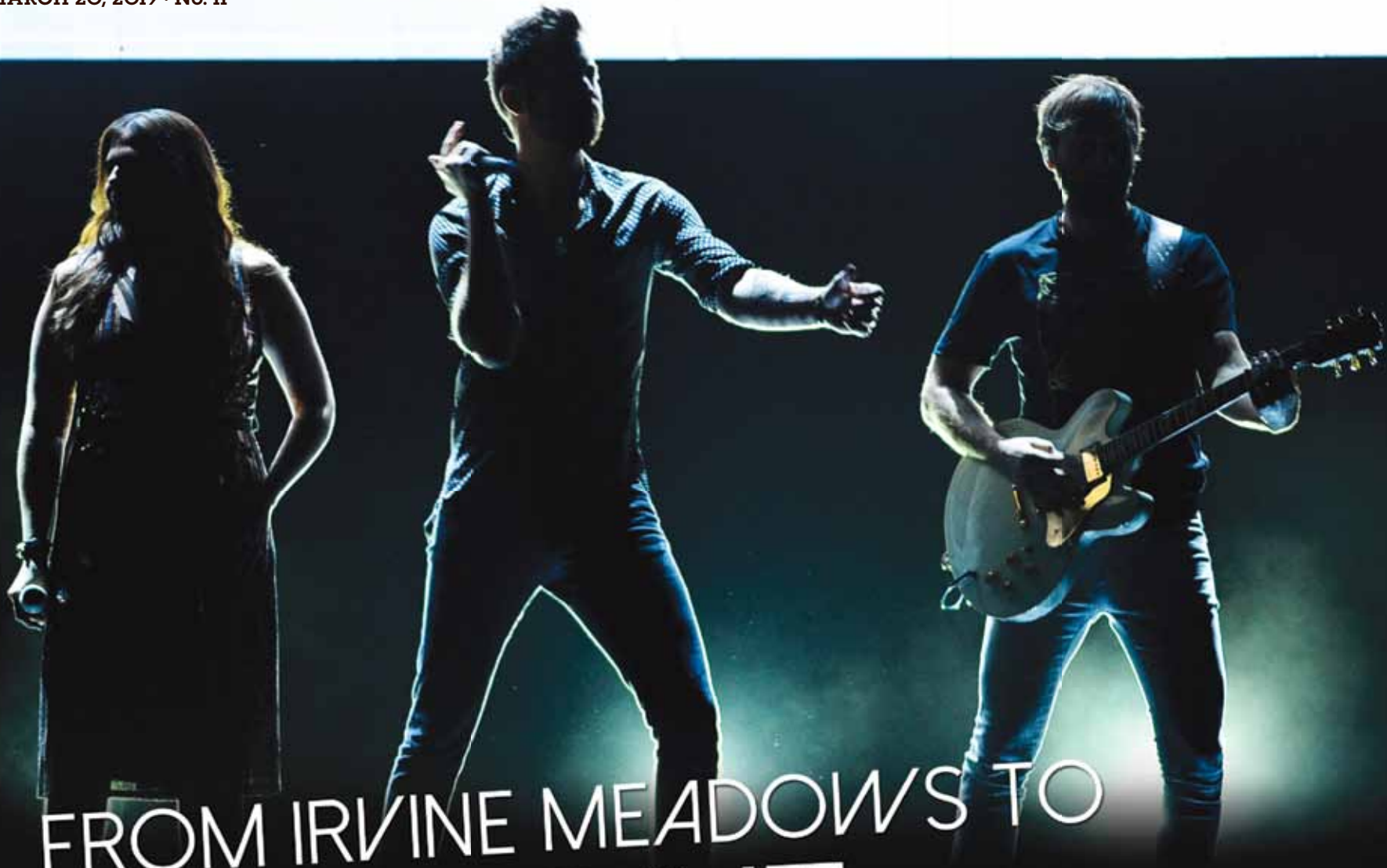


RESULTS FROM O.C. SUPERVISOR SPECIAL ELECTION • HIKE IRVINE: TOP 10 TRAILS • SHOWCASING RISING LOCAL ARTISTS

# IRVINE WEEKLY

MARCH 20, 2019 • No. 11



FROM IRVINE MEADOWS TO  
FIVEPOINT  
AMPHITHEATRE  
BY: PAUL ROGERS

# IRVINE WEEKLY CLASSIFIEDS



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ON COVER: Lady Antebellum • Photo by: Dennis Guerrero

For all inquires: publisher@irvineweekly.com

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## IRVINE MAYOR DONALD WAGNER MAKES STRONG SHOWING IN O.C. SUPERVISOR SPECIAL ELECTION

BY: NICK WALKER

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF THE CANDIDATE

Following last week's special election, Irvine Mayor Donald P. Wagner appears to have won the vacant seat representing the Third District on the Orange County Board of Supervisors. As of 5 p.m. on March 15, Wagner held a 3,518 vote lead (42 percent to 371 percent) over

Loretta Sanchez. According to the Orange County Registrar of Voters, there are only an estimated 48 ballots left to count.

