



MEMORANDUM

**TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
ANTON DAHLERBRUCH, CITY MANAGER**

FROM: JACQUELYNE CAMPBELL

DATE: DECEMBER 01, 2017

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES NOVEMBER 25, 2017 TO DECEMBER 01, 2017

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Tbrnews.com	“Tribes of Palos Verdes” film loosely based on Lunada Bay Boys	11/30/17
Nytimes.com	Review: Strong Performances Anchor “The Tribes of Palos Verdes”	11/30/17

Petition seeks Prop. 13 expansion for seniors, disabled

By Jeff Collins

PUBLISHED: November 27, 2017

An overhaul of Proposition 13, California's landmark tax-control measure, could go before state voters next year under a plan adopted last month by the California Association of Realtors.

The trade group is launching a signature drive to put a new proposition on the November 2018 ballot that would expand tax breaks for homeowners age 55 and older or those who are disabled.

If passed, the proposition would allow senior and disabled homeowners to transfer their low, existing Prop. 13 tax assessment to a new home anywhere in the state, using the option as often as they choose and paying any price for their new home.

Realtors say the provisions would help older owners "locked in their homes" because they're reluctant to give up low Prop. 13 tax assessments when buying a new residence. Realtors maintain at least 70 percent of seniors haven't moved in 17 years.

"It's to make it easier for senior homeowners who want to move but don't want to see a big tax bill," said CAR President Steve White, owner of two Keller Williams brokerages in north Los Angeles County.

"Many homeowners who have seen their homes appreciate over the years are discouraged from moving because they face a big property tax increase," White added. "This will allow senior homeowners to sell their existing home and blend their current tax rate with their new home. And it will free up their homes for other buyers who haven't been able ... to get into the housing market."

A nonpartisan state analysis concurred that the proposal would boost home sales in the state, but it might cost local governments as much as \$2 billion a year in lost revenue — a finding Realtors dispute.

HOW PROPOSITION 13 OVERHAUL WOULD WORK

Transfers already in place

Eleven California counties — including Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura — have voted to let senior and disabled homeowners move their existing Proposition 13 property tax assessment across their borders under the current law.

Blended tax assessments

Under current law, homeowners who are 55 and older or who are disabled can keep their lower Prop. 13 property tax assessment when buying a new home of equal or lesser value than their prior home.

The California Association of Realtors' proposed ballot initiative would also allow them to apply their old property tax assessment to a new home that's more expensive than the old one. The new assessment would be a blend of the old and new assessments, combining the old assessment up to the sale price of the old home with an additional assessment for the amount paid

over that price on the new home.

If the new home is less expensive than the old one, the assessment would be adjusted downward in proportion to the amount saved.

Here's how it would work:

- More expensive: Say a couple owned a home for 30 years and its current assessed value is \$75,000, meaning they pay \$750 in annual property taxes. They sell the home for \$600,000 and buy a new one for \$700,000. Their new tax assessment would be \$75,000 plus \$100,000 (the difference between the old home's sales price and the new home's sales price). Their new property tax would be \$1,750.

- Less expensive: Say the same couple sold their old home for \$600,000, then paid \$500,000 for a condo. Since the condo's price is 83 percent of the old home's sales price, the new assessment would be 83 percent of the old, or \$62,500. Their new property tax would be \$625.

Source: California Legislative Analyst's Office

California's city and county government associations have opposed similar proposals in the past, and the chief lobbyist for the California State Association of Counties argued the CAR proposal would blow a hole in city, county and school budgets.

Under Prop. 13, a home's taxable value is set to market prices every time it sells. But future tax hikes are capped at 2 percent a year after that, even when home price gains are in the double digits.

New ballot measures adopted in the 1980s — Props. 60 and 90 — gave homeowners 55 and older and those who are disabled a one-time opportunity to move without facing a tax increase. They can transfer their existing tax assessment to a new principal residence so long as it's in the same county or in one of 11 counties that opted to accept "intercounty" transfers.

