

A FINAL, SAD FAREWELL



Westminster Mall, once the jewel of retail marketing on Orange County, has become a center for vandalism since its closure at the end of October. Above, the former entrance is boarded up. It's been reported that there have been over 400 calls for service at the location (Goldenwest Street and Bolsa Avenue) and 46 arrests. Jim Tortolano has some comments on page 3 (Wikipedia photo).

250th U.S. birthday is SF theme

"Celebrating Our Nation's 250th Anniversary" will be the theme of the 66th Annual Garden Grove Strawberry Festival, which will take place on Memorial Day weekend, May 22-25 at the Village Green park.

"Our theme this year celebrates the heart of our nation: its history, its



LOGO for 2026 Festival.

people and the vibrant cultures that define us," said Steve Sanders, president of the festival association. "As we recognize our country's 250th year, we're proud to honor the shared heritage that brings our community together."

Officers of the festival association this year are

Continued on page 2

Travel, expense policy on agenda

A relatively light agenda greets the Westminster City Council when it meets on Wednesday.

The council will consider an update of the city's travel and expense policy for elected officials and

■ WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL

appointed officials and city employees.

Also on Wednesday, there's consideration of a request to install a plaque

at Sid Goldstein Freedom Park to honor Lt. Tin That Nguyen, a soldier in the Army of the Republic of Vietnam killed in combat in 1972.

The council will meet

Continued on page 2

■ GARDEN GROVE CITY COUNCIL

New Looks For The Three Little Saigons

Contract is awarded for design ideas

By Jim Tortolano
Orange County Tribune

A contract worth \$250,000 for the development of architectural and urban design guidelines for "Little Saigons" was approved by the Garden Grove City Council on Tuesday night. The vote was 7-0.

Approved was a contract with Gensler, an architecture, design and planning firm to draft architectural and urban design guidelines for the various "Little Saigons" in Garden Grove, Fountain Valley and Santa Ana.

Funding comes from the state Community Economic Resilience Fund.

The idea is to develop those areas as destinations for tourists and area residents.

Also on Tuesday, the Community Spotlight recognized the Garden Grove Unified School District for its "notable achievements and accomplishments in 2025."

The GGUSD serves most of Garden Grove and parts of Anaheim, Cypress, Fountain Valley, Santa Ana, Stanton and Westminster.

Additionally, the council adopted a proclamation recognizing Jan. 13 as Korean American Day in Garden Grove.

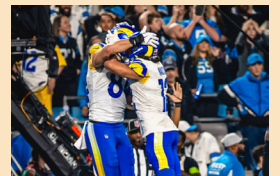
The next meeting of the city council will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 27.

In The Tribune



New Orleans taste at Roux

NEWS & VIEWS PAGE 3



Rams Had No Doubt At All

SPORTS PAGE PAGE 6

Rights of landlords and tenants as well

Do you own rental property or rent an apartment and need to keep up with the latest laws and regulations?

You'll soon be able to have a guide to being on either sides of that relationship. On Tuesday night the Stanton City Coun-

STANTON CITY COUNCIL

cil directed city staff to create a page on the municipal website providing links to state resources on the rights and responsibilities of residential tenants' and landlords' rights and responsibilities. One recent change in the law

is that as of Aug. 1, 2025, landlords can increase rent by a maximum of 5 percent plus the regional Consumer Price Index, or 10 percent, whichever is lower.

Landlords must provide at least 30 days written notice for rent increases of 10 percent or less, and 90 days notice of increases exceeding 10 percent.

However, there are some exemptions to those rules.