The supervisorial seat was left vacant when former Supervisor Todd Spitzer was elected Orange County District Attorney last November. The Third District covers parts of Irvine, Mission Viejo

and Anaheim Hills as well as Orange, Tustin, North Tustin, Yorba Linda, Villa Park and some of unincorporated O.C.

By law, the county supervisor position is nonpartisan, although Wagner, a Republican, was endorsed by the Republican Party of Orange County, while Sanchez, a Democrat, was endorsed by her respective Orange

County chapter. Only one Democrat has been elected to sit on the Orange County Board of Supervisors in the last decade, Supervisor Doug Chaffee, who was elected last November. While the position is technically nonpartisan, many view the outcome of this election as a potential precursor to what may occur in 2020. Some wanted to see

a continuation of the "blue wave" of last November, while others hoped to see the GOP retake the reins of Orange County politics.

Prior to his role as mayor of Irvine, Wagner served six years in the California state Assembly. Before that he also sat on the South Orange County Community College Board of Trustees for three terms, including six years as board president. Wagner was elected mayor of Irvine in 2016, and again in 2018.

Wagner, now just at the beginning of his second term as mayor of Irvine, will need to step down from his position in order to take on this new role of Orange County supervisor. So, what will happen to the vacant seat?

According to a recent city ordinance (No. 19-01, Section 1-2-213) passed by the City Council on February 12, 2019 (just in time to go into effect for the special election), "Should the Office of Mayor become vacant during his or her term of office, the Mayor Pro Tempore shall become the Mayor for the remainder of the mayoral term." This means that Mayor Pro Tem Christina L. Shea is in line for the mayor's seat once again following Wagner's vacancy. Shea previously held the position of mayor of Irvine from 1996 to 2000, and has served as an Irvine council member for the majority of the last two decades.

In order to fill the vacant City Council seat left open by one of the council member's transition to mayor, the City Council can make an appointment within 60 days (Ordinance 19-01, Section 1-2-201). However, in this case, the general public could potentially have more say. If the voters of the city create a petition signed by at least 7 percent of the voting population and delivered to the City Clerk within 30 days of the notice of vacancy, the vacancy must be filled via special election. If Irvine voters fail to create this petition, power to fill the open seat will remain in the hands of the council.

Wagner will be sworn in to his new role as supervisor on either March 26 or April 9, and will hold the seat for approximately 21 months (the remainder of the current term), with the possibility of re-election in 2020.

**Editor's Note: This article is based on the vote count at press time last Friday, March 15, before the final count was certified.**



CREAMISTRY

## DISHES WORTH THE DRIVE: VOL. 3

**WHETHER YOU PREFER SWEET OR SAVORY ... WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED.**

BY: MICHAEL COOPER

PHOTOS COURTESY OF: FEATURED RESTAURANT

**W**ith Valentine's Day behind us and spring just around the corner, this month's issue of dishes worth the drive from Los Angeles to Irvine offers a little sweet and a little savory. These two places are so unique that we truly believe they make up for the often rough commute from L.A. to Orange County.

Our first stop is on the sweet side: Creamistry, an ice cream shop where everything, even the ice cream, is made

to order by their "Creamologists."

"We use a liquid nitrogen freezing process. It's negative 320 degrees, so pretty much right on contact with the milk base, it just solidifies and freezes," says Creamistry Marketing Director Kenny Cho. "The instant freezing process is actually pretty crucial to the texture of the ice cream because it doesn't allow for any additional air to get mixed in and it prevents the formation of ice crystals. So what you end up with is a really nice, creamy, dense ice cream product that's

kind of hard to imitate without a similar freezing process using liquid nitrogen."

Definitely not your tub of ice cream from the grocery store, Cho's description of Creamistry's handmade ice cream is spot on and really sets it apart from any other ice cream.

Creamistry started when the founder went on a business trip to Korea in the early 2000s and saw a street vendor making custom ice cream by hand. That stuck with him and finally, in 2013, he and his wife decided to start exper-

imenting with the concept. "Literally within their home kitchen, they tried the liquid nitrogen process and tested out over 100 different flavors. That culminated in opening the first Creamistry shop at the Irvine location in 2013," says Cho.

Creamistry now has about 60 locations throughout the country (there are closer ones than Irvine around L.A., such as Beverly Hills and Koreatown, but since Irvine is the flagship store, we thought that's worth the drive).



