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SOUTH BAY

Hot Wheels designer gets cool honor

Larry Wood, 81, will be inducted into the Automotive Hall of Fame for his creativity

By Michael Hixon
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It started with 16 model cars in 1968 and grew into a phenomenon.

Hot Wheels, the tiny Mattel cars that became one of the most popular toys in the country, has a South Bay connection — Larry Wood, who worked as a Mattel designer

for decades, beginning in 1969. His first Hot Wheels designs hit the market in 1970, and he continued working at Mattel, which is based in El Segundo, until he retired in 2019.

He'll be inducted into the Automotive Hall of Fame in Detroit on Thursday.

"I don't know where that came from," the Redondo Beach resident said recently

from his Long Beach garage, where he works on vintage cars, surrounded by Hot Wheels memorabilia. "But all I can figure is I made so many guys play with them through the years and some of them became car guys."

Wood, 81 couldn't put a number on how many Hot Wheels he designed over the years. But the first one Mattel produced for the market was called "Tri-Baby," which he described as a "real low sports car with a big

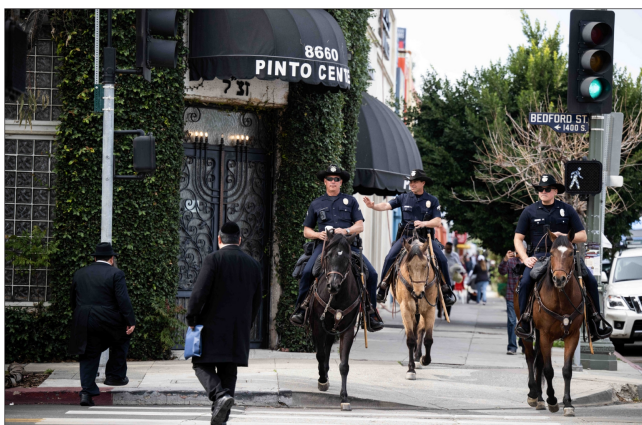
HOT WHEELS » PAGE 6



Larry Wood's garage in Long Beach is full of Hot Wheels and all things automotive, from classic cars to classic gas pumps. BRITTANY MURRAY STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

LOS ANGELES

Mounted policing is a horse of a different color



SARAH REINGEWIRTZ — STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The Los Angeles Police Department's Mounted Unit patrols the Pico-Robertson neighborhood in February after a shooting.

Visibility of LAPD unit in high crime areas often serves as enough of a deterrent

By Emily Holshouser
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A cloudy afternoon just outside the Griffith Observatory had a touch of a John Wayne film set: A half-dozen or so Los Angeles Police Department officers with pristine Stetson cowboy hats sat atop horses wearing gleaming saddles with the LAPD's initials carved into the leather.

The officers were there to announce increased patrols at the observatory after the department investigated a number of vehicle thefts in the area.

Officer Roberto Morales, an eight-year veteran with the Mounted Unit, was riding Stanley, a bay quarter horse with a white stripe on his face and a long black mane.

"A big part of what we do is community engagement," Morales said that mid-April



HANS GUTKNECHT — STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Members of the LAPD's Mounted Unit attend a ceremony at LAPD headquarters in May to unveil a bronze statue honoring four police dogs killed in the line of duty.

day. "We were in Pico-Robertson after the shooting at the synagogue. We were there for about two weeks,

and I've never seen more kids pet the horses. They're very calming."

Many of Los Angeles'

popular tourist attractions are watched over by the mounted police, including

HORSES » PAGE 7

FREEWAYS

L.A. Metro eliminates FasTrak lane fines

Those without transponders can 'pay as you go' by being billed for congestion toll and processing fee

By Steve Scauzillo
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A decade of pay lanes on the 10 and 110 freeways in Los Angeles County has pleased millions of riders in a hurry, even as sticklers criticize the loss of "free" ways that are deemed a California legacy, and even as inadvertent ExpressLane users balk over high tolls, fines and fees.

On June 22, the L.A. Metro board made it easier to use ExpressLanes by eliminating the need for a FasTrak transponder, or the need to sign up your vehicle. Now any motorist can use the lanes without a transponder or a Metro account and simply be billed for a congestion toll plus an \$8 processing fee per trip — avoiding penalties.

L.A. METRO » PAGE 7

LONG BEACH

Council poised to create panel on women, girls

By Kristy Hutchings
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After decades of advocacy from local leaders, the Long Beach City Council is set to formally establish a Commission on Women and Girls this week, marking a historic moment for the city.

And to make it even more poignant, the council's Tuesday vote coincides with the 100th anniversary of the Equal Rights Amendment being introduced to Congress for the first time.

The ERA, which intended to further codify women's rights in the U.S. Constitution, came just a few years after the 19th Amendment was ratified, providing women with a constitutional right to vote.

WOMEN » PAGE 6

INDEX

Bridge.....B7
Classifieds.....B7-9
Comics.....A9-10, B7
Nation+World.....A12
Obituaries.....A5
Puzzles.....A8, 10-11
Ship arrivals.....A2
Sports.....B1-6

TODAY H: 86 L: 67
TUE. H: 88 L: 65
WED. H: 82 L: 63
Full weather report B10

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FOOD

Burger Week offers all the fixings for diners

8-day event begins Sunday, gives Long Beach restaurants a chance to show off unique items

By Christina Merino
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From house-made sauces, traditional sesame seed buns, and American cheese to vegan renditions and even burgers topped with peanut butter — the third annual Long Beach Burger Week returns with something for everyone to enjoy.

The eight-day event, starting Sunday to July 30, pays homage to America's culinary classic —

the hamburger.