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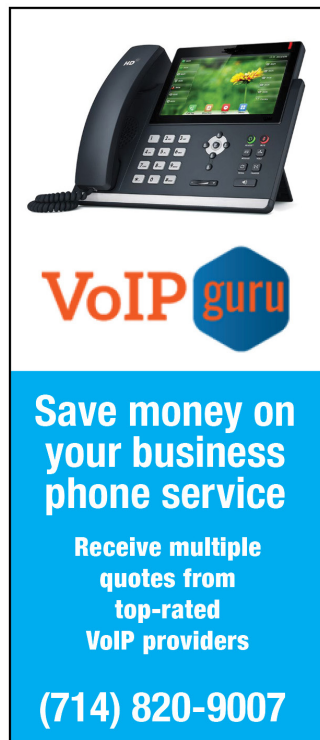
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Westminster

Continued from page 1

in closed session at 4 p.m. with an open session at 6 p.m. in the Council Chambers, located at 8200 Westminster Blvd.

Festival theme '26 is USA 250

Continued from page 1

Sanders (president and in charge of rides and grounds), Tony Lopez (immediate past president/non-profit food booths), George Skelton (treasurer) and Rachelle Gillerman (secretary/opening ceremony/cake cutting).

For more information, go to www.strawberryfestival.org.

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The★Tribune

Jim Tortolano
Editor and Publisher
Marilyn Lewis Tortolano
General Manager

The Orange County Tribune is published on Wednesdays and Saturdays with some exceptions. Address is 9402 Luders Ave., Garden Grove, 92844.

E-mail : orangecountytribune@gmail.com.

www.orangecountytribune.com. Phone: (714) 458-1860.

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News & Views

It's the shape of scary things to (potentially) come

Heavy Water Dept.: You may have read about or seen photos of the vandalism and other damage done to the interior of the Westminster Mall. With the last major department store closed (except for Target, which – reportedly – in still going strong), bad guys have been running wild inside the now-ghostly structure which was once the biggest enclosed shopping center in Orange County.



Retorts
Jim Tortolano

Arriving at this sad moment is like watching a traffic accident in slow motion. Everyone could see it coming, and there was not enough collective energy to prevent it from happening.

This is only Part One. What becomes of restaurants and other stores in the mall parking lot, such as Outback and Best Buy? What kind of expensive resources must be devoted to keeping the former mall from becoming the worst kind of public relations or simply a locus for petty crime?

My larger point is not just to wring hands over this one problem. There's a (potentially) larger issue looming. Municipal costs in general are rising, in part because of the long-term costs of employee pensions. Some economists are concerned about the potential for a recession soon; the odds are about 50-50, I've read.

Smart cities, businesses and average Joes and Janes always need to keep their eyes on the horizon because – and here comes the mixed metaphor of the week – you never know when something is going to come up and bite you from behind.

Fund-raising for hurt police officer

Isaac Davila struck while chasing fleeing suspect

Funds are being raised for the support of a Garden Grove police officer critically injured early this month when stuck by a vehicle while he was pursuing on foot an assault suspect.

According to the GGPD, injured was Officer Isaac Davila, who was knocked unconscious by the impact, and sustained multiple broken bones in his upper body and a severe traumatic brain injury and – at last report – was being treated in a hospital intensive care unit.

Davila is a seven-year veteran of the GGPD and started his law



GARDEN GROVE police officer Isaac Davila and wife (GGPD photo.)

enforcement career as a Newport Beach Police Department Explorer.

His wife is also a GGPD sworn officer. They have a 1-year-old son.

To assist in the medical expenses and future care needs

which may not be fully covered by insurance, the Association of Orange County Deputy Sheriffs has created an account to help defray expenses.

For more information or to make a donation, go to www.aocds.org.

Chow Lines

Travel to NOLA with Roux in Hunt. Beach

By John M. Borack
Orange County Tribune

The end of the year traditionally brings up the difficult question, "Where should I go to dinner for my birthday?" I generally attempt to dine at a different local restaurant each year with my family, preferably at a non-chain establishment. I always enjoy trying new places, but with a vegetarian in my midst and me being a card-carrying carnivore, sometimes finding a restaurant that hits the sweet spot for everyone can be a mite difficult. Luckily, I succeeded this year when I rolled the dice and dined for the first time at Roux Seafood Kitchen in Huntington Beach.