ELVIS PRESLEY • CREAMISTRY

Not only is the ice cream custom-made, but customers can customize their own orders as well. "A customer can choose one of many bases. We have an organic cream base, our signature premium cream base and for any of our lactose intolerant or vegan customers, we also offer a coconut and cashew base. We do also offer sorbets as well," says Cho. Some of us can be easily overwhelmed with too many options, so if that's the case, we have two recommendations for you:

The first dish is one of their Creations. A "Creation" is a cup with layers of two scoops of ice cream, two toppings, sauce and whipped cream. Creamistry just launched a brand new Creation called the Elvis Presley, which is perfect for any banana lover. "We add the fresh bananas [to the milk base], we mix it up, we freeze it and scoop it right on the spot. [It's] layers of fresh banana ice cream, fresh banana slices, Reese's Peanut Butter sauce and real bacon. [It comes in a] nice clear cup with all those layers and topped with whipped cream," says Cho. We can attest that it's

delicious.

The other dish is their Fruity Pebbles ice cream sandwich. Creamistry offers upgrades to customers, one of which is the option to turn their ice cream into a sandwich, a bowl, a brownie bowl, etc. While the opportunities to make a sandwich are endless, we're recommending the Fruity Pebble one. "Think of it as a rice crispy treat but we make it with Fruity Pebbles instead," says Cho. "So [it's] a custom ice cream sandwich between two Fruity Pebble marshmallow treats. It's pretty delicious and pretty visually appealing as well." The marshmallow twist makes this an especially unique sandwich that's definitely worth the trip from Los Angeles!

If savory, rather than sweet, is more your thing, then head on over to Le Diplomate Café in the University Center. Le Diplomate Café is an old staple, having been open since 1995. "It's been here in the same place for over 20 years!" says Le Diplomate Café Manager Lisa



FRUITY PEBBLES • CREAMISTRY



LE DIPLOMATE CAFE

Park. Its French-Vietnamese fusion definitely makes it a unique dining destination.

The first dish we recommend trying here is the Chicken Broccoli Mushroom sandwich. It comes with oven-baked chicken breast, steamed broccoli and mushroom, all in a French baguette roll with a garlic sauce and cheese, grilled Panini-style. "The garlic sauce is our signature sauce. We make [it] here, [in house]," says Park. The combination of the food mixed with this special garlic sauce definitely makes this dish worth the drive from L.A.

The second dish we're recommend-

ing is one of three types of Vietnamese sandwiches served at Le Diplomate Café. This one is called the Bahm Mi. It has barbecue pork, pickled veggies, jalapenos and cilantro. However, there's one other special ingredient that truly makes this sandwich as delicious as it is: the bread. "We bake [our] bread here, everyday. It's more fresh and it tastes good," says Park. Indeed, the fresh bread on this sandwich makes it stand out from just any sandwich. The Café also features a wide selection of coffee and smoothies to enjoy with your food. As Park said, Le Diplomate Café has decent prices and great food, and that alone can make a long trip worth its weight in gold!

Whether you prefer sweet or savory, ice cream or chicken, follow these recommendations on your next journey from L.A. to Irvine and your palette will definitely be thanking you. Catch us next month with four new dishes that we think can make the case for a trip down south!

**Creamistry:** 3972 Barranca Pkwy Suite D, Irvine, CA 92606 (949) 777-6627 [www.creamistry.com](http://www.creamistry.com)

**Le Diplomate Café:** University Center, Suite B161, Irvine, CA 92612 (949) 854-5161 [www.shopirvinecompany.com/centers/irvine/university-center/le-diplomate-cafe/](http://www.shopirvinecompany.com/centers/irvine/university-center/le-diplomate-cafe/)



## FROM IRVINE MEADOWS TO FIVEPOINT AMPHITHEATRE

**NEW OUTDOOR VENUE CARRIES ON THE CITY'S STRONG TRADITION OF LIVE MUSIC.**

BY: PAUL ROGERS

PHOTOS COURTESY OF: DENNIS GUERRERO

**W**hen Irvine Meadows Amphitheatre was demolished in 2017, the city lost a landmark that had been a musical, cultural and social hub for generations of locals. The wrecking ball also ushered in determined efforts by both local music fans and venue operators Live Nation to retain a major outdoor music venue in the area. These are currently evidenced by a nearby interim replacement for the Meadows, FivePoint Amphitheatre, which was swiftly erected adjacent to the Orange County Great Park.

