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IRVINE WEEKLY

SEPTEMBER 9, 2020 • VOL. 2, NO. 21



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IRVINEWEEKLY.COM

HOW-TO-VOTE



MORNING BREW/UNSPLASH

VOTING IN 2020

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW.

BY: EVAN J. LANCASTER

It's the last two months before the November elections and several factors, including a pandemic, will make voting in 2020 different than ever before.

Through the use of Voter Centers, and the statewide vote-by-mail system, for registered voters in Orange County, voting in 2020 comes with multiple options.

Vote Centers are a product of The Voters Choice Act (SB 450), established to modernize voting processes in the state. The Orange County Board of Supervisors opted into the VCA in 2019.

Per the Orange County Registrar of Voters, SB 450, "authorizes counties to conduct any election as an all-mailed ballot election provided the jurisdiction provides ballot drop-off locations, vote centers and conducts outreach."

In a report from the OCROV, the March 3, 2020 Presidential Primary Election was, "the first countywide election under the Vote Center model," which received positive voter feedback.

At Vote Centers, a voter will be able to:

- Vote in-person
- Drop off a vote-by-mail ballot
- Use an accessible ballot marking device that allows voters with disabilities to vote independently
- Receive a replacement ballot
- Obtain language assistance

Register to vote or update registration information

All Vote Centers will be in full operation during the established 5-day period of voting.

Beginning on Friday, October 30, Orange County Vote Centers will open from 8:00 am - 8:00 pm. On Election Day, Tuesday, November 3, Vote Centers will be open from 7:00 am - 8:00 pm.

The number of Voter Centers within each county is based on the number of voters in each city, according to Orange County's Election Administration Plan. Each city is assigned one Vote Center per every 10,000 registered voters within the city.

"OCROV plans to provide more vote centers than the minimum requirements. Orange County will operate 38 vote centers open for 11 days, including Election Day, and 188 vote centers that will be open for 4 days, including Election Day, in Orange County," according to The Orange County Registrar of Voters website.

Considering the ongoing global health crisis, California is adding another layer of safety to voting in 2020.

With the passage of Assembly Bill 860, signed by Gov. Gavin Newsom on June 18, all voters in California will have access to the state's Vote-by-Mail option.

The provisions within AB 860 require, "that county elections officials must mail a ballot to every registered, active voter ahead of the November 3, 2020 General Election," according to Alex Padilla, California

Secretary of State.

Not only does vote-by-mail address public health concerns over COVID-19, it is also a direct reflection of what Orange County voters want.

"In fact, turnout for [the March 3, 2020] election (501%) was the highest for a presidential primary election since 2000. Additionally, 82% of voters opted to vote by mail as opposed to 18% choosing to vote at an in-person voting location," according to a report conducted by OCROV.

Per state law, vote-by-mail ballots are to be mailed out no later than 29-days prior to the election. Orange County residents should expect Vote-By-Mail ballots in early October.

As Orange County residents prepare to vote in 2020, the OC Registrar Of Voters will be providing voters with essential tools for digital ballot tracking, locating Vote Centers, and identifying accessible drive-thru ballot drop-off locations.

"From voting at home, drive-thru ballot drop-off, in-person options, returning your ballot via the United States Postal Service, or personally deliver your ballot to us – the choice is yours," - OC Registrar of Voters website

Vote-by-Mail Ballots Returns

Here's a list of Ballot return location options in Irvine:

- Vote Center Drop-off (Locations to be determined and available once finalized)
- U.S. Postal Office or Mailbox
- **Ballot Drop Boxes**
 - **Harvard Community Park,** 14701 Harvard Avenue
 - **Heritage Community Park,** 14301 Yale Avenue
 - **Irvine Metrolink Station,** 15215 Barranca Parkway #1
 - **Rancho Senior Center,** 3 Ethel Copen Way
 - **Trabuco Center,** 5701 Trabuco Road
 - **Turtle Rock Community Park,** 1 Sunnyhill Drive
 - **Woodbury Community Park,** 130 Sanctuary

While there's still time for candidates to win over their constituents, there will be plenty to track in both the Irvine City Council and mayor contests.

There are 14 candidates running to fill only two City Council seats – the seat of Melissa Fox who is running for state Assembly and the seat of appointed Councilman Mike Carroll, who is running for election to the seat. Carroll was appointed to fill the seat when a vacancy on the council occurred because Don Wagner was elected to the Orange County Board of Supervisors.