Since I was craving a good steak and being that I am also a



MARDI GRAS PASTA is one of the dishes on the menu at Roux Seafood in Huntington Beach (Tribune photo).

fan of Cajun cuisine, the combination of Roux's 16-ounce ribeye (for only \$29.00) and the opportunity to savor some New Orleans gumbo as an appetizer was too good to pass up. The gumbo is stocked with plenty of shrimp, chicken, hot sausage, andouille, and okra, and was very tasty and a tad spicy, thanks to that hot sausage. (Roux does allow you to adjust

the level of spiciness in their dishes to your taste.) The steak was juicy and cooked perfectly (medium rare), and I added five large prawns to my meal for an additional \$8.00. The prawns were grilled to perfection and bursting with flavor, as was my side dish of garlic noodles. (Other sides include french fries, red roasted

Continued on page 8

NewsUpdate

No Inquiry into Minn. Fatal Shooting

Protester killed by ICE agent in disputed action

The killing of a woman by a federal Immigration Customs Enforcement officer in Minneapolis doesn't justify a criminal civil rights investigation, according to the U.S. Department of Justice.

The Associated Press reports that while an investigation by the FBI is underway, the Civil Rights Division of the DOJ won't be involved in looking into the death of Renee Good.

Deputy District Attorney Todd Blanche issued a statement, reading, "there is currently no basis for a criminal civil rights investigation."

Good was shot by ICE agent



RENEE GOOD was fatally shot by an ICE agent in Minneapolis (Shutterstock).

Jonathan Ross on Jan. 7 in Minneapolis. She was fatally shot while in a van near activity by ICE.

Federal authorities claim she

was trying to strike agents with her vehicle; videotape of the incident appears to challenge that contention, says the AP.

A half-dozen federal prosecutors

in the DOJ resigned on Tuesday in protest over the department's handling of the case, according to The New York Times.

High court may support transgender sports bans

In a pair of cases in which state laws ban transgender athletes from participating in girls and women's sports, the U.S. Supreme Court on Tuesday appeared ready to uphold such laws in place in West Virginia and Idaho and 25 other states.

The New York Times reports that — based on the questions during a hearing on Tuesday — the three liberal justices — questioned the fair-

ness of the laws, while the other six justices leaned on the fact that federal law has a long-standing policy of supporting separate sports teams for males and females to ensure fair competition.

The high court, in the past, has protected the rights of transgender employees, but Chief Justice John Roberts suggested that the principle didn't apply in sports.

Great Thoughts

When you photograph people in color, you photograph their clothes. When you photograph them in black and white, you photograph their souls.
— Ted Grant

"I've been 40 years discovering that the queen of all the colors was black."
— Pierre-Auguste Renoir

"You know you have a problem on your hands when you ask someone how to spell 'orange' and they ask, 'The color or the fruit?'"
— Craig D. Lounsborough

Weather: Sun for a while

Summer-like weather is expected to persist in our West Orange County cites for a while. The forecast for Wednesday is for a daytime high of 80 with an overnight low of 53 under sunny skies. Thursday will be slightly warmer at 81 (52) and sunny. Friday will cool a bit to 78 (52) and sunny. Partly cloudy conditions will move in on Saturday with temps of 79 (52).

Central Banks voice support for Fed Chair Jerome Powell

Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell should have full independence, a group of the leaders of several of the world's central banks said on Tuesday.

According to United Press International, Powell is the target of a federal criminal investigation related to cost overruns in the renovation of Federal Reserve buildings.

The European Central Bank wrote that Powell "has served with integrity." President Donald Trump said, "He is either incompetent or he's crooked."

The Federal Reserve plays a key role in regulating the economy by raising or lowering interest rates. Trump has criticized Powell for not lowering them in keeping with the White House's wishes.