The new home also has to be of equal or lesser value than the old one.

Under the Realtor proposition, there would be no limit on how many times senior and disabled homeowners could transfer their old assessment. They could take that assessment to any of California's 58 counties. And the new home could be more expensive than the old one.

If the price of the new home is higher than the previous one, the new assessment would be a blend of the old and new assessments, combining the old assessment

with an additional assessment for the amount paid over that price for the new home. (See related box.)

If the new home is less expensive, the new assessment would be lower.

Four similar measures — two of them sponsored by CAR — have been introduced in the California Legislature since 2008, but all of them failed to pass. “They have opposed this, so we’re taking it to the voters,” White said.

The trade group plans to gather 1 million signatures by the March 26 deadline — 415,000 more than required just to be safe, said Alex Creel, CAR chief lobbyist. White said CAR is preparing to spend \$20 million to \$50 million on the ballot campaign.

White and Creel scoffed at the notion CAR is seeking to boost sales to increase Realtor commissions. The proposition is projected to increase sales by about 40,000 a year, which is “not an incentive,” given that CAR has more than 190,000 members and house sales alone already are projected to reach 422,000 this year, Creel said.

“Suggesting this is a Realtor full-employment act is like suggesting Tesla builds cars just to make money. They’re responding to a need,” White said. “Our members are responding to the need of senior homeowners for property tax bill protection.”

The Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association, which originally backed Proposition 13, long has supported tax-base “portability” for seniors, said David Wolfe, the group’s legislative director.

“We’re completely in favor of the concept,” Wolfe said. “The simple fact is you’re churning up the housing market by making it easier for families to move out of their starter homes and giving millennials a chance to buy those starter homes.”

The nonpartisan Legislative Analyst’s Office agreed the Realtor proposition would boost home sales “by as much as tens of thousands per year.”

But the agency also concluded it would decrease property taxes by \$300 million a year in the first years, and further decrease it by \$2 billion a year over the long term. Currently, property taxes generate nearly \$60 billion a year.

White, CAR’s president, said the Legislative Analyst’s assessment fails to take into account revenue from additional transactions or from increased tax assessments on the homes seniors would sell.

“Our own analysis shows this would be a net gain in tax revenues,” White said. “When people buy homes, they buy new cars, they buy furniture, they put in pools and new carpet. All those things that generate activity and sales tax.”

Since state law guarantees school and community college funding levels; a drop in property tax revenue could trigger an increase in state school spending, the legislative analyst reported.

“It’s not a simple tax benefit. It affects communities,” said Dorothy Johnson, a lobbyist for the California State Association of Counties. “CSAC is very concerned this proposal will reduce revenue that provides police, fire, social services and other criminal justice services.”

Johnson believes counties need to retain the authority to choose whether to accept lower property taxes from outside their borders since they know their local market conditions best. Almost 30 counties have voted against intercounty tax-assessment transfers in the past 29 years, Johnson said.

“I think that really speaks for the need for local jurisdictions to make the determination,” she said.

Palos Verdes High School student pleads not guilty in South Los Angeles gang-linked murder

By Carlos Granda

Wednesday, November 29, 2017

LOS ANGELES (KABC) --

Palos Verdes High School student Cameron Terrell, 18, pleaded not guilty Wednesday to a gang-related killing in South Los Angeles.

His attorney, Jovan Blacknell, issued a statement which said in part, "Today was Cameron's arraignment. He entered a plea of not guilty and denied all special allegations."

Investigators say the shooting occurred on Oct. 1. According to police, 21-year-old Justin Holmes was gunned down on 78th street near Western Avenue.

Investigators say Holmes was not in a gang.

Terrell was arrested Oct. 12 along with two juveniles, who are also facing charges.

Investigators allege the two juveniles asked Holmes where he was from and then shot him. They believe Terrell was the driver of the getaway car.

The criminal complaint against Terrell includes an allegation that the crimes were committed "for the benefit of or in association with a criminal street gang."

