

Strawberry Festival Honors ‘Diversity’

Civil rights pioneer Sylvia Mendez is 2025 theme grand marshal

By Miles Gaskin
Orange County Tribune

This year’s Garden Grove Strawberry Festival is 65 years old – mature enough to have a memorable history, and youthful enough to offer a weekend of thrills, music and yes, the name-sake treat: the strawberry.

“We will have a few new rides that people will enjoy,” said Tony Lopez, president of the all-volunteer Garden Grove Strawberry Festival Association. We also have new strawberry-themed items at our non-profit food vendors, and we will have live music playing all weekend in the Garden Amphitheater, free of charge.”

The festival opens on Friday and runs through Monday, with the parade on Saturday, stepping off at 10 a.m. The route starts at Chapman Avenue at 9th Street, heading west.

At Euclid Street it heads south and finishes at Acacia Avenue.

This year’s theme is “Cele-



SYLVIA MENDEZ
Theme grand marshal



KATE LINDER
Celebrity grand marshal

brating Cultural Diversity.” The theme parade grand marshal is Sylvia Mendez, who was the



THE STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL grounds are at the Village Green park at Main and Euclid streets in downtown Garden Grove (Festival Association photo).

plaintiff in the landmark civil rights case in which the California Supreme Court outlawed racial and ethnic segregation in the state’s public schools.

The celebrity grand marshal is Kate Linder, star of the TV daytime drama, “The Young and the Restless.”

Lopez, in his first term as president of the Association, points out that the event is not just an entertainment enterprise.

Fast festival facts

Village Green park, Main and Euclid streets

Festival hours:

- Friday: 1-10 p.m.
- Sat-Sun: 10 a.m. - 10 p.m.
- Monday: 10 a.m.-9 p.m.

Parade: starts at 10 a.m. Saturday, 9th Street to Chapman to Euclid Street.

The event brings families together, he said, and “we also help with 75 percent of the festival profits going back to the community. We help over 30 different local organizations here in Garden Grove with capital improvement projects.”

Festival hours are Friday from 1 to 10 p.m., Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., and Monday from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Admission to the festival is free.

OK, but why is it called a ‘strawberry festival’?

By Jim Tortolano
Orange County Tribune

Looking around the community of Garden Grove with its neat tracts of housing, broad shopping areas and high-rise ho-

tels, one may wonder why the “strawberry” is such a big deal, and its signature event called the “strawberry festival”?

Garden Grove, like most of Orange County, was agricultural for the first

three-quarters of its existence, from 1874 to the mid-1950’s. It went through cycles of cultivating walnuts, eggs, oranges and finally strawberries when the post-war building boom hit.

A modest Grover’s Day event was converted by the Garden Grove Chamber of Commerce in 1958 into the first “strawberry festival” as a means to bring the new – incorporated in 1956 – city to-

gether and promote the leading crop of the time. In 1959, a new organization – Garden Grove Strawberry Festival Association – was created

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'State of the City' planned for June 18 at the Hyatt

Garden Grove Mayor Stephanie Klopfenstein will deliver her first official address at the 2025 State of the City luncheon, hosted by the Garden Grove Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with the City of Garden Grove.

The ticketed event takes place on Wednesday, June 18, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Hyatt Regency Orange County, located at 11999 Harbor Blvd. Individual tickets are \$125 per person.

During the address Klopfenstein will highlight major accomplishments over the last year, goals for the current year, and vision for the city.

Klopfenstein will also discuss the City's financial health and upcoming projects and developments.

Following the event, a complete transcript of the mayor's speech and supporting videos will be available on the City's website at www.ggcity.org.

For tickets and sponsorship opportunities, contact the Garden Grove Chamber of Commerce at (714) 638-7950, email staff@gardengrovechamber.com, or visit www.gardengrovechamber.com/state-of-the-city.



STEPHANIE KLOPFENSTEIN
Mayor of Garden Grove

Why strawberry for the festival?