Be sure to check out Irvine Weekly's Candidate Preview for Irvine Elections 2020.

<https://irvineweekly.com/irvine-elections-2020-first-look-at-candidates-running-for-irvine-mayor-and-council/>



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CHRISTINA SHEA



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PHOTOS COURTESY CITY OF IRVINE

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE 2020 IRVINE CITY ELECTIONS

BY: IRVINE WEEKLY EDITORIAL BOARD

Irvine city elections are always eventful. There are often large numbers of diverse candidates, with wildly differing beliefs, seeking to hold office in our city. There are always familiar faces that seem to run every two years. There is always a surprise or two. And this year will be particularly historic given that we are voting during a global health pandemic and government-imposed lockdowns.

We know that most people in the city do not have time (or interest) to pay attention to the constant ebb and flow of Irvine politics so here is a quick primer on some important things you should know because politics in Irvine moves fast and a lot has changed in since we last voted:

Mike Carroll is a Current City Councilman on the Ballot for the First Time

When Irvine voters look at their ballots, they will see one particular name for the first time: Mike Carroll. Yet, while Carroll is a first-time candidate, he is already a member of the Irvine City Council. That is because Carroll was appointed with bipartisan support on the council to fill a vacancy. The vacancy occurred when then-mayor Don Wagner won a special election to become a member of the Orange County Board of Su-

pervisors. As a result, then-councilwoman (and former mayor) Christina Shea was appointed to fill the mayor role leaving an open seat on the council which Carroll was appointed to.

While Carroll's name may be new to many voters in Irvine, his reputation among his fellow councilmembers led to his bipartisan support to the city council. That is because he, at the time of appointment, he was serving on the city's planning commission and developed a reputation for a fair, community-focused approach.

Christina Shea is Running for Mayor

Last time voters saw Christina Shea on the ballot she was running for city council, for which she won. As mentioned above, she was appointed to mayor (a position she has served in before). Now, Shea is running for Mayor of Irvine because she believes that the city needs steady leadership in such a tumultuous time. She has made public safety a corner stone of her campaign as well as education, arguably the two issues most Irvinenites hold most dear.

Shea has a long history in Irvine and is one of the most recognizable public figures in the history of the city. She is popular, knows the issues and the players, and has won a lot of elections in the city.

While four candidates in total are running for mayor, the most formidable besides Shea is Farrah Khan, a currently elected member of the city council. Khan is in her first term ever serving on the city council and was elected two years ago in what some would call a surprise victory. She and Shea have been allies on the council, and even considered each other friends at one time. The race should be interesting to say the least.

Melissa Fox is Not Seeking Reelection to the Council

Councilwoman Melissa Fox is not seeking reelection to the council in November. That is because she won the Democrat nomination for State Assembly where she is seeking to unseat former Irvine Mayor and now-state assemblyman Steven Choi.

When first elected to the council, Fox was a virtual unknown in Irvine politics. But she was devoted to an intense regimen of door knocking and meeting with Irvine residents. She also started her own blog which provide a platform for constant commentary of political issues as well as a means to communicate with constituents.

At Least One New Member Will Join the City Council After the Election

At least one new face will be elected to the Irvine City Council this fall. That is because Fox has decided not run for reelection. But it is also possible that the council could elect two or even three new faces this election season. That is because if Councilwoman Khan wins the mayor's race, her seat would automatically go to the third-place finisher in the council election according to Irvine city rules. And, if Councilman Carroll were not successful in his bid for election to the council, the city dais have another new member.

We will be following the city elections very closely in the pages of Irvine Weekly as well as our website IrvineWeekly.com.



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COURTESY CITY OF IRVINE

WATCH OUT FOR MISINFORMATION ABOUT IRVINE'S VETERANS CEMETERY

BY: IRVINE WEEKLY EDITORIAL BOARD

For Irvine residents who pay close attention to local politics, they know that the proposed veteran's cemetery has been a political hot potato for some time now. Sadly, veterans have been used by some to create a political wedge issue to gain leverage, or even power, in local Irvine politics. It is sad that some forces in our community would attempt to use veterans like this.

As voters, to be forewarned is to be forearmed. If any candidate sends you campaign literature for or against a potential veteran's cemetery, view it with a careful and skeptical eye.

We advise that because the veteran's cemetery

issue in Irvine is essentially settled. And the only reason to use it in campaign purposes is to try and use veterans for political gain. It is gross. It is wrong. And we should not tolerate it from people running to represent us on the Irvine City Council.