"Both the prosecution and defense need time to go through all the evidence," Terrell's attorney said. "As of right now, it is clear that Cameron didn't shoot anyone. He didn't have any weapon. He was not part of any conspiracy to commit this crime."

Sex Offender Faces Judge Today For 1980 Palos Verdes Murder

DNA evidence linked the registered offender to a long-unsolved killing that happened in Palos Verdes Estates more than 37 years ago.

By PATCH SOCAL, Patch Staff | Nov 29, 2017



PALOS VERDES, CA – A registered sex offender will face a judge Wednesday to determine whether there is sufficient evidence for him to proceed to trial. Robert Yniguez was charged with capital murder for the alleged killing of pregnant newlywed Teresa Broudreux, 20, who was found dead on a beach in Palos Verdes Estates in 1980. Broudreux, from Wilmington, was also the mother of a four-year-old girl when she was murdered.

DNA evidence linked a registered sex offender to a long-unsolved killing that happened in Palos Verdes Estates more than 37 years ago, the Los Angeles County sheriff announced. Yniguez was arrested near his home in the San Pedro area in connection with the March 1980 killing.

The construction worker, who is married and has a family, was convicted in 1982 of a sexual assault in the South Bay area and served about eight years of a 12-year

prison term, according to sheriff's Homicide Bureau Detective Ralph Hernandez.

Yniguez also had been arrested in February 1981 in connection with another sexual assault, but that case was eventually dropped due to a lack of cooperation from the alleged victim, Hernandez said. He said investigators believe the 1981 attack had a "very similar modus operandi as to what we believe happened" to Broudreux, who was found bleeding from the head in the early morning hours of March 4, 1980, after Palos Verdes Estates police responded to a call of a female lying on the beach.

Investigators do not believe Yniguez and Broudreux knew each other.

"We can't actually say if a sexual assault occurred," Hernandez told reporters, but added, "I believe the possible motive to be sexual assault."

The woman's husband, Ronnie Fematt, told reporters that he had "been waiting a long time for this day."

"I'm just glad this day came," he said, thanking his family for believing in him and the sheriff's investigators for their work on the case.

Investigators determined that the woman had had an argument with her husband the night before, walked to her sister's home and was never seen alive again after leaving her sister's residence, McDonnell said.

A "series of coincidences" and new DNA technology "produced an unexpected break in the case," McDonnell said.

"Often these cases wait for a powerful combination of a detective who never gives up, a witness with a guilty conscience or a suspect with a self-serving interest, or

in this case new DNA technology," he said. "The murder of Teresa Broudreux went unsolved for more than 37 years until now."

DNA testing in 2013 linked Yniguez to the crime scene, according to Hernandez, who said it was the oldest murder case he had investigated.

The detective – who described Yniguez as being "upset" at the time of his arrest – said he had been interviewed twice and "knew that at some point we would be seeking criminal charges with the District Attorney's Office."

Yniguez is being held in lieu of \$2 million bail and is expected to make his first court appearance in the case Monday in a Torrance courtroom. He is expected to be charged with one count of murder.

In Northern California, Tina Faelz, a freshman at Foothill High School, was killed with 44 stab wounds when on her way home from school on the afternoon of April 5, 1984. Her body was found in a drainage ditch. The case was cold for more than two decades, but in 2011, authorities announced that DNA investigations begun in 2007 linked a spot of blood found on Faelz's purse, which was found hanging from a tree at the homicide scene, to Carlson. Carlson, who then had a criminal record that included convictions for drug crimes and a lewd act on a 13-year-old girl, was arrested and charged with the murder. He was tried as an adult. and convicted.

Some L.A. County cities scored highest in U.S. for ‘well being’ while others scored among lowest in new study



A new report from the Social Science Research Council shows broad disparities in the well-being of resident across Los Angeles County.

