderated by Times Deputy Editor of Entertainment & Arts **Matt Brennan**.



Scan the code to watch now.



Refik Anadol Studio

A STILL from Anadol's giant LED wall "Living Paintings Immersive Editions."

A 'living museum' of pixels

[Dataland, from E1] Vanderboom said, was for it to complement the Grand Avenue arts corridor, with restaurants and shopping for people visiting the nearby Museum of Contemporary Art, Broad museum, Walt Disney Concert Hall, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, Ahmanson Theatre and Mark Taper Forum. Dataland changes that equation, placing the Grand L.A. firmly inside downtown's cultural core, he said.

"I think it's just one more thing happening on the Grand Avenue corridor, with the Colburn School expansion under construction across the street from us, and with the Broad expansion getting ready to start next year," Vanderboom said. "And now this. I think it just solidifies Grand Avenue as the cultural connector and center of Los Angeles."

The 20,000-square foot museum, whose exact opening date has not yet been announced, is being built by the Gensler architectural firm with four gallery spaces. An escalator will take guests from the entrance under a soaring, 30-foot ceiling to immersive experiences below.

Dataland is privately funded and will collect and preserve artificial intelligence art; certain artworks may be sold on the blockchain. RAS AI Foundation, a nonprofit branch of the organization founded in 2023, is dedicated to the expansion of ethical AI research.

Dataland won't be like any other museum, said Anadol, who is calling it a "living museum" made of pixels and voxels, which are mathematical representations of 3D imagery. Its piece de résistance is its very own AI model, called the Large Nature

Model. Designed by Anadol's studio, the model uses data sourced from partners including the Smithsonian (9 million public specimen records, 6.3 million public images, 148 million objects in its collection); London's Natural History Museum (90 million specimens in its collection, 4 million public images); and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology (54 million images, 2 million sound records). AI will create artworks using this data and more — up to a half-billion images of nature, Anadol said.

Anadol was quick to add that he is making "ethical AI" the linchpin of his practice. He secured permission for every bit of sourced material (a step not always followed in AI-model training), and all of the studio's AI research was performed on Google servers in Oregon that use only renewable energy. It's slow, Anadol says, but it does the job without fossil fuels. A future version of the Dataland website will include access to the Large Nature Model for educational and research purposes, and a widget will track in real time how much energy is being used.

A piece of Anadol's research into the natural world using Dataland's AI model, called "Large Nature Model: Coral," is being shown at the United Nations' Summit of the Future, which is exploring sustainable development goals, climate action and new and emerging technologies.

"This is a little AI model that we are putting underwater to reconstruct corals," Anadol said, adding that this work can ultimately lead to the revitalization of coral ecosystems. He is sharing his research with teams at the United Nations.

For Anadol, education,

and the sharing of technology, data and AI models, is integral to Dataland's mission.

Anadol said that while a hallucinating AI model might be interesting and beneficial for making art, it's not good for scientific research, which is why the Large Nature Model was meticulously sourced from trusted organizations to create the most accurate results. He showed the possibilities contained within his high-powered laptop. "These are all the beautiful flowers of rainforest," he said. "We have 75 million flowers, all perfectly tagged one by one, which took us one year. Now, artists can use it. Researchers can deep dive into it."

Oh, and you can also smell it. Anadol's studio partnered with a scent-making company that trained an AI model on half a million scents. Anadol created a machine that pushes those scents into galleries to further augment the viewing experience. He pulled up a picture of his invention on his computer. It shows a complex webbing of crenelated tubes connected to a mysterious mustard-colored box.

He pulled up another picture of a gallery in Italy filled with one of his mesmerizing living paintings.

"When you enter this room, it is dreaming all the flowers in the world," Anadol said. "And you can really smell these AI dreams."

Anadol traces his fascination with AI to grade school, when he saw the sci-fi film "Blade Runner." "I think AI means anything and everything," he said. To him, it is an intelligent, reasoning system. "Some people say it's a tool. I don't think we should call it a 'tool.' That underestimates its power."