Irvine has a tremendous American military history. Upon the entry of the United States into World War II in the aftermath of the 1941 Pearl Harbor strike, sprawling lima bean fields in Irvine were selected by the United States military as an important and strategic site for the United States Marine. In August of 1942 construction began to convert the previously agricultural land to the El Toro Marine Corps air station.

When the base was officially closed in 1999 that is when the politics around its future uses started and have been going one ever since. For years political fights broke out over whether to turn El Toro into an international airport or a park. At one point the site was approved as an airport then later that decision was overturned by voters and it was approved to be a park. Now it is the site of the Orange County Great Park.

In recent years, the debate has been over whether the site should also have space for a veteran's cemetery. Few people in Irvine politics disagree with having a cemetery for servicemen and servicewomen in the city, but the debate has been over where. But some political players have tried to assert inaccurately that their political opponents are trying to block a cemetery altogether. But that is not the case.

It has been a long and complicated road for the El Toro Marine base, but its future is bright, and residents should rest assured that there will be a memorial to our veterans here. Do not let politicians running for office try and exploit the issue any further or use our veterans as political props.

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ORANGE COUNTY BARBERSHOPS AND SALONS TO REOPEN

INDOOR OPERATIONS TO RESUME WITH MODIFICATIONS.

BY: EVAN J. LANCASTER

As of Monday, Aug. 31, barbershops and salons in Orange County finally have approval to return to work indoors, after Governor Gavin Newsom's announcement for "A Blueprint for a Safer Economy" on Friday, Aug. 28.

Per the announcement, indoor shopping malls are now able to reopen, with reduced capacity. However, mall food courts will remain closed.

In a Facebook post Monday, the Orange County

Health Care Agency gave more details on reopening protocol across Orange County.

"As of today (Monday, August 31), hair salons and barbershops can open indoors with modifications. Shopping malls also can open at a maximum capacity of 25%. Common areas and food courts must remain closed. For more information and to find out the status of other industries, visit covid19.ca.gov/safer-economy/"

Under California's new color-coded tiers for

COVID-19 monitoring, Barbershops and salons – in Orange County – can reopen with modifications set forth by the state department of health.

While modifications are in place, the reopening guidelines for barbershops and salons issued by the California Department of Health remain unchanged from a July 29 update.

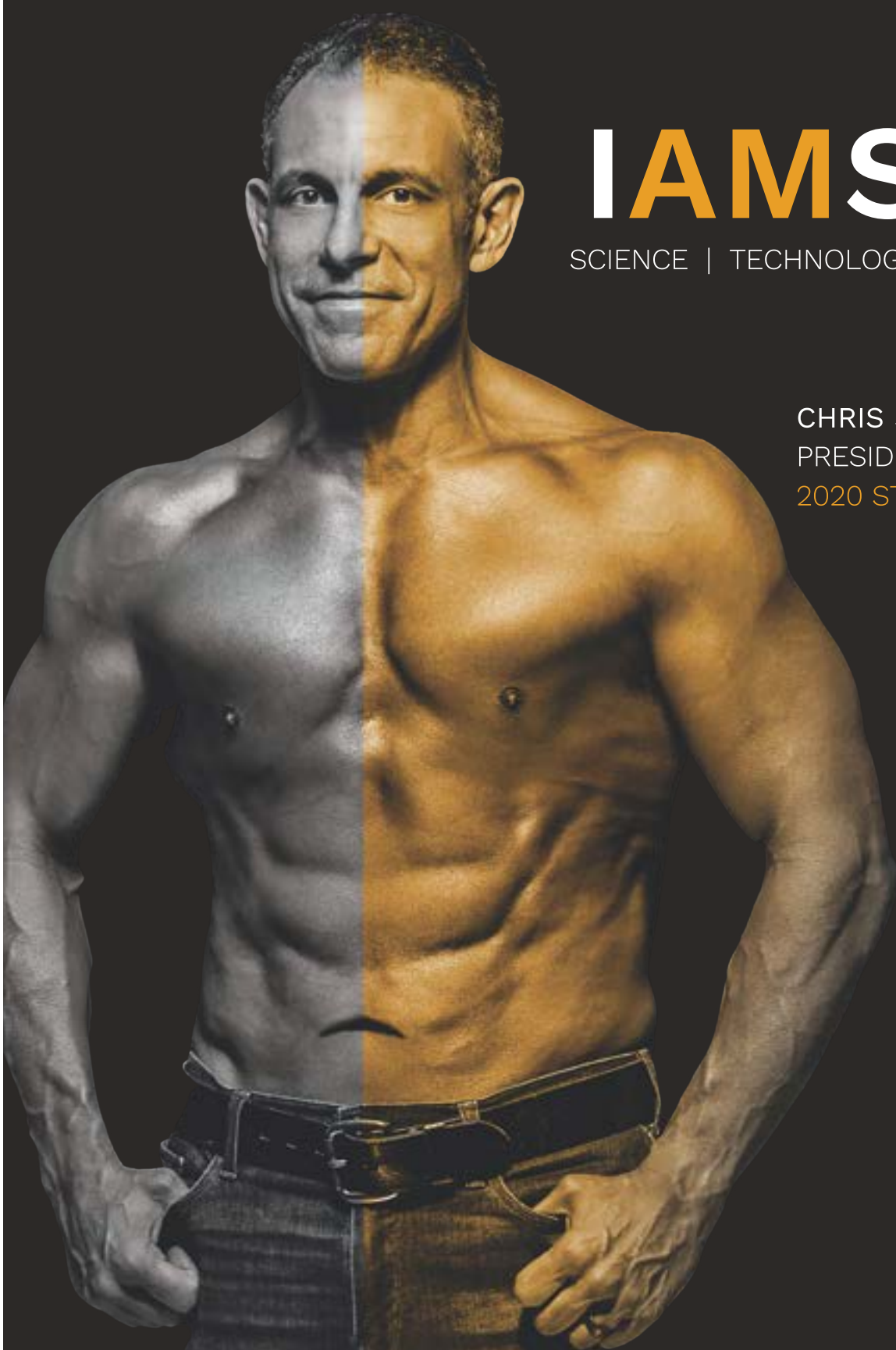
Barbershops around the Irvine area began sharing reopening messages on social media Monday.