Arts&Living

'Dead Man's' Evoking 'Dog Day'

Intense hostage drama in yet another bank

By Jake Coyle
AP Film writer

It plays a little loose with facts but the righteous rage of "Dog Day Afternoon" is present enough in Gus Van Sant's "Dead Man's Wire," a based-on-a-true-tale hostage thriller that's as deeply 1970s as it is contemporary.

In February 1977, Tony Kirtsis walked into the Meridian Mortgage Company in downtown Indianapolis and took one of its executives, Dick Hall, hostage. Kirtsis held a sawed-off shotgun to the back of Hall's head and draped a wire around his neck that connected to the gun. If he moved too much, he would die.

The subsequent standoff moved to Kirtsis' apartment and eventually concluded in a live televised news conference. The whole ordeal received some renewed attention in a 2022 podcast dramatization starring Jon Hamm.

But in "Dead Man's Wire," starring Bill Skarsgård as Kirtsis, these events are vividly brought to life by Van Sant. It's been seven years since Van Sant directed, following 2018's "Don't Worry, He Won't Get Far on Foot," and one of the prevailing takeaways of his new film is that that's too long of a break for a filmmaker of Van Sant's caliber.

Working from a script by Austin Kolodney, the filmmaker of "My Own Private Idaho" and "Good Will Hunting" turns "Dead Man's Wire" into not a period-piece time capsule but a bracingly relevant drama of outrage and inequality. Tony feels aggrieved by his mortgage company over a land deal the bank, he claims, blocked. We're never



"DEAD MAN'S WIRE" has a hostage criss, romance and more.

Movie Review

given many specifics, but at the same time, there's little doubt in "Dead Man's Wire" that Tony's cause is just. His means might be desperate and abhorrent, but the movie is very definitely on his side.

That's owed significantly to Skarsgård, who gives one of his finest and least adorned performances. While best known for films like "It," "The Crow" and "Nosferatu," here Skarsgård has little more than some green polyester and a very '70s mustache to alter his looks. The straightforward, jittery intensity of his performance propels "Dead Man's Wire."

Yet Van Sant's film aspires to be a larger ensemble drama, which it only partially succeeds at. Tony's plight is far from a solitary one, as numerous threads suggest in Kolodney's fast-paced script. First and foremost is Colman Domingo as a local DJ named Fred Temple. (If ever there were an actor suited, with a smooth baritone, to play a '70s radio DJ, it's Domingo.) Tony, a fan, calls Fred to air his demands. But it's

not just a media outlet for him. Fred touts himself as "the voice of the people."

Something similar could be said of Tony, who rapidly emerges as a kind of folk hero. As much as he tortures his hostage (a very good Dacre Montgomery), he's kind to the police officers surrounding him. And as he and Dick spend more time together, Dick emerges as a kind of victim, himself. It's his father's bank, and when Tony gets M.L. Hall (Al Pacino) on the phone, he sounds painfully insensitive, sooner ready to sacrifice his son than acknowledge any wrongdoing.

Pacino's presence in "Dead Man's Wire" is a nod to "Dog

Good ★ ★ ★

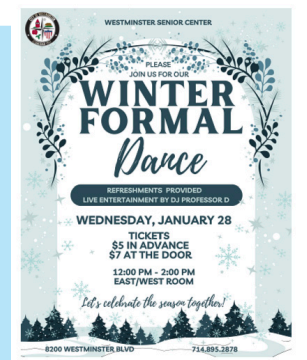
Day Afternoon," a movie that may be far better — but, then again, that's true of most films in comparison to Sidney Lumet's unsurpassed 1975 classic. Still, Van Sant's film bears some of the same rage and disillusionment with the meatgrinder of capitalism as "Dog Day."

There's also a telling, if not entirely successful subplot of a local TV news reporter (Myha'la) struggling against stereotypes. Even when she gets the goods on the unspooling news story, the way her producer says to "chop it up" and put it on air

Continued on page 8

Let's get formal

The Winter Formal Dance at the Westminster Senior Center is scheduled for Wednesday, Jan. 28 in the East/West room from 12-2 p.m. Tickets are \$5 in advance and \$7 at the door. Refreshments will be provided and there will be live entertainment from DJ Professor D.