In the decade between Irvine being formally incorporated in 1971 and the opening of the 16,000-capacity Irvine Meadows in September of 1981, the city's population skyrocketed 800 percent, and that of surrounding Orange County grew by more than a third. O.C. was coming out of the shadow of nearby Los Angeles, and the top-tier concert tours and music festivals hosted at the Meadows were one more affirmation that the area had "arrived."

Irvine Meadows defined Orange County and the music scene," said Long Beach producer/musician Billy Mohler,

who grew up in Laguna Beach. "It showed what was possible and brought renowned artists to our backyard. Whether you lived in Laguna, Irvine or San Clemente, everyone felt Irvine Meadows was their venue."

When the Meadows' land lease expired in 2017, owners the Irvine Company did not renew, instead opting to build apartments on the site. The last shows at the venue, on October 29 and 30, 2016 were appropriately headlined by Anaheim's Gwen Stefani, with Irvine band Young the Giant as support. The following month the storied amphithe-

ater, O.C.'s first major venue, was unceremoniously flattened.

"[Irvine Meadows] was so much fun and close to home," recalled Christine Kleile Martin, a Pet Care Rep who lived in Irvine from 1977-2010. "I enjoyed it being outside and if you didn't want to pay for the more expensive seats ... you could sit on the lawn."

Yet all was not lost for area music fans. An upsurge of enthusiasm to retain a substantial music venue in the area coagulated into the Save Live Music Irvine community group which, with the backing of former Irvine Meadows operators Live Nation, was able to convince the city of Irvine to erect FivePoint Amphitheatre on 44 acres of privately-owned land less than two miles from the site of the old venue. Not even a year after Stefani's tremulous final notes faded from Irvine Meadows, FivePoint Amphitheatre opened on October 5, 2017 (with Young the Giant this time headlining proceedings). The idea was for Live Nation to operate the amphitheatre through 2020, while plans for a permanent venue within the Great Park solidify.

"It was incumbent on us at Live Nation to come up with a plan that would keep live music thriving in Irvine," explained Brad Locker, vice president of marketing for Live Nation L.A., who began his career in 1995 as a marketing intern at Irvine Meadows.

Locker says that Live Nation gave "a little backbone" to Save Live Music Irvine after noticing the organic groundswell of community support for retaining a major concert venue in the area.

That kind of became a voice for people who wanted to, like us, make sure that there was a plan going forward to ensure that they would still be able to come out and see world-class talent in a market that has a sizeable population – and, frankly, demands it," Locker continued.

In many ways, the more intimate and flexible 12,000-seat FivePoint Amphitheatre – named for its developers, FivePoint, which has designed mixed-use, master-planned communities up and down the California coast – is a superior venue to the old Irvine Meadows (which was known as Verizon Wireless Amphitheatre, 2000-2014). Yet the semi-rural, hill-hugging layout of Irvine Meadows, while not entirely practical, is nonetheless hard to replicate.

"You were surrounded by nature. ...

That in itself made the venue unique," recalled Mohler, who saw everyone from Anthrax and Ice Cube to Ziggy Marley and The Jesus and Mary Jane at Irvine Meadows. "The unique seating arrangement was awesome! Seats cascading down the hillside, with a large general-admission grassy knoll at the very top."

Mohler is not alone in having tales of local teens, who were familiar with the surrounding terrain, sneaking into the venue through its upper knoll, their price of admission paid only in poison oak.

"If Irvine Meadows was not there, I definitely would not have seen as many concerts," said Kleile Martin, who saw the likes of Bon Jovi, the Grateful Dead, Metallica and Iron Maiden at the venue. "I have been to the L.A. Forum, L.A. Coliseum and Long Beach Arena, but always enjoyed the concerts at Irvine Meadows better."

What FivePoint Amphitheatre lacks in brick-and-mortar solidity and natural charm is compensated for by its smaller size and thoughtful layout. The furthest of its bleacher-style seats from the stage are significantly closer to the action than those of Irvine Meadows, and its

flexible design allows it to be tailored to individual artists and their fans.

"For some shows at FivePoint Amphitheatre we recognize that we have kind of a more active, wants-to-dance, party kind of crowd, so we can do the entire front section as general admission," said Locker. "Sometimes we might have a show that lends itself more to being seated, and we can do the entire thing seated. We can find a middle ground, where part of it is seated and part of it is general admission."

By contrast, Irvine Meadows offered only a very modest general-admission pit area, holding around 200 fans, regardless of who was performing. Nonetheless, the venue drew in people from all over SoCal who might otherwise have never visited Irvine, attracting as it did even tours that skipped Los Angeles – a function that any new permanent venue will hopefully continue.