Under the new system, barbershops and hair salons statewide will be allowed to reopen their indoor operations with certain modifications, however, L.A. County opposed those permissions.

L.A. Public Health said, "Since County orders may be more restrictive than State guidance, all current restrictions remain in place until @lapublichealth and the @LACountyBOS have an opportunity to review the suggested guidance from the State and take actions that are appropriate for our County."

On Monday Aug. 31, the Orange County reported 94 new COVID-19 cases, with one new death. There are currently 317 people hospitalized, with 98 in the ICU.

Orange County is currently in the "Widespread" category, which is the highest level of the state's new four-level tiered system.



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ARTS



A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S ZOOM

UCI TRANSFORMS A SHAKESPEAREAN CLASSIC.

BY: EVAN J. LANCASTER

Despite a cancelled 2020 season, students at UCI's New Swan Shakespeare Center took to the virtual stage to perform "A Midsummer Night's Zoom."

While the performance of "A Midsummer Night's Zoom" was different from what cast members were used to, two UCI faculty members used this performance as an experiment to prove that the pandemic will not slow down future productions.

Eli Simon, chancellor's professor of drama and artistic director of the New Swan Shakespeare Festival, and Julia Lupton, professor of English and director of "A Midsummer Night's Zoom," spoke about why they chose to adapt one of Shakespeare's most well-known stories.

"We chose 'Midsummer' because we wanted to offer the campus and community a magical Shakespearean masterpiece during these stressful times," Simon says. "In essence, we have changed many of our beloved ways of living because of restrictions that have been put in place to preserve our wellbeing. In much the same way, the

lovers in 'Midsummer' have been told how they must behave and whom they are permitted to love. The restraints and isolations the characters suffer, represented in Zoom, reflect the feelings that we've all experienced being trapped by this pandemic. Once the characters find their way to the forest, they are released from the need to distance, and as our heroes find the freedom inherent in nature, they mature, express feelings and find the love they need and deserve."

While the cast did not meet in person this year, Lupton explained that the use of technology was much different from what the audience expected – in terms of Zoom performances.

"We're making the most of the technology that's available to us, and it's a lot of fun," Simon says. "If you've ever watched theater events online where performers are just sitting there speaking lines into the camera, rest assured, this [was] nothing like that."

All performances were free and enjoyed by many. We can't wait to see what's next!



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GREAT PARK BALLOON MASKS UP

**OC ICON ENCOURAGES
PUBLIC SAFETY WITH
FRIENDLY UPGRADE.**

BY: EVAN J. LANCASTER

The Orange County Great Park Balloon got a pandemic-friendly upgrade thanks to Irvine-based FivePoint Holdings.