It also is an opportunity for Long Beach residents and visitors to support local restaurants during a critical time while also trying new places or visiting personal favorites, according to event organizer Long Beach Food & Beverage, a nonprofit dedicated to providing a platform for the city's restaurant community.

"We may be past the pandemic stage of COVID, but res-

taurants are still struggling and the third annual citywide Long Beach Burger Week will help increase guest counts and sales,"

Terri Henry, executive director of Long Beach Food & Beverage, said in a press release. "And hey, it's summertime and who doesn't love a good burger?"

Featured eateries will offer a Long Beach Burger Week menu with dine-in, to go and delivery options available depending on the restaurant.

A few of the over-the-top burger offers include Burger Hand Pies, Pupusa Burgers, Cajun Lobster-topped, IPA Cheese-

topped, Cheeseburger Pizza, Pastrami-topped, Chile Verde Burger, and more unique options.

During Long Beach Burger Week, businesses will also offer discounted specials, ranging from \$5 to \$25.

Some participating restaurants include Polly's Pies, Long Beach Tap House, Eat Fantastic, Hungry Belly and Proudly Serving L.A. — which is now overseeing the kitchen at Beachwood Brewing in downtown Long Beach.

For more information, go to BurgerWeekLB.com.



FILE PHOTO

Long Beach Food & Beverage presents Long Beach Burger Week from Sunday to July 30. Restaurants will feature discounted menu items or unique kitchen creations for the event for dining in, picking up or delivery.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Study praises region's environmental efforts



PHOTOS BY PAUL BERSEBACH — STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Visitors check out tide pools during a hike at the Crystal Cove State Marine Conservation Area near Corona del Mar in 2021. The protected area runs from the Newport Harbor entrance to Abalone Point in Laguna Beach.

In first decade of implementation, Marine Protected Areas along coast have helped bring back a variety of sea life

By Erika I. Ritchie
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California's coastline is among the most diverse ecosystems on the planet and its protection the last 10 years through 124 designated areas has made the state a model nationally and internationally.

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife recently released its first study following the first decade since the creation of an ecologically connected network of Marine Protected Areas and the results are promising, especially in Southern California's Los Angeles and Orange counties, said Stephen Wertz, a senior scientist and manager of the wildlife agency's Marine Protected

MARINE » PAGE 4



Two paddlers pass each other in Upper Newport Bay in Newport Beach in 2021. The Upper Newport Bay State Marine Conservation Area is a Marine Protected Area in Orange County.

OUTDOORS

Groups target use of 1-pound propane cans

By Brooke Staggs
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California has a pretty efficient system set up to handle propane tanks used for barbecues. People buy a tank at full price, empty it cooking meals, then bring that tank back to one of thousands of retailers, where they can swap it out at half-price for one that's already been refilled by trained professionals.

That system keeps most barbecue propane tanks out of landfills, while reducing the number of tanks that need to be manufactured. It also brings the cost down

for consumers, and it makes propane use safe and convenient for all parties.

But California has yet to set up a similar system for the estimated 4 million to 7 million 1-pound propane cylinders that Californians use with camping stoves each year, or for the untold numbers of smaller isobutane canisters paired with backpacking stoves. Those tanks of ten aren't reused, and they often do become hazardous waste.

To date, efforts to stem the tide of single-use fuel canisters, both through



MARK RIGHTMIRE — STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Though still fully legal, a ban on single-use propane fuel cans was vetoed last year in Sacramento. Now environmental groups are trying to get a law passed to make manufacturers pay to set up a recycling program and are encouraging Californians to seek out reusable versions.

PROPANE » PAGE 5

SAILING

Port of L.A. set to host boat challenge

International sport SailGP, set for this weekend, will feature competitors from 10 countries

By Donna Littlejohn
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Imagine the wild thrill of NASCAR races — but on the water.

SailGP, a fast-paced, international sport that's only 4 years old, will come to the Port of Los Angeles and San Pedro this weekend, with 50-foot catamarans from 10 countries competing in an ocean grand prix in the Outer Harbor.

Actually, they'll often just skim and fly a few feet above the water.

And they race at speeds of more than 60 mph, thanks to 80-foot wing sails and six-member crews who are both top athletes and part "rocket scientists," SailGP's U.S. spokesperson, Laura Muma, said in a telephone interview.

The sport is risky and relies as much on strategy and tactics as on speed. There can be last-minute maneuvers, close calls — even some capsize.

"A lot can — and does — happen," she said. "But it's important to note that these are the best athletes."

When it comes to safety, training and teamwork, Muma said, "they're second to none."

While the sport has been staged in San Francisco several times — the current season's finals will be held there in July 2024 — this is the first time the grand prix has come to L.A.

The area has long attracted wind surfers for

SAILGP » PAGE 4

SENIOR LIVING

Promising drug for Alzheimer's disease reveals research inequity

By Arthur Allen
Kaiser Health News

The FDA on Thursday gave full approval to what many scientists and doctors say is the first drug to show promise in slowing the progression of Alzheimer's disease.

But while patient advocates are celebrating, critics see it as the unfortunate triumph of a flawed theory of the disease's cause and predict the rollout of the drug will aggravate racial disparities in elder care.

An FDA advisory panel last month voted 6-0 to support FDA approval of lecanemab from the Japanese pharmaceutical company Eisai. In a clinical trial involving nearly 1,800 early-stage Alzheimer's patients, the drug slowed the disease's progression somewhat in those who got biweekly infusions, compared with those given a placebo.

But the drug didn't reverse Alzheimer's symptoms, and it will require carefully monitoring patients for months or years, including with brain scans. Those receiving lecanemab, which carries the brand name Leqembi, were twice as likely as placebo recipients in the major trial to have hemorrhaging or swelling in

SENIOR » PAGE 5