"When I was young, the Meadows weren't bad, because I wasn't drinking and didn't have to worry about the lines," remembered Preston Foster, a hard rock aficionado from Sylmar who attended KROQ Weenie Roasts and Pantera, Foo Fighters and Sepultura

concerts at the old venue, and has seen Slayer at FivePoint Amphitheatre. "But as an adult, the restroom situation was not accommodating to a sold-out show. ... By the time you got back to your area in the hill you'd have to piss [again]!"

Foster recalls impatient Meadows patrons simply urinating through its back fence. By contrast, FivePoint Amphitheatre boasts relatively convenient (albeit portable) restrooms on both sides of its concession circle. Additionally, those concessions are unusually in-touch and imaginative, last year boasting Tackle Box Tacos from Top Chef alum Brian Huskey, noodles and dumplings from Ms. Chi Café (Shirley Chung/Top Chef), plus creations from chef Freddy Vargas (Scarpetta/The Ponte) and a rotation of O.C.'s best food trucks.

"[FivePoint Amphitheatre] also has a very unique space: The back lawn and the concourse area there is vast and allows us to entertain the fans in a different way," Locker explained. "We have a bunch of party games. ... Sometimes we'll bring out a dance floor and a deejay. [It] allows people to spread out

and sit down and relax before a show, in almost like a field setting."

As well as top-notch programming – which this summer includes Fishfest, Beck and Cage the Elephant, and two nights of the Zac Brown Band – Locker said that Live Nation has endeavored to carry-over Irvine Meadows' welcoming aura into FivePoint Amphitheatre "in terms of being friendly to our fans and making sure that our staff is knowledgeable and able to direct people in a way that enhances the experience."

In the longer term, Locker expresses an enthusiasm for Live Nation serving O.C. music fans which bodes well for the enduring presence of a major outdoor venue in the Irvine area.

"We have identified that Orange County is a tremendous concert market, where people tend to support and go out to more events than in other markets nationally," he concluded. "We are at work on a separate permitting process to build a permanent amphitheatre in Irvine, likely near the site of FivePoint Amphitheatre. We hope to share more news about that soon."



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SAN JOAQUIN MARSH • COURTESY OF IRVINE RANCH WATER DISTRICT

## HIKE IRVINE

### TOP 10 TRAILS TO WALK, HIKE, RUN AND EXPLORE.

BY: PAUL ROGERS

PHOTOS COURTESY: FEATURED PARKS

**W**hile Irvine is rightly famed for its world-class schools, prestigious corporate headquarters, and fine dining and retail, the city is far from just concrete and glass. In fact, Irvine (which was mostly ranchland until the 1960s) and nearby communities boast extensive hiking trail networks with something to suit all levels of fitness, enthusiasm and time commitment. We visited 10 worth exploring.

#### HANGMAN'S MONUMENT

Don't just show up in your boots and sunscreen for this 6-mile, sometimes challenging trek (1,800 feet of climbing elevation) to the site of one of Irvine's darkest historical incidents. See, you'll need to join an organized hike led by Irvine Ranch Conservatory-certified volunteers in order to visit the spot where,

in 1857, two notorious bandits were summarily hanged by one General Andres Pico. The stone monument marking this grim event, surrounded by wildflowers and wonderful views, was lost beneath brush for decades, before the 2007 Santiago Fire scorched the area. Hikes begin close to Hwy. 241/Foothill Toll Rd., near the end of Presida Canyon.

For details of this and other Irvine Ranch Natural Landmarks guided activities visit [LetsGoOutside.org/activities](http://LetsGoOutside.org/activities).

#### BOMMER CANYON TRAIL

This 4.6-mile, moderately strenuous loop through historic Bommer Canyon is a staple of Irvine's outdoorsy types, yet is still only gently trafficked much of the time (and is plenty wide enough to accommodate hikers and mountain bikers alike). Much of its 810-foot elevation gain happens in its furthest mile out, but this last steep stretch is so

worth it for gasp-inducing views inland toward Saddleback Mountain and out over the twinkling Pacific and Catalina Island. Clean restrooms are available at the trailhead. Note that there are only 14 parking spaces at the 6400 Shady Canyon Dr. trailhead, but continue and make a left into Sunnyhill for more (starting your hike here will add 1.4 miles, roundtrip).

#### SAN JOAQUIN MARSH & WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

Just blocks from John Wayne Airport and UC Irvine lurks 300-plus acres of freshwater wetlands which host more than 200 bird species and, in fine weather, numerous varieties of human walkers and runners. The 12 miles of meandering trails within the hidden haven of Irvine Ranch Water District's San Joaquin Marsh – which is nearly two-thirds the size of New York's Central Park – are

best suited to leisurely wanderers, with seemingly endless options and few signs. All flat (though with little shade), this relaxing and ultra-convenient, kid-friendly escape can reward visitors with sightings of pelicans, herons and ducks, not to mention raccoons and cottontails. Open from dawn 'til dusk year-round, San Joaquin Marsh is accessed from Campus Drive and Riparian View.