The Great Park Balloon, one of Orange County's most well-known attractions, now serves as a reminder to residents of the importance of slowing the spread of COVID-19 in Irvine.

In order to do so, the Great Park, along with the city of Irvine and FivePoint Holdings - which sponsors the Great Park Balloon - transformed the iconic fixture into a giant emoji wearing sunglasses and a face mask.

Even though the Great Park Balloon is closed to the public, FivePoint hopes this initiative will serve as a metaphor - as the face mask-sporting emoji will also be socially-distancing from the skies.

"The emoji serves as a friendly reminder to wear facial coverings as a first line of defense toward protecting our own personal health and safety and others," said Lynn Jochim, Chief Operating Officer at FivePoint.

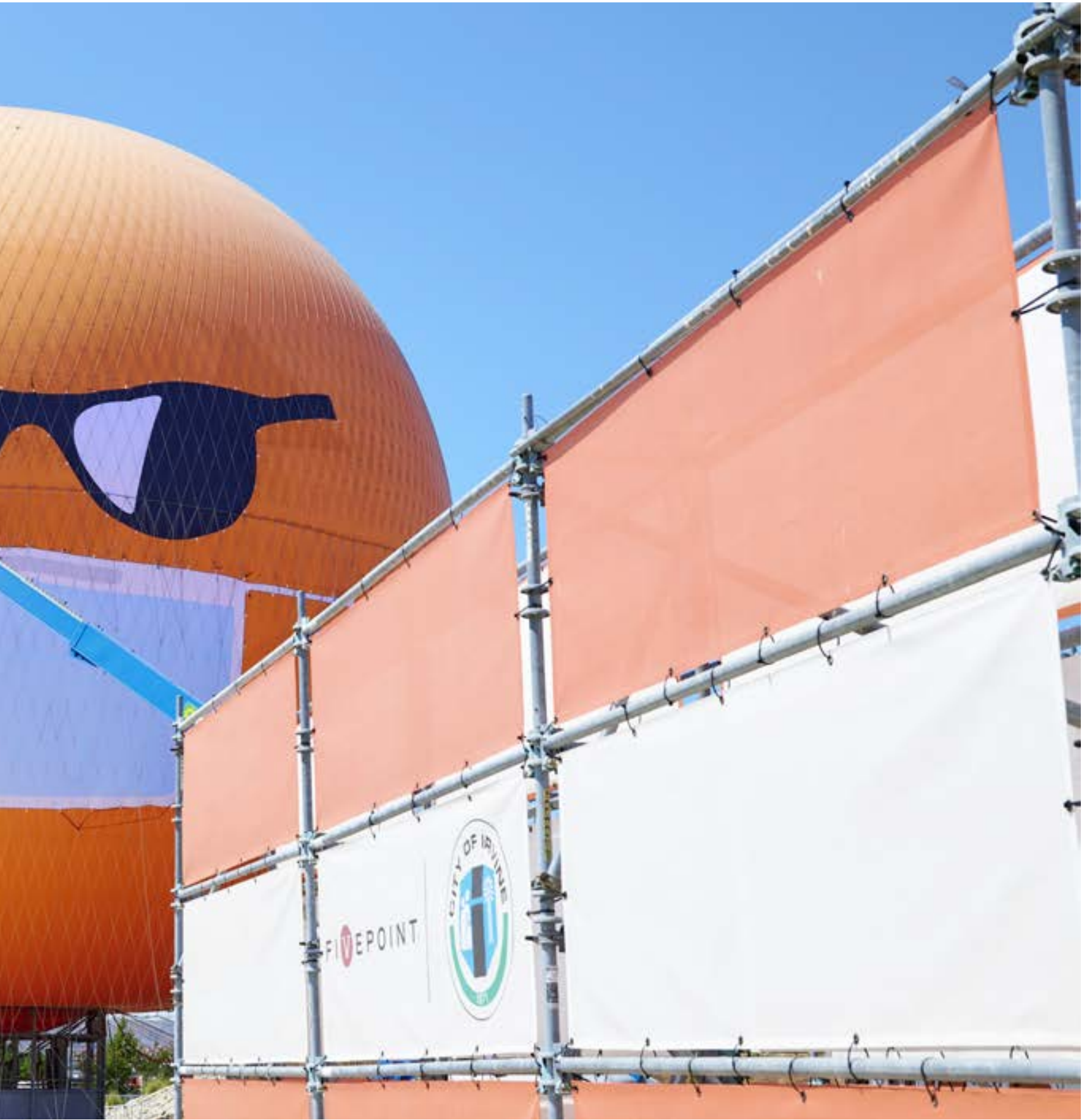
Throughout the statewide lockdown, FivePoint has remained dedicated to delivering much-needed PPE to first responders and essential workers in Irvine and beyond.

