



MICHAEL FOUNTAIN addresses the audience at the Garden Amphitheater in Village Green park on Tuesday for a “Celebration of Life” for Thomas Bradac, who started and nurtured much of Garden Grove’s theater scene (Tribune photo).

Remembering Tom in ‘The House That Bradac Built’

By **Jim Tortolano**
Orange County Tribune

If Yankee Stadium was called “The House that [Babe] Ruth Built,” surely the Festival Amphitheater in Garden Grove—now the Garden Amp—could be termed “The House that Bradac Built.”

On Tuesday, friends, family members, colleagues and admirers of Bradac gathered for a celebration of his life at the 550-seat facility in the Village Green park. Bradac, the man behind the rebirth of the Gem Theater and the

creation of the Amphitheater, passed away recently at the age of 76.

The event began with a musical background of Tom’s favorite road trip playlist, featuring Bob Dylan’s “Like A Rolling Stone,” and Randy Newman’s “I Love LA.”

The lineup of speakers included colleague Michael Fountain, who said Bradac encouraged authenticity in theatrical performance and “Always speak the truth,” Bradac was said to have emphasized. “Truth with a Capital T.”

“Tom” loved theater and

especially Shakespeare — he founded the Grove Shakespeare Festival and Shakespeare of Orange County — but he was a devoted family man as well.

His brother, Daniel Knutson-Bradac, recalling their somewhat troubled childhood family environment, said, “I love you, Tom. You were the best brother I could have had. You were an open, tolerant human being.”

Carl Reggardo, who appeared in and directed many of Bradac’s plays, performed a bit of a speech

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■ GARDEN GROVE CITY COUNCIL

Independence Day Parade In West Grove

150 ‘golf carts’ through the Eastgate area

About 150 “golf carts” will participate in the event to begin at 5 p.m. The sponsors, the Honoring Our Fallen organization, will reimburse the city for all direct costs associated with the event.

The annual Strawberry Festival parade isn’t the only street procession in Garden Grove.

At Tuesday night’s meeting of the city council, approval was given on a 7-0 vote for temporary closure of streets in the Eastgate Park neighborhood in the West Grove area for the second annual Independence Day-Freedom Parade on Saturday, June 29.

Also on Tuesday, the council authorized a purchase order for a new police department pickup truck with appropriate equipment for \$90,996.64 and a purchase order of \$215,746.19 for four police department administrative utility vehicles.

The next meeting of the council is scheduled for Tuesday, May 14.

■ STANTON CITY COUNCIL

Delivery of cannabis applications approved

The Stanton City Council on Tuesday night approved a resolution that will re-open the application process for commercial cannabis delivery business permits from existing commercial cannabis retail “storefront” businesses.

The vote was 4-0 with Councilmember Donald Torres not present, but with an excused absence.

Even though the city has issued four delivery permits, none of them began operations within two years by the November 2023 deadline, and — considering what’s called a “thriving cannabis delivery market” — city staff had urged the council to reopen the process.

The resolution will open a new application process

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In the 'House that (Tom) Bradac Built'

Continued from page 1

from the Bard. So did Mike Nehring, who praised Bradac as "someone who never gave up." The event's capstone was comments by daughters Alyssa and

Caitlin, who shared life with a dad who served as sports coach, theatrical adviser and loving father.

They concluded by leading the audience in reciting Shake-

speare's Sonnet 37, a celebration of youth, beauty and the possibilities of life: "Look what is best, the best I wish in thee; This wish I have; then ten times happy me!"

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Strawberry Ball set for May 23

On Thursday, May 23, from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m., the City of Garden Grove's H. Louis Lake Senior Center will host the 47th Annual Strawberry Ball, a celebration honoring the 2024 Strawberry Ball King and Queen.

The event will be held at the Community Meeting Center, at 11300 Stanford Ave. Local seniors are invited to attend. Tickets are \$20 and include entry, dinner, dessert, non-alcoholic and alcoholic beverages.

'Pot' delivery

Continued from page 1

for four existing "pot" stores to apply for delivery permits. The application period will be between May 9, 2024 and June 30, 2024.

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News & Views

Some papers 'just say no' to public projects

A recent editorial in The Register claimed that Garden Grove simply couldn't afford the bond issue to finance the construction of a new police facility (with adjacent parking structure) and a new park in what's called the "Civic Center Revitalization" project to the tune of \$142 million.