TheSportsPages

Aaron Rodgers: time to step down before downfall

At first, I liked Aaron Rodgers. He was the star of the Midwest and a rival with Tom Brady for the honorific of "GOAT," meaning "Greatest of All Time." Then I disliked Aaron Rodgers for some of the offensive (and downright wacky things) things he said.

Now, I kind of pity him.

Watching him play on Sunday for the Steelers against the Texans his new acronym looks like OTH (Over the Hill.) in a 30-6 loss.



**Sports
Retorts**
Jim Tortolano

He completed just 17 of 33 passes, was intercepted once and sacked four times. His QBR (Quarterback Rating) was 14.3, which is almost invisible. His arm is still competitive, but the rest of his 47-year-old body is as mobile as my 1964 Plymouth Valiant was, which contributed to getting him dumped on his duff four times.

Aaron is on his Farewell Tour, first being traded to the Jets for the 2023 season where he was injured — and out for almost half of the season — on the team's first series of the first game.

He had a pretty good 2024 season for the 5-12 Jets. But he reportedly didn't get along well with ... well ... a lot of people and was released. From there it was on to the Pittsburgh Steelers where he led his new team to the NFC North title. That's a pretty nice way to end a career, despite the forgettable finale. Four NFL Player of the Year awards and one Super Bowl is a heck of a resume.

Aaron, let's remember you for your days in Wisconsin, terrifying defenses and making cool TV commercials, not hobbling onto the field for whichever team is placing nostalgia ahead of the future. And so should you.

No Doubt With Number 9

Stafford lifts Rams to a late playoff win

By Steve Reed
AP Sports Writer

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) — Puka Nacua stepped into the huddle with the Los Angeles Rams trailing by four with 2:38 left, the home crowd roaring and his team's season on the line. He never thought twice about losing.

"Never a doubt — No. 9 is with us," Nacua said with a wide smile in reference to the team's 37-year-old All-Pro quarterback, Matthew Stafford.

Stafford calmly led the Rams 71 yards by completing 6 of 7 passes — the only incompletion coming on a drop by Davante Adams — before capping it with a perfectly-placed 19-yard touchdown pass to Colby Parkinson with 38 seconds left, lifting the Rams to a dramatic, come-from-behind 34-31 win over the Carolina Panthers in the opening game of the NFL playoffs on Saturday.

Stafford finished 24 of 42 for 304 yards with three touchdown passes and an interception, while Nacua had 10 receptions for 111 yards and two total touchdowns as the Rams (13-5), who were 10 1/2-point favor-



COLBY PARKINSON (84) celebrates with Puka Nacua over game-winning TD pass from Matt Stafford (Rams photo).

■ **RAMS** visit the Chicago Bears Sunday, 3:30 p.m. on Channel 4 in NFC Divisional Playoff.

ites, advanced to the divisional round.

"You see him out there, he just has the best composure of anyone I have ever seen," Parkinson said. "He knows that we are going to go make it happen and we completely trust him. ... I knew he was going to have to throw a back-shoulder ball — and that was a perfect ball. Like perfect. It couldn't have been placed any better."

Stafford credited his calmness to his 17 years of NFL experience.

"I have been in that spot a lot in my life — and I love that spot," Stafford said. "I would rather be me having to go out there with our offense and do it then watch from the sideline. You can make it stressful or you can make it calm and collected, and think the latter is what we were today."

Bryce Young threw for 264 yards and a touchdown and ran for another score for Carolina (8-10), which finished its sec-

Continued on page 7

Some doubt in Chargers' minds

By Jimmy Golen
AP Sports Writer

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. (AP) — Chargers coach Jim Harbaugh still believes he can take his team all the way. Quarterback Justin Herbert isn't so sure. After a 16-3 loss to New England in the wild-card round of the NFL playoffs on Sunday night, Harbaugh said he told the team, "Those that stay will be

■ PRO FOOTBALL

champions." "Not looking at this as an end," he said in a somber postgame news conference that undermined his professed optimism. "It's another beginning."