#### TOP OF THE WORLD (Laguna Beach)

Officially named Alta Laguna Park, Top of the World soars some 1,000 feet above Laguna Beach, with views of much of O.C. on a clear day (or at least out to sea and inland toward Aliso Viejo). The hiking/biking trails here include easy options (like West Ridge and Oak Grove), moderately strenuous workouts (such as Mathis Canyon), and a few downright difficult stretches (such as the short-but-rocky Car Wreck trail, featuring the incongruous remains of a 1946 Dodge coupe). Dripping Cave trail leads to the eponymous overhang where hikers can grab a shaded rest or picnic. It can get busy here, and proper hiking boots or trail shoes are recommended. Parking is at 3299 Alta Laguna Blvd.

#### TURTLE ROCK / FRENCH HILL LOOP

This ultra-convenient, 4.2-mile urban/scenic stroll offers not only some of the best land/sea vistas anywhere in Irvine, but also peeks of the gorgeous homes and pools of the prestigious Turtle Rock Summit neighborhood. While Turtle Rock / French Hill can be tackled in sneakers, there are some steep, boulder-strewn scrambles (though even these can be circumvented). A combination of dirt and paved paths, this trail is heavily trafficked, with leashed dogs welcome. Hardly a "wild" experience – most of the near views are of low brush or manicured housing tracts – it's nonetheless a calves-toning workout in the heart of town, with the most popular of numerous starting points being the corner of Turtle Rock Drive and Concordia Way.

#### PETERS CANYON REGIONAL PARK (Orange)

The 340 acres of Peters Canyon Regional Park are well worth the short drive for Irvine hikers, with its diverse array of trails and graded roads. Home to the substantial Upper Peters Canyon Reservoir and Peters Canyon Creek, the park hosts all manner of wildlife, including hawks, smaller amphibians, mule



deer, bobcats and, yes, snakes. There's something for everyone here, including the 2.5-mile Peters Canyon Lake View Trail (which lives up to its name, yet has only 203 feet of elevation gain), and the heavily-trafficked, 5.9-mile Peters Canyon Loop Trail, which presents a moderately strenuous challenge through undulating terrain. Open 7 a.m. through sunset, the park is located at 8548 Canyon View Ave. in Orange.

#### **QUAIL LOOP TRAIL**

Ideal for a swift dog or power walk, even on your lunch break, Quail Loop is a couple of miles of natural-surface trail around the base of Quail Hill. The only wilderness trail in the Irvine Ranch Natural Landmarks that allows dogs (on leashes), it offers great views of Saddleback and of Irvine itself. Birds are plentiful – quail, of course, plus western meadowlark, hummingbirds and more – especially near the wetland area at the loop's start. A free cell phone audio tour, featuring experts explaining significant features, is available (dial 949-743-5943). Quail Hill Trailhead, at 34 Shady Canyon Dr., is also the perfect place to connect to southern Irvine's broader network of hiking trails.

#### **EL MORO CANYON LOOP TRAIL (Laguna Beach)**

One of 28 trails totaling 18 miles in Crystal Cove State Park, this well-maintained 5-mile loop through El Moro Canyon repays an 800-foot climb with sweeping coastal views and colorful wildflowers. Rated moderate overall, it includes only one sweat-breaking ascent. While the trail through 2,400 acres of coastal sage scrub is mostly shadeless, an ocean breeze fans even the hottest of hikes. Expect to see plentiful bunnies, birds and maybe even a twilight coyote before descending back to more than three miles of beach, which can be enjoyed on the same day pass (the park also includes four overnight campsites). Crystal Cove State Park is at 8471 N. Coast Hwy., Laguna Beach. Day-use parking is \$15/vehicle (or \$5/hour).