Why not? Nearly every school district in the area has successfully floated bond issues over the last decade, and they now have the new



Retorts
Jim Tortolano

classrooms, stadiums and underground infrastructure to show for it (assuming you can see underground).

Just a few years ago, a smaller bond issue financed the construction of a modern fire station on West Street to serve the booming hotel district one block over on Harbor Boulevard.

Now, it's only fair to point out that the school bonds were supported in part by modest increases in property taxes, and the civic center project's debt service will come from the municipal budget.

It's been pointed out that Garden Grove can count on enough cash for that need for the next five years, but cannot predict reliably beyond that.

But no one can reliably predict much of anything that far ahead. Will there be another pandemic? A Great Recession? Tornados? Dogs and cats living together?

The planned police center is a big meal, I'll agree. But the task of law enforcement has become increasingly complex, diversified and technological. The

Continued on page 8

Child molestation suspect arrested

An incident nearly a decade ago has resulted in the arrest of a suspect on charges of sexual acts in Garden Grove against two pre-teen girls.

According to Sgt. Nick Jensen of the GGPD, Elijah Domminic Barrera, 29, of Orange, was arrested in Orange at around 2:16 p.m. Friday on two counts of lewd and lascivious acts with a child stemming from two separate acts in August 2014.

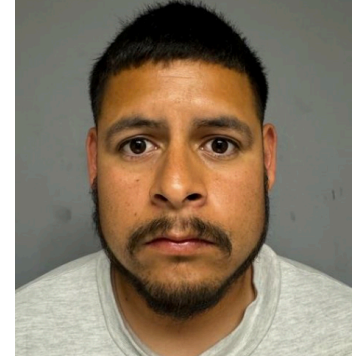
In March 2023, a victim contacted the GGPD and said she was "inappropriately touched" by a counselor at the Garden Grove Boys & Girls Club, 9860 Larson St. in 2014.

She had not previously reported the incident.

Detectives in a follow-up investigation located a second victim who identified the suspect. The girls were 7-8 and 6 years old at the time of the incident. Additional information was obtained that corroborated the victim's statements, according to Sgt. Jensen.

Barrera was served with an arrest warrant in Orange and booked into Orange County Jail. There may be additional victims, police believe.

If you are a victim or know someone who is, contact Detective Adam Nikolic at (714)



ELIJAH DOMMINIC BARRERA (GGPD photo)

741-5877 or e-mail him at AdamN@ggcity.org.

A WHOLE NEW WORLD



STANLEY ELEMENTARY School in Garden Grove recently staged a production of "Disney's Alladin," as part of the Disney Musical in Schools program. It seeks to foster student well-being, a sense of belonging, increase student confidence and strengthen student performing arts skills (GGUSD photo).

Manslaughter charge vs. the driver in crash

The driver of a truck that struck a palm tree and a pole – a crash in which a female passenger died – was arrested in Santa Ana early Sunday morning.

According to the SAPD, multiple calls were received around 2:08 a.m. regarding the collision in the area of 800 S. Main Street. Police officers and Orange County Fire Authority crews arrived at the scene and OCFA personnel extricated the male driver and a woman passenger in a front seat.

All three occupants were taken to a local hospital where the woman succumbed from her injuries. The driver and a male passenger in the back seat are hospitalized in stable condition.

The identities of those involved are not being made public at this time.

From the preliminary investigation, it's believed that the truck was southbound on Main when it went out of control, hit a palm tree and came to a stop against a pole.

Detectives learned that the driver – who had prior arrests for driving under the influence

Continued on page 8

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The OCT covers the cities of Garden Grove, Huntington Beach, Stanton and Westminster. In addition to local news there's a national/world news update and coverage of favorite area prep and pro sports teams as well.

NewsUpdate

Military Aid for Ukraine Approved

Senate also Ok's help for Israel, Taiwan on 79-18 vote

The U.S. Senate overcame an attempted filibuster and with bipartisan support approved military aid to Ukraine, Israel and Taiwan on Tuesday night. The vote was 79 in favor and 18 against.

The legislation now goes to President Joe Biden, who has promised to sign it immediately.

Democrats were joined by Republicans as 80 senators ended the filibuster and moved the long-delayed funding of

\$95 billion – \$61 billion of it for Ukraine – to a final vote.