But when Herbert followed his coach to the podium, he couldn't smile through his third playoff loss in as many tries. The Chargers have not claimed

a postseason victory since winning in the wild-card round in 2018. (They lost to the Patriots the following week.)

Asked if he was still confident that he could make a playoff run or even win one postseason game, Herbert said, "I don't know."

"I haven't figured it out yet, and it hasn't happened," he said. "So we'll have to re-evaluate it

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15 locals named to CIF-SS grid all-stars

Fifteen athletes from schools serving our West Orange County cities have been named all-CIF Southern Section for football.

Edison and Pacifica each has four awardees. Only two players are sophomores, and one junior.

Division 3 (all from Edison)

- Devyn Blake, defensive lineman, senior
- Jude Gonterman, linebacker, senior
- Maddox Thomas, linebacker, senior
- Nathan Stevens, defensive lineman, senior

Division 4

- Star Thomas (Orange), quarterback, sophomore.

Division 8

- Francis Saporito (Marina) quarterback, senior

Division 10 (all Pacifica)

Prep Sport Spotlight

- Ma'Kai Brown, running back, senior
- Davis Carlsson, wide receiver/running back, senior
- Elias Sandoval, wide receiver/running back, senior
- Jerad Verdure, offensive lineman, senior

Division 11 (all Ocean View)

- Trevor Vaivo, running back, sophomore
- Aiden Bond, linebacker, junior

Division 13 (Rancho Alamitos)

- Ethan Reyes, linebacker, senior
- Jakob Luna, lineman, senior

Division 14

- Nathaniel NatiLani Iosua Fiaputa, Bolsa Grande, defensive tackle, defensive end, senior.

Rams bite Panthers; will try to tame bears

Continued from page 6

ond season under coach Dave Canales by losing four of its final five games.

Jalen Coker had career highs with nine receptions for 134 yards with a touchdown and Chuba Hubbard ran for 46 yards and two touchdowns as the Panthers lost in their first playoff appearance since the 2017 season.

"There is such a mix of emotions right now in the locker room, from guys being proud of what we accomplished and where we got, to being sick about the opportunity that was right there in front of us," Canales said. "And that is going to sting."

The Panthers, who beat the Rams 31-28 on this same field six weeks ago, fell behind 14-0 early but stormed back to take a 24-20 lead on Hubbard's second touchdown of the run game early in the fourth quarter.

Stafford, who was selected as an All-Pro earlier in the day, led the Rams back down on the field and found Kyren Williams for a 13-yard touchdown to regain the lead.

Los Angeles appeared to be in charge after getting a stop on defense, giving Stafford the ball back.

But a holding penalty put the Rams behind the sticks and forced a punt, which Isaiah Simmons blocked to set the Panthers up the Rams 30.

Four plays later, Young found Coker in the left corner of the end zone for a 7-yard touchdown to give Carolina a 31-27 lead with 2:39 left, sending the crowd into a frenzy.

But the celebrations quickly turned to silence after Stafford gave the Rams the lead again. Carolina's last attempt to move into field-goal range ended when Jimmy Horn dropped a fourth-down pass from Young.



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Some doubt about the future in the Bolts locker room

Continued from page 7

and see what happens.”

A year after a 32-12 loss to Houston in which Herbert completed less than 45% of his passes and was intercepted four times, the 2020 Offensive Rookie of the Year led the Chargers to just a single field goal. He completed 19 of 31 passes for 159 yards and was the team's leading rusher, scrambling 10 times for 57 yards.

But he was also sacked six

times, losing 39 yards.