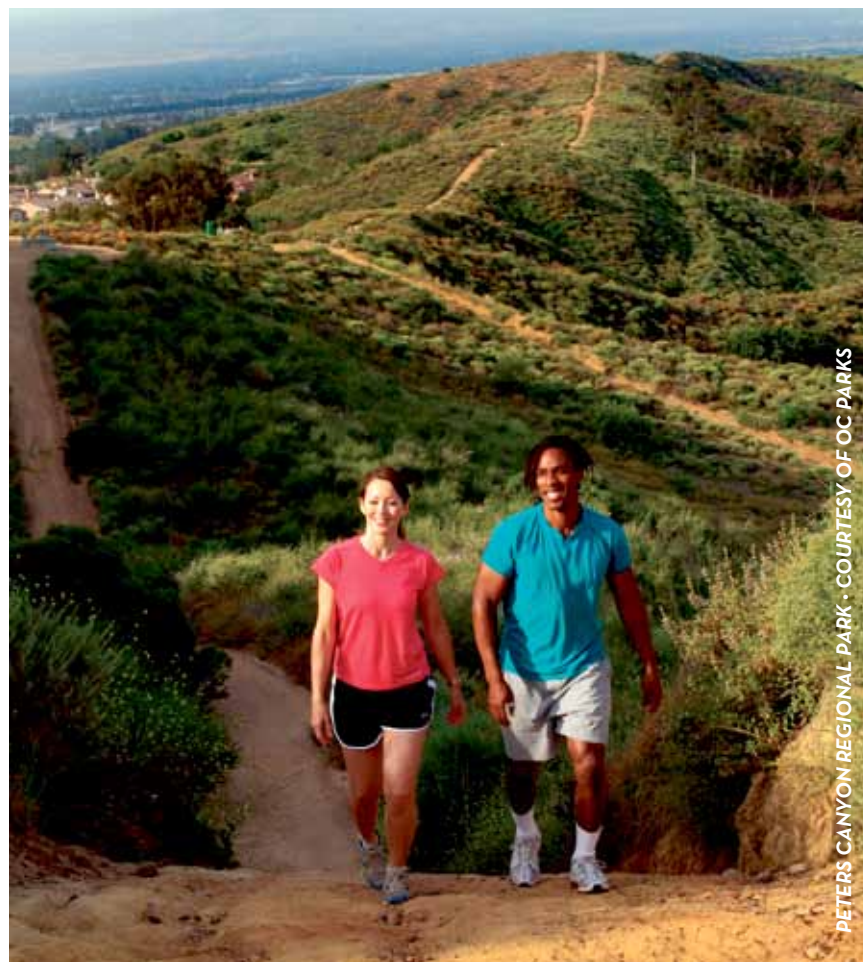
#### **WOODBIDGE TRAIL**

The relaxed, paved 1.7-mile out-and-back Woodbridge Trail is a favorite of families, dog owners, joggers and casual walkers, with a pleasant lake-side stretch and views of nearby mountains which shift with every curve. For the more ambitious, Woodbridge can also form part of a lengthier jaunt, connect-

ing as it does with both the Freeway and San Diego Creek trails. Though it also traverses a neighborhood, the meandering pathway offers brief escape from urban sprawl on its way through a field and alongside North Lake. Almost literally flat (just a 29-foot elevation gain), its supremely civilized hiking experience is completed by the restrooms, barbecues, picnic table and drinking fountains near the parking at Mike Ward Community Park (20 Lake Rd.)

#### **SHADY CANYON TRAIL**

With both paved and dirt paths, this 7.8-mile out-and-back trail questions the dividing line between "hiking" and just "walking," as it bisects both housing tracts and open ground. Whatever you call it, Shady Canyon Trail is a safe and non-stressful way to stretch your legs over 574 feet of elevation gain without the need of specialized attire or equipment (though a hat and sunscreen are recommended, as there's little shade). Also well trafficked by bikers and even inline skaters (and wheelchair accessible), there's a sense of community connection here that most of the more rugged local trails lack. Shady Canyon Trail shares a trailhead and parking with Quail Hill Trail (see above) at 34 Shady Canyon Dr.



PETERS CANYON REGIONAL PARK • COURTESY OF OC PARKS



CRYSTAL COVE STATE PARK • COURTESY OF CRYSTAL COVE CONSERVANCY



REACH OUT COLLECTION • PHOTO BY: MYAMI

## RISING ARTISTS OF ORANGE COUNTY

### LOCAL CHAPTER OF RAW HELPS SHOWCASE NEW TALENT IN THE CREATIVE ARTS.

BY: RYAN NAJJAR

PHOTOS BY: MYAMI & DANIELLE DORR

**A**rt is alive in Orange County. Local talent emerges constantly, and even though people typically look to L.A. for art in Southern California, we have more to offer than you'd think.

During an exhibit by the Orange County chapter of RAW, an independent artist organization, I was lucky enough to speak with three different artists who were showing their work. The first person I spoke with was M.o.M Clct founder Myami, who gives new life to thrift shop garments as one-of-one pieces. I then got a chance to exchange words with Danielle Dorr, an apparel designer reframing feminine and Parisian aesthetics in her own image. Lastly,

I sat down with Carmen Winter, an artist who creates intricate zero-waste sculptures, paintings and other installations through her Sustainable Secrets project.