The appropriation of aid was considered especially crucial for Ukraine, which is reported to be running low on ammunition and other crucial items – including air defense items – to resist Russian invaders.

Israel will receive \$26.4 billion and another \$8.1 billion for the “Indo-Pacific region,” including Taiwan.



UKRAINE will begin receiving ammunition, artillery pieces and air defense systems in the wake of the Senate's approval (Shutterstock).

Tennessee will arm teachers and staff

A bill that will allow some teachers and staff to carry concealed firearms at public schools was approved by the Tennessee House of Representatives on Tuesday on a 68-28 vote.

The bill has already passed the state Senate and goes on to Gov. Bill Lee for his signature, which is considered likely.

In addition to allowing educators to be armed on school grounds, information on who is carrying

firearms won't be available to the general public.

Protesters opposed to the bill chanted “Blood on your hands!” from the gallery, which was ordered cleared.

To go into effect there would have to be agreement from the school district, the local law enforcement agency and the school principal.

Supporters of the bill called it a “deterrent.” Opponents say it's a way of appealing to donors in the gun industry.



PRO-PALESTINIAN protests at Columbia University (Wikipedia).

Gaza protests spread across U.S. campuses

Turmoil has spread on some colleges and universities in protest against Israel's war with Hamas, as demonstrators have set up camps.

Columbia University in New York City was the first campus to see the activity. Last week, over 100 demonstrators supporting Palestine camping out on the campus were arrested by police.

In reaction to the disturbances, the university will pivot to “hybrid” classes conducted at least in part by computer until the end of the semester next week.

At New York University, 133 protesters were arrested on Monday for disorderly conduct. Police report that bottles and other items were thrown at them.

Coolish weather for area

Our West Orange County weather continues to have cool and cloudy conditions although there is a slight warming trend toward the weekend. Wednesday should be mostly sunny with a daytime high of 66 and an overnight low of 56.

Partly cloudy skies will follow with a high of 68 (56) on Thursday, followed by 66 (54) on Friday and 69 (53) on Saturday.

Trump facing contempt citations?

Judge Juan Merchan said he would “reserve a decision” on whether to hold former president Donald Trump in contempt for allegedly violating gag orders.

He had been ordered to stop criticizing witnesses,

jurors or anyone else involved in his trial over alleged falsification of business records.

Attorneys for New York State argued that Trump “willfully” ignored the “gag order” on 10 occasions and should be fined

\$1,000 for each instance.

Also, the former National Enquirer publisher David Pecker testified that he “had a great relationship” with Trump and later considered agreeing to suppress stories critical of Trump.

Arts & Living

Smoke Queen Arrives on 'Cue

Fusion of varied flavors makes for unique tastes

By John R. Borack
Special to The Tribune

As someone who visits Texas at least once a year and is a card-carrying carnivore, saying I am a fan of good barbecue may be the understatement of the year. I have fond memories of several pounds of brisket, sausage, and ribs being devoured at joints such as Pecan Lodge (Dallas), Hurdo (Arlington), and Heim (Fort Worth).

But here in Orange County, finding consistently tasty barbecue has been something of a challenge until the past few years, when top-drawer 'cue began being served up at The SmoKING Ribs (Garden Grove), Beale's (Huntington Beach), and Heritage (San Juan Capistrano).

Another contender has recently popped up in Garden Grove: Smoke Queen Barbecue opened its doors just last month, in a newly developed area not far from Garden Grove City Hall.

It's the first business to open in the Cottage Industries project repurposing classic homes into eateries, stores and more.

"Pitmadam" Winnie Yee's "East meets West" brand of barbecue—which melds traditional, Texas-style smoking with Asian-inspired flavors—has garnered rave reviews thus far.

It's not unusual for there to be a line snaking out the door at any time of day at Smoke Queen: indeed, when I showed up about 15 minutes before they opened at 11 a.m. on a recent Friday morning, there were already 10 people waiting in line, with several more joining the queue after us.

The line moved quickly, though, and those waiting were treated to the intoxicating smell of smoked



SMOKE QUEEN BARBECUE is the first enterprise to open in the Cottage Industries area near the Civic Center area in central Garden Grove (Photos by John Borack)

Chow Lines

meats wafting through the air.