Continued from page 1

and the event grew into what's now one of the western United States' largest community events.

Lot by lot, the strawberry fields were converted into offices and housing, but there were still several strawberry fields in town as late as the late 1990s.

Today, the "strawberry" remains the city's symbol and a reminder of how far the community has come.

The Tribune

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News & Views

No Strawberry Festival? Here's the unthinkable

Each year – with the exception of during catastrophic pandemics – the Strawberry Festival comes to Garden Grove, shining a spotlight of publicity on the city, bringing together hundreds of thousands of people to the downtown area and helping to raise large sums of money for non-profit groups to improve the community.



Retorts
Jim Tortolano

It happens each Memorial Day weekend like clockwork, organized by a totally volunteer group, the Garden Grove Strawberry Festival Association.

The whole thing proceeds with such regularity that we tend to take it for granted. But what if there was no festival, strawberry or otherwise?

Well, first off, it would likely mean that Garden Grove would lose its connection to its long agricultural past, which consumed more than half of the time since the community was founded in 1874 to the present day.

Garden Grove would lose the most prominent local event in all of Orange County, which is bigger even than the Huntington Beach 4th of July parade or the Orange International Festival.

Lost also would be a sense of community among residents, many – if not most – of which had first dates there, made friends working in game or food booths, or just enjoyed the thrill rides and sights and sounds of the midway. In the most practical sense, it would mean the loss of millions of dollars raised over the years

Continued on page 10

Cannabis bust nets millions

Westminster police worked with state officers in arrest

The recreational use and commercial production of marijuana may be legal in California, but there's still a lot of money to be made illicitly in the "weed" business.

In a recent major drug bust conducted by the Westminster Police Department and the California Department of Cannabis Control, over \$8.4 million worth of illegal cannabis and mushrooms were found in Orange County and a man was arrested. According to authorities, it started with an investigation into an unlicensed cannabis business.

On May 2, Kung Chau, 49, of Westminster was arrested for possession for sale of a controlled substance (marijuana) and was booked into Orange County Jail.

In the process of the search authorities found:

- over \$8.4 million worth of il-



THE SUSPECTED drug lab raided by authorities in Westminster (WPD photo).

legal cannabis;

- 643 pounds of illicit psilocybin mushrooms worth \$44,000;
- 3,891 pounds of illegal vape cartridges;
- 1,505 pounds of illegal cannabis flower;
- 600 pounds of illegal cannabis edibles;
- 351 pounds of cannabis concentrate.

Westminster Police Chief Darin Lenyi said, "This sizable enforcement action underscores Westminster PD's commitment to keeping the public safe, as it addresses the vital need to protect communities from unlicensed operators who may also be distributing unregulated and untested substances like hallucinogenic mushrooms."

Future of HB library before voters

Voting in the Tuesday, June 10 Huntington Beach Special Municipal Election has begun and will continue through 8 p.m. on that day.

According to the Orange County Registrar of Voters, two items are on the ballot:

- Measure A: Community Parent Review Board, where voters are asked whether to end a city council-created board to make decisions on the procurement of children's library materials;
- Measure B: Public Operation of Library, where voters are asked whether to approve a requirement that the operation of the city's library system be by the city and not by a private entity.

All active voters were mailed a ballot last week, and it should be filled out and mailed on or be-

Election 2025

fore Election Day.

As an alternative, voters can use one of nine secure drop boxes in the city or one ballot drop-off location in the city, or drop it off in person at any Vote Center in Huntington Beach.

Alternately, you can vote in-person at any Vote Center in Surf City.

Beginning on May 31, select Vote Centers in the city will be open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. through June 6. From June 7-9, all Vote Centers in the city will be open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. On Election Day, the Vote Centers will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

For a full list of voting locations and hours, go to ocvote.gov/votecenter or telephone 888-OCVOTES(888-628-6837).

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NewsUpdate

Allies Warn Israel Over Gaza

Offensive and humanitarian aid are at issue

Israel's rising military efforts in Gaza are sparking reactions from Western allies that could have an economic impact on that nation.