FivePoint was among the first companies locally to pivot and acquire more than 100,000 face masks for health care workers, law enforcement personnel and others.

On July 27, the City of Irvine and FivePoint issued a joint news release detailing a new donation of 1 million face masks that will be provided to healthcare workers, law enforcement personnel and distributed throughout the community to slow the spread of COVID-19.

The balloon will fly weekdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. It will also fly Saturdays and Sundays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. to 10 p.m., weather permitting.





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CORINA RAINER/UNSPLASH

SEPTEMBER SHOWTIMES FOR DRIVE-IN MOVIES

HERE'S WHAT'S SHOWING IN IRVINE.

BY: EVAN J. LANCASTER

While the public is still dealing with various stages of lockdown across Orange County, drive-in movies around Irvine have kept residents entertained through all the uncertainty.

With movie theaters and most family entertainment largely on hold for the time being, drive-in entertainment around Irvine - at the Irvine Spectrum and the Orange County Great Park - has become a welcome trend for people to gather with social distancing in place, and are on pace to continue through October.

Irvine Mayor Christina Shea delivered the news in her Mayor's Corner address via an IGTV video on Instagram.

Irvine Summer Drive-In Series at the OC Great Park

Here's what showing next at the Great Park's Summer Drive-In Series:

Saturday, September 12: Onward

Saturday, September 19: Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone

Gates to the Irvine Summer Drive-In Series at the OC Great Park will open at 6:00 p.m., with the movies beginning approximately 7:15 p.m.

Guests are allowed to bring food from home or purchase food on site from gourmet food trucks. Registration is now open for the city-sponsored drive-in at the Orange County Great Park, to reserve tickets visit www.cityofirvine.org/specialevents.

Irvine Spectrum Center Live Comedy Drive-In

The Irvine Spectrum has also converted the rooftop of one of its parking structures into a drive-in comedy venue. Tickets can be purchased on the Irvine Spectrum's Events and Promotions page.

Doors to the Regal Parking Deck venue open at 6:00 p.m., and live comedy begins at 8:00 p.m. Face masks

are required when outside of the vehicle.

Here's how the September bill is shaping up:

Saturday, September 12: Hot Nights, Cool Comics

Saturday, September 19: Craig Robinson

Saturday, September 26: Joel McHale

Saturday, October 3: Hot Nights, Cool Comics

All shows will be hosted by Monty Franklin.

Ticket prices range from \$125 - \$150 per vehicle. All attendees must be 18+ years old. The audio for the comedy shows is broadcast through a professional-grade FM transmitter (radio), so make sure you have a good sound system in your vehicle. If you do not have an FM transmitter in your car, you can bring a battery-operated stereo with speakers to hear the comedy show.

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eDot sold goes towards breaking the cycle of child abuse. eDot is working to improve the lives of thousands with just one sip, and with each bottle you drink you are a part of this worthy cause.

Currently, eDot is sold in 500ml bottles, donating a percentage of every bottle purchased to Olive Crest's mission to end child abuse.

With the new year comes exciting new products, including hibiscus-infused water debuting this spring. For every premium 350ml glass bottle sold, eDot will contribute a percentage to Olive Crest. And for every liter sold, eDot will double its donation.

eDot's commitment to health and wellness extends beyond the body and into the lives of those that need it most. Together, eDot and Olive Crest are working to keep the most vulnerable members of society safe and end the cycle of child abuse in our communities. eDot's cause marketing water is helping Olive Crest to transform and strengthen families, improving the wellbeing of thousands of children.

For almost 50 years, Olive Crest has been serving children and families in crisis. Through the support of their partners like eDot, Olive Crest provides assistance for 4,000 children and families every day. By providing safe and loving homes, the

organization sets kids on a course to a positive and healthy future. Every bottle of eDot alkaline water sold allows Olive Crest to continue to make a difference. Community-conscience consumers like you are helping to build strong families and safe kids.

eDot Water: Better Water, Better Body - Better Water, Better You.