Smoke Queen's menu is nothing if not eclectic: along with barbecue staples such as smoked brisket, pulled pork, smoked chicken, and house BBQ pork ribs, there are more adventurous selections such as pork belly siu yuk (rubbed with a Chinese 8-spice blend and glazed with a savory, sweet Chinese BBQ sauce) and a panang curry bowl, which pairs Southeast Asian coconut curry with chicken rice and smoked brisket.

I opted for the smoked brisket (\$15) and two of the scratch-made sides: dirty rice (Thai jasmine rice cooked with chicken seasonings, sesame oil, and Chinese sausage) and

Granny's potato salad (which included chunks of Granny Smith apples, raisins, and al-

mond slivers). The brisket knocked it out of the park: tender, smoky, and bursting with flavor, even before I added dollops of the house BBQ sauce. (It was so tender I cut several pieces of it just using a fork.)

It's rubbed with a blend of cumin, paprika, garlic, black pepper and slow smoked with white oak for up to 14 hours.

The sides range from \$5 to \$7 each, but there is more than enough for two people. That didn't deter me from eating the entire batch of dirty rice, however, with the addition of some more BBQ sauce on top making a good thing even better. (There is also a second house BBQ sauce, which is Asian-inflected and a lot spicier.)

Service was friendly, and the overall vibe at Smoke Queen



SMOKED BRISKET is a hit at the Smoke Queen Barbecue.

was nice and relaxing. They currently offer outdoor eating only, and their hours are Thursday—Sunday from 11 a.m.—4 p.m. (or until they run out).

They're located at 12941 9th Street in Garden Grove (near Garden Grove Boulevard), and their website is www.smokequeenbbq.com.

TheSportsPages

The bad luck of Rendon and the Angels, too

Now, this is a tough one. Do we roll our eyes over Anthony Rendon's latest injury, which will put him out of the Angels lineup for the umpteenth time?

Is this just the latest dodge from a million-dollar player who has expressed boredom with baseball's long-season and assured us that the sport is

"not his top priority"?

Rendon suffered a leg injury on Sunday trying to beat out an infield hit in the Halos' latest loss in Cincy, their fourth defeat in a row.



Sports Retorts

Jim Tortolano

Now, it does look like he was *reallllly* kinda trying on that play. On the other hand, properly conditioned athletes don't often suffer that injury unless a) they are past their prime or b) only looked like they were running hard.

Now, I'm no fan of Rendon. I've seen more fidelity to duty among some beer league ball-players. I suspect that if Tony heard Herb Brooks' charge to the 1980 USA "Miracle on Ice" team that "the name on the front of the jersey is more important than the one on the back" he might have to suppress a chuckle.

But in this case, I think his injury might be legit. That's because the Angels have a long history of eyebrow-raising injuries.

Most famous is Mo Vaughn, the former Boston Red Sox star who – in his first game with the Halos in 1999 – fell into the dugout chasing a foul ball.

In 2010, Kendrys Morales hit a game-winning grand slam but broke his left ankle when he

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PUKA NACUA was a prime pick in 2023 draft (Rams photo).

Can Rams Pick Another Puka?

The NFL Draft starts on Thursday

By Greg Beacham/Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The most recent time the Los Angeles Rams made a first-round pick in the NFL draft, Sean McVay was Washington's offensive coordinator and Puka Nacua was a high school freshman.

That was way back in 2016, just after the Rams moved back home to Los Angeles from St. Louis. General manager Les Snead's team was nothing special at that time following 12 consecutive non-winning seasons, and the Rams decided they needed to make a big splash in Hollywood by trading up for Jared Goff.

Boldly adding a solid quarterback — and eventually trading that quarterback for Matthew Stafford — put McVay in position to lead the Rams back from irrelevance and into near-annual playoff contention. They've racked up six winning seasons, five playoff berths, three NFC West titles, two Super Bowl appearances and one championship since the most recent time they picked in the first round.

The Rams have been annual Thursday nonparticipants in the draft for several very good reasons, in fact: McVay probably wouldn't have enjoyed all of his success without Snead's judicious use of his first-round picks as capital for improving his

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SPORTS WRAPUP

Angels snap skid, Dodgers rally to beat Nationals

The Los Angeles Angels snapped their five-game losing streak on Tuesday, defeating the Baltimore Orioles 7-4 in Anaheim.