The New York Times is reporting that on Tuesday, Great Britain announced it was suspending talks with Israel on the possible expansion of a free-trade agreement.

This followed a reprimand on Monday of Israel by Britain, France and Canada over its actions to expand its control of Gaza.

'We have always supported Israel's right to defend itself against terrorism. But this escalation is wholly disproportionate,' read the statement.



ISRAEL IS increasing its military actions in Gaza (Wikipedia).

The increasing numbers of Palestinians – some of them civilians – and the Israeli threat to block humanitarian aid into the area have provoked rising criticism

from nations which had been among Israel's strongest allies. That statement from the three powers contained a threat. "If Israel does not cease the renewed

military offensive and lift its restrictions on humanitarian aid, we will take forth concrete actions in response," according to the statement.

Great Thoughts

"Finish each day and be done with it. You have done what you could. Some blunders and absurdities have crept in; forget them as soon as you can.

"Tomorrow is a new day. You shall begin it serenely and with too high a spirit to be encumbered with your old nonsense."

– Ralph Waldo Emerson, writer and philosopher.

Would new tax bill hike debt by over \$3.8 trillion?

The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office issued a report on Tuesday stating that the "big beautiful budget bill" promoted by President Donald Trump and backed by Republican lawmakers would add over \$3 billion to the the national debt.

United Press International is reporting that the tax policy in the new bill would reduce money coming into the federal govern-

ment by about 10 percent in the coming decade, according to the CBO.

The potential impact would be over \$3.8 trillion over 10 years, according to the separate Joint Committee on Taxation.

According to UPI, White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt said on Monday that the bill would not increase the national debt.

DOJ will investigate Chicago hiring practices

An investigation is being launched into the hiring practices of the City of Chicago by the federal Department of Justice.

The Associated Press reports that the inquiry comes in the wake of comments by Mayor Brandon Johnson taking credit for the the increased number of Black people in his administration's upper ranks.

That investigation was announced on Monday after remarks on Sunday at a Chicago

church by Johnson. The Justice Department is alleging that the city has violated Title VII of the Civil Rights Act which bans hiring on the basis of race.

Assistant Attorney General Harmeet K. Phillon suggested that the "prior administration" only looked at job discrimination from "a particular angle" and this was "a broader view."

There was no immediate response from the mayor's office.

Weather: Perfect holiday weather

The coming Memorial Day weekend should have just the right conditions for enjoying the Strawberry Festival in Garden Grove. Wednesday is forecast to be partly cloudy with a daytime high of 85 with an overnight low of 59.

Thursday will cool to 80 (60) will similar skies. Friday will cool further to 74 (59) and mostly sunny skies. Saturday looks familiar at 74 (58) with partly cloudy skies.

Arts & Living

Beware the Blender in 'Bloodlines'

'Final Destination' franchise comes to bloody conclusion

By Jocelyn Noveck
AP National Writer

A blender. A lawn mower. A ceiling fan. A garden rake. A vending machine. An MRI scanner.

These mundane items are supposed to ease us through life, helping us eat, clean, keep cool, stay healthy. They're not supposed to be evil.

But in "Final Destination Bloodlines," as in the entire 25-year franchise, ordinary objects become fearsome tools of murderous mayhem. And they do it through intricate sequences akin to Rube Goldberg machines — those contraptions that make simple tasks complex through elaborate chain reactions. We doubt Goldberg intended for a nose ring to interact with a ceiling fan in quite the way seen here, but whatever.

There's some ingenious chaos cooked up here by co-directors Zach Lipovsky and Adam B. Stein, who said at the film's premiere this week that they hope people will be watching this, the franchise's sixth installment (and 14 years after the last), through their fingers — but with smiles on their faces.

To which I must confess I muttered to myself: "No way I'm going to be smiling." I braced to feel jumpy and miserable for two hours.