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530 W Olive Ave
Redlands, Ca 92835

W Cafe & Restaurant
16205 Sand Canyon Ave,
Suite 110
Irvine, CA 92618

Javatinis - Fullerton
1950 Sunny Crest Dr, Ste 1000
Fullerton, CA 92835

Kona Loa Coffee - Irvine
2750 Alton Pkwy, Ste 141
Irvine, CA 92606

The Coffee Cup
220 Malden Ave
Fullerton, CA 92832

Molinos Coffee
3660 Mission Inn Ave
Riverside, CA 92501

Lily & Leo's Boutique Cafe
1950 Sunny Crest Dr
Fullerton, CA 92835

Sheraton Cerritos Hotel
12725 Center Ct Dr S
Cerritos, CA 90703

Fashion Island Hotel
690 Newport Center Dr
Newport Beach, CA 92660



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FOOD



COURTESY DAVE'S HOT CHICKEN

DAVE'S HOT CHICKEN IS COMING TO IRVINE

AND THEY PROMISE TO BRING THE HEAT!

BY: EVAN J. LANCASTER

As the Nashville Hot Chicken craze continues, it looks like Dave's Hot Chicken will be burning its memory into the mouths of Irvine residents very soon.

On Tuesday, Aug. 25, the popular Nashville hot chicken pop-up, credited for bringing the super spicy chicken trend to the West Coast, signed a new partnership with two sisters, Mariam and Angela El Haj, who have a long history of business and real estate investing in Orange County.

Dave's Hot Chicken specializes in hot chicken tenders and sliders, with spice levels ranging from "No Spice" to "Reaper."

The El Haj family owns several national chain restaurants, including an IHOP on Harbor Blvd., and now have their sights set on bringing a half-dozen restaurant concepts into the Irvine area.

With 200 locations across the nation, and more than 145,000 followers on Instagram, it's safe to say everyone is hungry for Dave's heat.

Additionally, Shannon Swenson, vice president of franchise development at Dave's Hot Chicken, explained that the El Haj's saw Irvine, Orange and Tustin as ideal areas to bring the Dave's Hot Chicken experience into.

"Mariam and Angela are exactly the type of operating partners that we are looking to grow alongside. As a cultural fit, we are confident that they will create the same energy and experience in Irvine, Orange and Tustin that we aim to produce in each restaurant," she said. "Their ties to the area and experience in the restaurant industry made this deal a no-brainer. We are thrilled to continue growing."

Founded in 2017 by Chef Dave Kopushyan, DHC was originally operated as a parking lot pop-up by Kopushyan and a group of friends.

Since then, the brand has exploded in popularity and now has multiple brick-and-mortar locations open in Southern California.



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- Jim and Carol Hoffman



COURTESY OF ROADHOUSE

ROADHOUSE EXPLODES THE CHARTS

THE FIRST-EVER DJ DUO TO SIGN WITH A NASHVILLE RECORD LABEL.

If you're looking for music that'll make you smile, we'd like to introduce you to RoadHouse. As the first DJ duo to be signed to a Nashville record label, they're kind of a big deal.

In fact, you likely already know them. Successful DJs in their own right, DJ IKON and Dee Jay Silver have joined forces to bring us the ultimate good-time shit show.

"That's our intro. Welcome to the shit show: ROADHOUSE," laughs Dee Jay Silver in an exclusive interview with *L.A. Weekly*. "If it makes one person that was not having a good time smile, then I feel like we did our job."

"RoadHouse will be known for always throwing a party, having a good time, and always pushing the boundaries of music. Our music is full of collaborations

and musical features. You never know who's gonna show up at a RoadHouse show," he says, promising to always surprise us.

The newest members of BBR Music Group, RoadHouse is feeling the love with all the support and positivity coming their way.

"The whole BBR team has been family to me for a while," Silver tells us. "Really means a lot that they would take a chance on us and this project! BBR isn't afraid to take chances and they really believe in us!"

When he's not spinning at festivals and shows across the country, Dee Jay Silver is working at his residency at Hakkasan in Vegas or as country legend Jason Aldean's DJ (partnering with the star since 2009). He has become a

top-touring DJ, producer and performer – playing to every major market in North America.

DJ IKON's work has been recognized with several industry awards over the years, including Remix Club DJ of the Year, Las Vegas Top 30 Under 30, and Bar and Nightclub DJ of the Year (twice!). He also enjoys Las Vegas residencies, including Hakkasan.

Despite their successes, 2020 has proven difficult for the two, as, like most artists, they are desperately missing live shows.

"There's nothing better in the world than playing a song and 28,000 people put their hands up," reminisces Silver. "Knowing that you touched that many people. You share a moment, and that's nothing you're going to be able to recre-

ate inside a studio."