Mike Trout, batting leadoff for the first time since 2020, homered in his first at-bat to give the Halos a lead they would not relinquish.

Catcher Logan O'Hoppe continued to have a strong April, going 2-for-4 with a double, a single and an RBI to raise his batting average to .329.

Griffin Canning (1-3) picked up his first win of the year, working five innings while giving up five hits and three earned runs.

The Halos are now 10-14 and in third place in the American League West.

Dodgers stay in 1st in NLW

The race for the National League West lead continued on Tuesday as the Los Angeles Dodgers kept one game ahead of the second place San Diego Padres with a 4-1 victory in Washington, D.C.

The Nationals led for the first five innings until the Blue Crew tied it in the sixth inning and pulled away with three runs over the eighth and ninth innings.

The Dodgers took the lead over the Nats on James Outman's two-run double in the top of the eighth inning. Miguel Rojas singled in a run next, and Shohei Ohtani hit his sixth home run of 2024 in the top of the ninth.

With the win, the Dodgers are 14-11.

Mavs squeeze by Clippers

The Dallas Mavericks squared their NBA Western Conference playoff series at one win each by edging the Los Angeles Clippers 96-93 on Tuesday night.

Paul George and Kawhi Leonard each scored 22 points for the Clippers, Luka Doncic starred for the Mavs, scoring 32 points, with six rebounds and nine assists.

Rams finally have a first round pick

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team with veterans.

The Rams' first-round pick in 2017 went to Tennessee as part of the Goff deal. Their pick in 2018 went to New England to land receiver Brandin Cooks. Snead used his first-rounder in 2019 to trade back for more draft capital.

Los Angeles' first-round selections in 2020 and 2021 then

went to Jacksonville for star defensive back Jalen Ramsey, while his first-rounders in 2022 and 2023 went to Detroit in the deal for Stafford. Both players were vital to the Rams' championship run in early 2022.

The Rams are finally back in the mix this year with the 19th overall pick, and their fan base is waiting to see whether they'll actually have something to cheer on a Thursday in April. Many possibilities

Snead's philosophy around the value of his picks has been widely adopted at this point, to the point where it's often more difficult to make the type of bold moves that landed Goff, Ramsey and Stafford in L.A. Snead has kept open the possibility of trading out of the first round yet again, and he will probably keep listening to offers until the last minute.

In other words, everybody realizes the Rams' first-round drought might not actually end this spring.

After 99

Following last season's im-

pressive return to the playoffs, the Rams appear to be close to title contention again, perhaps only needing a couple of elite talents to be a serious contender. But the Rams also lost one of the NFL's best players and a major portion of their franchise identity with the retirement of Aaron Donald last month.

The All-Pro left a massive hole in the roster, but also a more literal hole in the center of the defensive line. The Rams are short on bodies to line up alongside promising nose tackle Kobie Turner, let alone anybody with a fraction of Donald's ability.

So Many Picks

The Rams also kept their own second-round and third-round picks, and they get an extra pick at the back of the third round as compensation for losing defensive coordinator Raheem Morris to the Atlanta Falcons. Los Angeles has 11 total picks this month after making 14 picks in 2023.

Needs

Along with the vacancy on the

interior defensive line, Los Angeles also needs another pass-rushing linebacker after failing to bolster an area of weakness in 2023 during free agency.

McVay would always welcome another offensive playmaker, particularly a speedy receiver or a backup running back. The Rams probably need to address their long-term future at both offensive tackle spots soon, either in this draft or the near future.

Don't Need

The Rams look set at quarterback for 2024 with Stafford, Jimmy Garoppolo and possibly Stetson Bennett, although 2025 could be a different story. Their interior offensive line looks better than it has in years, while Los Angeles already bolstered its weak secondary with free-agent acquisitions Tre'Davious White, Kam Curl and Darious Williams.



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Mariner softball locks up title; baseball not yet

Pacifica High School usually has strong baseball and softball teams. On Tuesday one of them triumphed and one did not.

The Mariner softball team (now 9-0 in league and 21-2 overall), ranked second in Orange County, beat last place Tustin 20-0 on the Tiller diamond for the undisputed Empire League championship.

However, the M's baseball team lost 4-0 to Cypress, tying up first place in the Empire League with both teams at 8-1.

But there's one more game to be played on Thursday when the Mariners (18-7 overall) host the Centurions (17-10-1) to decide the league crown.