But sure enough I was soon smiling, even giggling. Turns out, horror films are a lot easier to handle when they're funny. Even more so when they're witty. A spoonful of wit, as Mary Poppins might say, helps the bloody mayhem go down.

Part of the fun in these movies is that we all know what we know. The surprise is not whether people will die. Death is not to be



COMMON OBJECTS and settings turn deadly in "Final Destination Bloodlines" (Warner Bros. release).

Movie Review

cheated. The issue is HOW, and that's where creativity comes in. The action starts with probably the most impressive sequence in the movie — an opening scene set in 1969 at the so-called Skyview tower, looking very much like the Space Needle (but filmed in Vancouver). It's opening night at the luxurious restaurant up top.

Lovely young Iris (Brec Bassinger) is brought here by her beau for a romantic evening and, though she doesn't know it, a proposal. In the elevator, Iris tries to calm her nerves. It doesn't help when the elevator guy boasts the project was completed months ahead of schedule.

Once upstairs, Iris' nerves persist, but she tries to quell them. When she nicks her finger and a bit of blood seeps out, she says with a smile, "I'll live."

Ha!
Soon enough, rivets are popping and the place is crumbling. Then people start dropping dead on the ground, to the befuddlement

of parking valets listening to "Raindrops Keep Fallin' On My Head" — written in 1969! — one of many musical jokes here.

And then a present-day college student wakes up.

Turns out this has all been a recurring nightmare of Stefani, who's in danger of flunking out because all she can think of is Skyview. Her sleep-deprived roommate urges her to go home and figure things out.

Which Stefani (an appealing Kaitlyn Santa Juana) does, determined to learn who Iris is. Turns out the woman is her grandmother. Uncle Howard tells her to stay away from the madwoman who years ago lost custody of her children.

Stefani suspects there's more to it. She tracks Iris down in the remote cabin where the reclusive woman has spent decades. She learns that Iris indeed survived a Skyview calamity — but thanks to her premonition, she actually saved many lives.

There's a catch, though. Every person who survived — thanks to Iris — ended up dying later. That's because they cheated Death, and became marked men

Good: ★★★

and women. Their offspring are marked too — hence the movie's title — because they were never supposed to exist. "Death is coming for our family," Iris warns.

What does this mean for Stefani? It means she has to save everyone. And that everyday life becomes very dangerous.

A family barbecue starts off happily, but then we see the spiked rake lodged just under the trampoline, and the huge glass shard in the blender. Someone will die. But who, and how?

And that's how the movie continues, upping the ante with each kill. A tattoo parlor hosts one of the more creative Goldberg-ian catastrophes. Even wilder is a scene with an MRI scanner. You know that giant magnet? Yeah, that.

Just as important are the non-deaths — the times you're sure something terrible will happen, but it doesn't. I found this silly phrase scrawled later on my

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TheSportsPages

The home run solves a lot of problems

“Going ... going gone!”
 “That dog will hunt!”
 “He’s back to the warning track ... to the wall ... home run!”

Yes, the “home run call” by the announcer is among the most stirring and iconic moments in baseball. Anyone who’s ever hit a home run – whether it be in Little League, beer leagues or The Show – knows what that feels like.



Sports Retorts

Jim Tortolano

The Los Angeles Angels are hitting a bunch of home runs, and they

– and their fans – are feeling pretty good about it.

After sweeping the Dodgers – defending World Series champs, I might add – and then beating the not-quite-as awesome Athletics, the Halos had won four straight and moved within an eyelash of climbing out of the American League West basement.

How have they done it? The classic “big play” of the home run. The four-bagger. The dinger. The tater. The round-tripper.

As a team, the Angels are only batting .221, putting them 27th among 30 MLB teams. But they’ve hammered 67 home runs, tied for third with the Arizona Diamondbacks.

The question is this: is a home run better than four singles? I mean, each represents four bases. But the homer always brings in at least one run, while four hits is not a guarantee of a score, unless they are consecutive and not always even then.