"It's rough, it's not fun for me, it's not fun for IKON. Sitting there playing music by yourself," he laments. "It's fun to play music, but after awhile you're just like 'this sucks.'"

Sponsored by Monster Energy Music, Silver recently finished a six-week online residency, playing Facebook and Instagram live every Friday. IKON has also been keeping busy, with countless streaming shows.

The online loophole to restricted performing isn't all it's cracked up to be, however, as each platform is plagued with their own issues.

"It's just so hard for us because they've cranked down so much on restrictions – always bumping us off for copyrights," sighs Silver.

"Yeah, it got so hard with the music," agrees IKON. "Every time you get kicked offline everybody has to log back on – it just becomes a real hassle. The whole streaming thing for DJs is kind of a nightmare because there isn't a platform specifically designed for us to livestream. Even Twitch now is kicking people off. And that was like everybody's kind of go-to for the last month, and now that's become something you can't use anymore. It's kind of a tough situation."

"I don't mean this in a bad way, but I feel like those record labels and artists should be begging us to play their music," argues Silver. "Because it's the only way of reaching people right now."

However, that still wouldn't be a solution to streaming issues. "Even my records, that I produced and wrote, were getting flagged and getting kicked off!" exclaims IKON.

With their new record label by their side, they were slated to debut RoadHouse in a big way, playing shows and festivals throughout the year. While they've been able to celebrate their signing by releasing a remix of LOCASH's hit, "One Big Country Song," COVID has definitely interfered with their plans. Is there any chance of being able to make one or two shows this year?

"Nah, we're done," mourns Silver. "Coachella, Stagecoach, they're all gone."

"It was a gut punch when it got moved back then cancelled," says IKON.

"You saw it coming but you just didn't want to believe it," continues Silver. "Something as iconic as Stagecoach and Coachella ... it's not just a Southern California thing. For a lot of artists that's their goal."

Hopefully the outcome for 2021 is different, but the artists are weary and cautious after the disappointments of 2020.

"[Signing RoadHouse] is something that's been about a year in the making," explains Silver. "To backtrack a little bit, I walked into BBR and sat down with Jon Loba, the EVP of BBR Music Group, and he was like 'I love the idea of RoadHouse, let's do this.' But then the international phenomena of Blanco Brown hit. So I was like 'let's let Blanco Brown cool down a bit then we'll get RoadHouse in.' Finally, once we were all set up and ready to go with RoadHouse – we had this whole strategic push laid out – COVID hit."

Not ones to be anything but positive,

RoadHouse took the hit in stride and happily pivoted strategies.

"So I've taken the time – Aaron (IKON) and I both have taken time – to finish our album. We want to come out with a push. We put out our first remix introducing who we are with "One Big Country Song" with LOCASH and it's the number one song in the country right now," says Silver.

"So we've just taken this time, we've got an EP coming out in September with all original music," he continues. "We dreamed it up with some of the best writers in Nashville, some of the biggest artists, some friends of mine. We can't wait to show it to you."

The EP is slated to drop on Silver's birthday, September 21st – also known in Vegas as Dee Jay Silver Day. (No joke, look it up.)

While they top the country charts, RoadHouse is adamant that they are genre-less; offering something for everyone, regardless of musical preference.

"I just think people are doing themselves a disservice if they say 'I am this' or 'I just listen to one type of music,'" highlights Silver. "I feel bad for people that won't give another form of music a shot, because they're missing out on a lifetime of memories."

"That's what our sets are like," interjects IKON when Silver brings up memories lasting a lifetime. "You know every word to every song, you're singing every word to every song, and every song touches you in that way that brings back a memory. Two hours into the set you're like 'oh my god I don't want this to end! That was so much fun!'"

For RoadHouse, their sets are a lot more than just good tunes.

"For us, music is positivity, music is love, music is energy," expresses Silver. "That's all we want to do: have fun, put positive vibes out there, and make big, loud, good music. We want to do fairs, festivals, we want to do the Stagecoaches of the world, but we also want to do Hakkasans of the world. We also want to do ELLEVEN in Miami, or The Grand Boston and then go back to play The Wharf in Orange Beach or the Staples Center in L.A. We just want to bring the party everywhere we go!"

When asked about their hopes for 2021 touring, RoadHouse is quick to reply: "We want everyone to walk out with a smile on their face and a hang-over in the morning."

After the horrors of 2020, I think we'd all love to take them up on that offer.

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