In the Sunset-Surf League, Huntington Beach (7-1, 20-7)

■ PREP SPORTS SPOTLIGHT

clinched the championship with a 7-1 win over Los Alamitos (4-4, 29-7). Fountain Valley is in second place (5-3, 17-9).
The Oilers and Griffins will play again on Thursday at the Huntington Beach diamond.

Voters like HB, Pacifica
Here are the local teams recognized by the CIF-SS in this week's final polls.

Baseball
• Division 1: Huntington Beach (fourth), Pacifica (received votes).

Softball
• Division 1: Pacifica (second),

Huntington Beach (11th).
• Division 5: Garden Grove (received votes).

Boys volleyball
• Division 1: Huntington Beach (fifth), Edison (seventh).

• Division 7: Orangewood Academy (fifth), Western (eighth).

Orange County baseball and softball polls

The new Orange County Sports-writers poll for baseball ranks Huntington Beach fifth, Pacifica ninth, Ocean View 21st.

For softball, Pacifica is second, Huntington Beach is sixth and Marina is ninth.

Volleyball playoffs
The CIF-SS boys volleyball playoffs are in their quarterfinals on Wednesday.

Huntington Beach is involved in Pool A. Division 1 play on Wednesday against Loyola.

In Division 4, Bolsa Grande will visit Laguna Blanca on Thursday. In Division 5, La Quinta will host Oxford.

Manslaughter arrest in crash

Continued from page 3

– was at the time of the crash under the influence of alcohol “and possibly drugs.”

He was arrested for driving under the influence causing death and vehicular manslaughter with gross negligence, say police.

Anyone with information about this incident is asked to contact Detective Corporal D. Carrillo at (714) 245-8208 or the SAPD Traffic Division at (714) 245-8200.

Sports Retorts: Hard luck Halos

Continued from page 6

stepped on home plate.

More recently, in 2022, Angel relief pitcher Archie Bradley was running to take part in one of those low-intensity baseball fights when he fell over the dugout railing and fractured his right elbow. So, maybe Tony is just a victim of bad Angel luck. Of course, maybe the Angels' bad luck also extends to their selection of free agents.

Retorts: Bet on public safety

Continued from page 3

GGPD is growing – thanks to Measure O – and at the same time, it's a challenge to recruit officers in a world in which fewer and fewer people want to go into the profession.

A gleaming new cutting-edge facility will not only help the GGPD perform its crime-fighting responsibilities better, but will help the city get its pick of new talent.

A few paragraphs above I mentioned how difficult it is to predict the future, but some things remain easy wagers. The Register has been opposed to nearly every public project that you can think of. If it had been around in centuries past and had the influence, there'd be no Great Pyramids, Panama Canal or Golden Gate Bridge.

So that's a hard “no” from the Register. But as a Marine sergeant once said, “It's easy to be hard, but it's hard to be smart.” This project looks like the smart move.

High School Baseball/Softball

Monday baseball
Corona del Mar 4, Marina 1

Monday softball
Anaheim 24, Magnolia 4
Calvary Chapel 10, Orange 0
Ocean View 9, Katella 5
Gard. Grove 7, Westminster 2
La Quinta 12, Ran. Alam. 0
Santiago 13, Loara 0
Los Amigos 26, Bolsa Gr. 6
Orangewood 9, CVC 4

Tuesday baseball
Cypress 4, Pacifica 0
Hunt. Bch. 7, Los Alamitos 1
Fountain Valley 9, Edison 1
Corona Del Mar 9, Marina 6
Ocean View 4, Katella 1
Los Amigos 6, Santiago 0

Tuesday softball
Pacifica 20, Tustin 0
Los Alamitos 11, Hunt, Bch. 4
Edison 5, Newport Harbor 2

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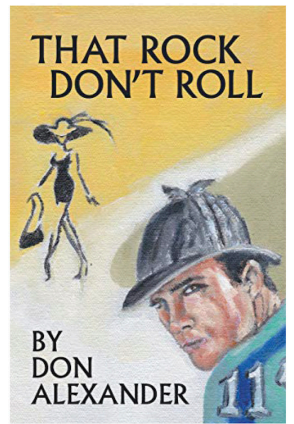
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Don Alexander has been a sports columnist, a sports broadcaster, talk show host and a college instructor. This is his first novel.