The “Golden Age” of Angel baseball was the “small ball” era of Mike Scioscia. But if the Angels could boost their team batting average to, say, .240 or so, they could dream of – least – a Bronze Age.

Sweeping the Champs



LOS ANGELES Angels’ Logan O’Hoppe, hits a three-run home run during the seventh inning of a baseball game Saturday, May 17, 2025, in Los Angeles. (AP Photo/Mark J. Terrill)

Are Angels now to soar after wins over Dodgers?

By Mike DiGiovanna
 Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — If the Los Angeles Angels turn around their season, an improbable sweep of the Dodgers could be viewed as the turning point.

The last-place Angels beat the defending World Series champions 6-4 on Sunday, rebounding from a late-inning bullpen stumble when Travis d’Arnaud hit a tiebreaking solo homer in the eighth.

“It’s tremendous,” said d’Arnaud, who also hit an RBI single in the third. “Every game here has felt like a playoff atmosphere. Everybody was passing the baton, having good at-bats up and down the lineup.”

“It was just a dogfight every single game, high stress, and we prevailed in all three games. It’s really special against last year’s world champions. It’s

Continued on page 8

Angels win 5th straight; Dodgers edge D-backs

The red-hot Los Angeles Angels posted their fifth consecutive win on Tuesday and rose out of last place in the American League West, while the Los Angeles Dodgers won a close one to maintain their slender lead in the National League West.

Trailing 4-1 at one point, the Halos (22-25) roared back with four runs in the fifth and two in the ninth to secure a 7-5 win over the Athletics in Sutter Health Park in West Sacramento.

They used the long ball to good advantage. Logan O’Hoppe hit a solo home run to tie the game

THE ROUNDUP

at 1-1 in the fourth, and Yoan Moncada hit a three-run homer in the fifth to tie it up again.

O’Hoppe’s RBI single in the same inning gave the Orange County team its first lead of the night and Zach Neto and Taylor Ward drove in the game-winners in the ninth.

Angel pitching was a bullpen game with five hurlers in the contest.

With the win the Halos climbed from fifth to fourth in the AL West. Back in Los Angeles, the Blue

AL West Standings

	W-L	Pct.	GB	L10
Seattle	27-20	.574	—	5-5
Houston	25-23	.521	2.5	6-4
Texas	25-24	.510	3	7-3
ANGELS	22-25	.468	5	7-3
Athletics	22-27	.449	6	2-8

NL West Standings

	W-L	Pct.	GB	L10
DODGERS	30-19	.612	—	4-6
San Fran.	29-20	.592	1	5-5
San Diego	27-19	.587	3.5	4-6
Arizona	26-23	.531	4	6-4
Colorado	8-40	.167	21.5	2-8

Crew bested the Arizona Diamondbacks 4-3 in 10 innings to keep their one-game edge in the NLW.

Max Muncy’s sacrifice fly to

Continued on page 10

Eagles rally to defeat Huntington, 6-5

Grove, La Quinta advance to the quarterfinals

Prep Sport Spotlight

In a showdown battle of two of Orange County's best high school baseball teams, the underdog Santa Margarita Eagles rallied from a 5-1 deficit to defeat the Huntington Beach Oilers 6-5 in a second round CIF-SS Division 1 game Tuesday afternoon.

The orange-and-black, ranked 20th in the nation and fourth in California by MaxPreps, led for most of the game.

But the Eagles scored four runs in the sixth inning to tie the contest, and won it with a run in the seventh. Each team committed three errors.

Huntington Beach finished the season with a 24-5 mark. The Eagles improved to 18-12 and advanced to the third round on Friday against Los Alamitos (19-

9-2), which bested Lutheran High of Orange (23-7) by 8-0.

The Lancers had been ranked 19th in the nation and second to Corona in California.

Division 7 play saw Garden Grove (21-9) advance to the quarterfinal round after a 5-0 win over Milken High of Los Angeles.

The Argonauts will face Mary Star of the Sea (14-12) of San Pedro on Friday.