#### Myami of M.o.M Clct

I got to chat with Myami fairly early into the night. His clothes, boasting a bevy of colors, patterns and fabrics, caught my eye and I went to his booth to introduce myself. I wanted to find out what inspires him to create these items, and figured it would make sense to start at the beginning.

Although he's been designing for five years, the path to his current creations starts even earlier. For as long as he can

remember, he's desired clothes made especially for him. This preference connects to his upbringing in Louisiana, where he lived until he moved to Southern California in 2016. He tells me the Louisiana attitude toward clothes centers around putting together what you have and assembling a look from there. He notices an opposing mentality in L.A., where people focus their style on the prominent trends of the moment. M.o.M Clct (M.o.M stands for Mind of Myami) became his vehicle to bring the Louisiana mentality to the world.

His pieces begin their journey in the trendiest of places: thrift shops. He'll gather an assortment of garments from these shops to bring to his workspace.

From there, he picks pieces of each and assembles them, building new shapes and styles from ordinary items. There's a shirt with four different color blocks and thick pockets, a flowing jacket sectioned into three different colors and fabrics, a sleeveless vest that transforms into a sweater, and many others. He doesn't stick to signature designs, either; given his creative process, all his pieces are one-of-one.

In an effort to expand his horizons, he's recently released a collaboration between himself and a special artist in his life:

"Her name is Adesina. [She's] actually my girlfriend, and the story behind our 'Reach Out' [collection] is kind of simple,



MODEL WEARING A BALLET SKIRT BY DANIELLE DORR • PHOTO BY: DANIELLE DORR

**“AFTER INVESTIGATING WHAT IT WAS, I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE A FUN OPPORTUNITY TO CHALLENGE MYSELF BY DESIGNING AND CREATING EIGHT LOOKS IN ABOUT FIVE WEEKS. IT WAS THE FIRST TIME I HAD EVER HEARD OF RAW, AND I’M GRATEFUL TO BE A PARTICIPANT.”**

**-DANIELLE DORR**

but complex. We decided to finally work with each other because we wanted to tell a story about being from different places and meeting and growing together. The ‘Reach Out’ moniker simply means [that] to be a better person, to live in a better world and achieve your dreams ... you have to be willing to reach out to others for guidance and assistance. It’s not until we both started reaching out to people around us that we started to grow and become more of a power couple. [The collection] is a sign of our willingness to reach out to one another as we continue to help one another grow in our mediums.”

#### **Danielle Dorr**

After speaking with Myami, I noticed

some sharply dressed models standing on pedestals in the center of the venue. I was interested in finding the mind behind them, and after some searching we introduced ourselves.

Like Myami, Danielle Dorr is a fairly recent entrant into fashion, although the seed was planted some time before.

“My mom was always trying to suggest I take sewing classes, and I said no for a really long time,” explained Dorr. “It wasn’t until after I had been a hairstylist for five years that I was ready for a change and threw myself into fashion.

“I began fashion school in 2015. Prior to that, I had experimented with costumes and a few other items. Some were unsuccessful, and some were mediocre, but none of my designs came out as

intended until I learned how to sew.”

Now that she’s taking advantage of her abilities, she wants to put a new spin on classics. “[For my latest collection],” she said, “I was inspired by the Parisian style and menswear with feminine aspects.” The collection was also partly inspired by the RAW event.

“After investigating what it was, I thought it would be a fun opportunity to challenge myself by designing and creating eight looks in about five weeks. It was the first time I had ever heard of RAW, and I’m grateful to be a participant.”

#### **Carmen Winter of Sustainable Secrets**

“I’ve been creating art for as long as I can remember.” Carmen Winter told me. “I’d make mud sculptures in my parents’ backyard as a kid and I kept on going.”

It turned out her first creations would be a precursor to her current work. As a self-proclaimed Eco Artist, Carmen’s Sustainable Secrets project focuses on creating waste-free artwork using things like pulped paper, crushed glass, plastic and an assortment of other

objects.

“There are several different reasons why I work with discarded materials as a medium,” said Winter. “One of those reasons is that I’m an artist: if you give me trash, I’ll [work to] transform it into something amazing. ... I enjoy using discarded objects to show people that waste can be a viable material, and to bring awareness to the importance of recycling and reducing our negative impact on this planet.”

She utilizes these materials to create an array of creations, including sculptures, paintings and elaborate LED displays.

“I want to add to the landscape by providing more eco-friendly, zero-waste artwork to the scene,” she told me. “I plan on experimenting with more landfill waste this year, and I’ve been building small recycling equipment to help me process my art supplies easier.”

You can read more about her work, and purchase a piece for yourself, on her website.

Be sure to keep up with the Irvine Weekly to stay updated on future news from the local arts scene.



PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN • PHOTO BY: SUSTAINABLE SECRETS

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