The Chargers only got deep into Patriots territory twice — the first time in the first quarter when Daiyan Henley intercepted a tipped pass from Drake Maye and set up the Los Angeles offense at the New England 10. The drive stalled at the 2, Harbaugh went for it on fourth down, and Herbert's pass fell incomplete.

“We just have to be able to score and we didn't do that today,” the quarterback said. “That's on us as an offense. When we get those opportunities we have to do everything we can to get ball in the end zone, and we let the defense down today.”

Among the problems: The best team in the NFL on third

down this season, converting 115 times, went 1 for 10 on Sunday night, and 1 for 3 on fourth down. (The only successful third-down conversion was a 1-yard QB sneak that was initially ruled short but was overturned on replay to give Los Angeles the first down.)

It was the second straight week the Chargers failed to score a touchdown. Asked if offensive coordinator Greg Roman was the right person to be calling plays, Harbaugh said, “Right now I don't have the answers.”

“We're going to look at that, at everything,” he said. “It really falls on me that we weren't at our best tonight. I don't have the answers. I wish I did. We'll work hard. It'll be a new beginning.”

Herbert broke a bone in his left — non-throwing — hand in a Nov. 30 victory over the Raiders, but he played through the injury and led Los Angeles to four straight wins. The Chargers lost to Houston in Week 17, then Herbert sat out the regular-season finale to heal.



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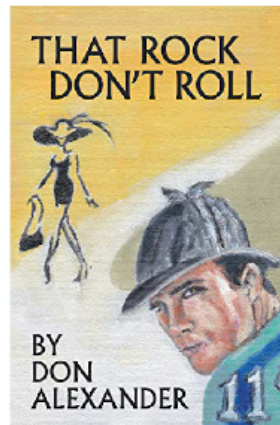
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— The Orange County Tribune

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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.

Visit New Orleans in HB

Continued from page 3

potatoes, rice, white rice and mixed vegetables.)

My family tried various entrées and appetizers, including the Mardi Gras pasta (sauteed Cajun trinity, large prawns, andouille sausage, hot sausage, jalapeño, and chicken in a tomato cream sauce), which my nephew described as the best he's ever tasted; the shrimp étouffée, which looked simply delicious; a bountiful house salad (with Granny Smith apples, dried cranberries, candy cashews, and shaved parmesan) and—wait for it—vegetable egg rolls. (There is a bit of an Asian twist to some of the dishes at Roux.)

(By the way, in case you're curious as to what the aforementioned “Cajun trinity” is, it's described by Wikipedia as the “essential flavor base in

Louisiana cooking, consisting of diced onions, green bell peppers, and celery.” It even has its own Wikipedia page—who knew?)

The prices are extremely reasonable (especially given the amount of food you get) and the service was impeccable—our server Nathan was attentive and on top of things without being overbearing.

Overall, Roux provided a great dining experience and I plan on returning soon to try the jambalaya and the shrimp po-boy sandwich.

Roux also offers various seafood boils, including crab legs, crawfish, clams, mussels, and shrimp, as well as fried seafood and live lobster.

They are located at 16883 Beach Blvd. in Huntington Beach, and their phone number is (657) 244-8592.

Film review: ‘Dead Man’s Wire’

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makes it clear: Whatever Tony is rebelling against, it's him, not his plight, that will be served up on a prime-time plate.

It doesn't take recent similar cases of national fascination, such as Luigi Mangione, charged with killing a healthcare executive, to see contemporary echoes of Kiritisis' tale.

The real story is more complicated and less metaphor-ready, of course, than the movie, which detracts some from the film's gritty sense of verisimilitude.

Staying closer to the truth might have produced a more dynamic movie.

But “Dead Man's Wire” still works. In the film, Tony's demands are \$5 million and an apology.

It's clear the latter means more to him than the money. The tragedy in “Dead Man's Wire” is just how elusive “I'm sorry” can be.

“Dead Man's Wire,” a Row K Entertainment release, is rated R for language throughout. Running time: 105 minutes.