In Division 8 action, La Quinta (17-7) edged Cate High of Carpinteria 3-2 and advanced to the quarterfinal round on Friday against Fillmore (11-17).

In Division 9, Santiago (8-15) lost to the Academy of Academic Excellence team from Apple Valley by 10-7.



MICAH RIOLA (36) scores for Huntington Beach in a game earlier this season against Fountain Valley. The Oilers lost 6-5 to Santa Margarita on Tuesday in a CIF-SS Division 1 contest (HBUHSD photo).



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Angels' sweep provides momentum?

Continued from page 6

very good for our confidence moving forward, knowing we can beat anybody.”

The Angels (20-25) remain last in the AL West, six games behind first-place Seattle. Their first three-game sweep of the

Dodgers (29-18) since 2010 gave them at least a glimmer of hope that they can rebound into contention. The Dodgers had not been swept in a series since last July in Philadelphia.

The Angels bludgeoned Dodgers pitching in the first two games, batting .307 (23 for 75) with 17 runs, four homers and eight doubles. Zach Neto's solo homer and Taylor Ward's two-run shot off Tony Gonsolin staked left-hander Yusei Kikuchi to a 3-0, first-inning lead on

Sunday.

Kikuchi pitched well enough to win, giving up one run and three hits, striking out seven and walking four in 5 2/3 innings before hurting his right ankle in a first-base collision with Tommy Edman.

Kikuchi departed with a 4-1 lead but had to settle for another no-decision after Shaun Anderson gave up a three-run homer to Will Smith that tied the score 4-4 in the seventh. Kikuchi is 0-4 despite a 3.50 ERA in 10 starts.

On an afternoon when Angels setup man Ryan Zeferjahn and closer Kenley Jansen were unavailable after pitching in each

of the previous two games, Anderson assumed the role of both setup man and closer.

The 30-year-old right-hander, who has played for 10 different organizations since being drafted in 2016, retired the side in order in the eighth and ninth innings, closing the game with a strikeout of 2024 National League MVP Shohei Ohtani.

“He really saved us,” Angels manager Ron Washington said. “When he came in (after the seventh inning), I told him this game was his. And he went out there and did a good job and ended up getting Ohtani for the last out of the game. We needed

Continued on page 10



Who helped eradicate the plague of polio?
Garden Grove Rotary

Who sponsors a defibrillator program to save lives when heart attacks strike?
Garden Grove Rotary

Who recognizes 6th grade students for achievement in academics and scholarship?
Garden Grove Rotary

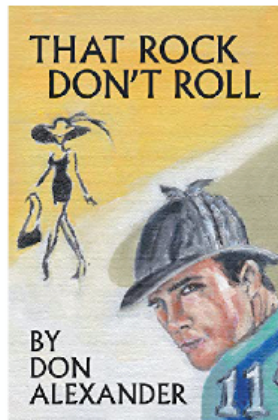
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Don Alexander has been a sports columnist, a sports broadcaster, talk show host and a college instructor. This is his first novel.

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Muncy's sac fly lifts Dodgers

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center drove in Shohei Ohtani from third with the winning run. The Dodgers clung to a 1-0 lead until the top of the ninth when the D-backs' Gabriel Moreno homered to left to tie it up. Arizona took a 3-1 edge in the top of the 10th on a two-run home

run by Corbin Carroll.

But the Dodgers scored one run on a Tommy Edman double, and tied it at 3-3 when Will Smith was hit by a pitch, bringing in Edman.

The game-winner then came on Muncy's deep fly, which snapped a rare four-game losing

streak.

Helping the cause was a strong pitching effort by Yoshi Yamamoto, who worked seven innings, giving up just one hit, no earned runs and struck out nine batters.

Wednesday's game will feature the same matchups.

NFL mulls tush push and flag football

By Schuyler Dixon
AP Pro Football Writer

The fate of the tush push will be up for discussion again along with the NFL's history of giving division champions with mediocre records home field in the playoffs.

There will be a new topic as

well when NFL owners gather Tuesday and Wednesday at the headquarters of the Minnesota Vikings after the league issued a proposal that would allow its players to participate in flag football when the sport makes its Olympic debut in Los Angeles in 2028.

"There's more work to be done there," NFL executive Jeff Miller said when the flag foot-

ball proposal was released last week. "It will certainly be an important topic of conversation. ... I would expect it to be an engaging and robust conversation on that topic."

Philadelphia's famous play has been a topic of conversation for years, reaching a new level when owners agreed to consider a proposal from Green Bay to ban a short-yardage scheme that has helped the Eagles win one Super Bowl — this past season — and reach another.

Angels sweep

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him to do exactly what he did — give us that length — and he did it."

Anderson (1-0) was credited with a blown save and a win for bullpen that entered Sunday with a major league-worst 7.04 ERA.

"To come in here and sweep them, it kind of shows what the Angels have, you know?" Anderson said. "It's kind of hard to see with our record, but these guys put in the work every day, the preparation, the postgame work, getting to the yard early and hitting. ... These guys want to win, and you can totally see it when you walk into the clubhouse. To see us rally and win the last three games, it just shows what we can do here."

Retorts

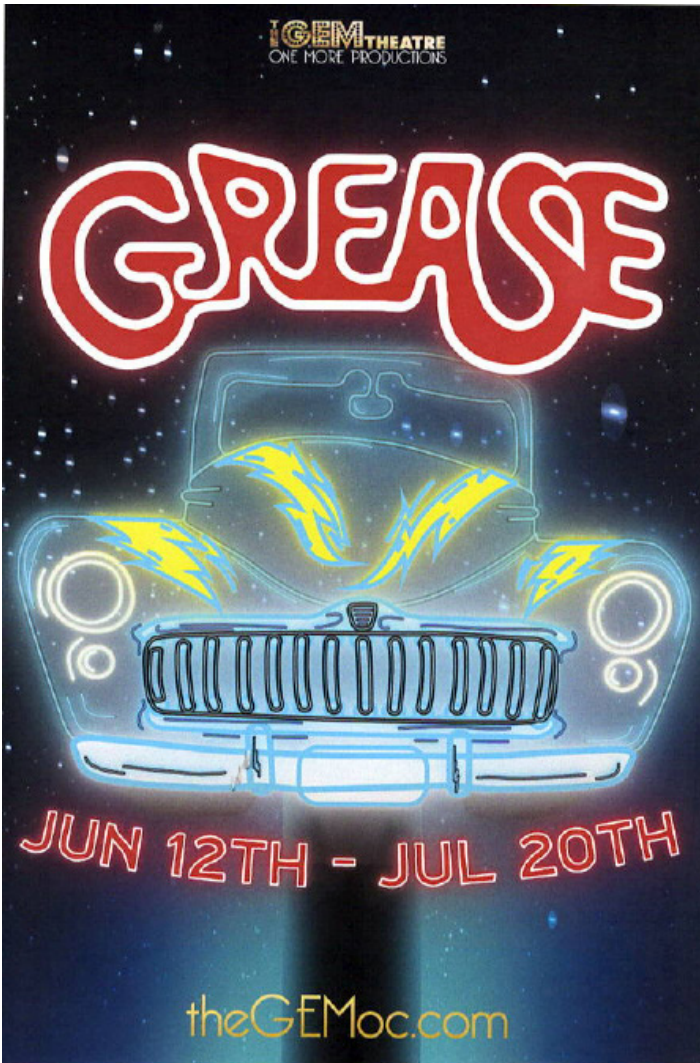
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to buy youth sports equipment, provide protective equipment for public safety employees, and otherwise benefit scores of other good causes.

Without the festival, the cost of those items would either have to come out of the taxpayer's pockets, or those in need would probably just have to do without.

It's not as grand as the Rose Parade in Pasadena and it's not as wild as the Mardi Gras festival in New Orleans.

But it seems to be just right, and irreplaceable, for the town that sometimes is called The Big Strawberry.



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