By KEVIN SMITH | San Gabriel Valley Tribune
PUBLISHED: November 29, 2017

A new report measuring the well-being of residents in Los Angeles County found broad disparities between the county’s richest and poorest areas, with some of the most impoverished neighborhoods across the region showing a lack of access to education and shortened lifespans on par with poverty-stricken areas of the South and mid-Atlantic.

The report by Measure of America, a project by the New York-based Social Science Research Council, found that some L.A. County residents enjoyed the highest levels of well-being in the country, while others showed some of the worst.

The study used the American Human Development (HD) Index — a standardized metric combining health, education and earnings data — to devise a 10-point scale to measure the well-being of the region and its 106 communities and unincorporated areas.

L.A. County's overall score was 5.43 out of 10. That's higher than the nation's overall ranking of 5.17, but it masked the differences between many of the county's cities.

San Marino, Manhattan Beach, and Palos Verdes Estates each scored over 9.3 on the index, for example, while Lennox, East Rancho Dominguez and Florence-Graham all scored lower than 2.7.

According to that measure, some of the worst scoring areas face challenges akin to those found in impoverished areas of Appalachia and the Mississippi Delta.

Kristen Lewis, co-director of Measure of America and co-author of the study, said the report provides an overview of the region that goes beyond economics. She said while measures like GDP can show how the economy is doing, using the American HD Index is a more accurate reflection of how Americans themselves are doing.

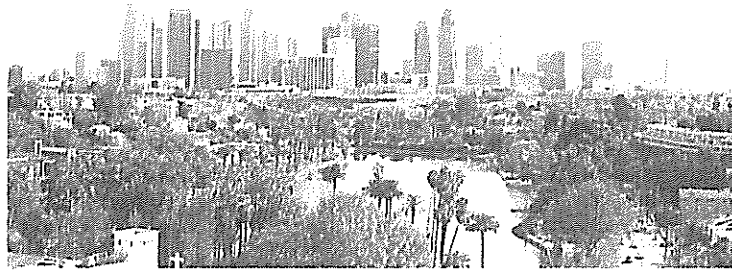
In a statement, Lewis said using that measure offers “a nuanced perspective on opportunity and well-being.”

The study was developed in collaboration with county departments and Southern California Grantmakers, a regional association for philanthropists and grantmakers working to improve communities.

New Report Shows LA County Has Highest and Lowest Levels of Wealth in US

By City News Service

Nov 29, 2017



A report released Wednesday shows that some groups of Los Angeles County residents boast the highest levels of well-being in the United States, while others have some of the lowest.

"A Portrait of Los Angeles County," commissioned by county Office of Child Protection, reveals findings based on a formula that combines data on income, health and education.

"The Portrait provides us with critical information about the well-being of communities that is greatly needed to effectively target prevention supports to the families who need them most," said Michael Nash, executive director of the office.

On the 10-point Human Development Index scale, the highest- and lowest-scoring communities are separated by seven points. In L.A. County, San

Marino, Manhattan Beach, and Palos Verdes Estates top the list, all scoring over 9.3 on the index. Lennox, East Rancho Dominguez, and Florence-Graham each score lower than 2.7.

Within the city of Los Angeles, the gap is even larger. Bel Air-Beverly Crest and Brentwood-Pacific Palisades are on top with scores of 9.51 and 9.24, respectively. Southeast L.A. is at the bottom with 2.26.

The HD Index is a composite statistic of life expectancy, education and per capita income indicators, which are used to rank areas into four tiers of human development.

"The county has been prioritizing data collection and analysis to enable us to make smarter decisions to support the well-being of our 10 million residents," said county Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas. "This report provides us with a portrait that can begin to immediately inform county decision-making."

Supervisor Sheila Kuehl said the report offers an understanding of how income, health and education intersect "to contribute to whether you and your community experience well-being or live at a great disadvantage."

"We knew there were grave disparities across the county, but now we have a more reliable way of geographically pinpointing the areas of greatest need," she said.

New Study Reveals Sharp Contrasts in County Income and Quality of Life

By Howard Fine

Wednesday, November 29, 2017

A new study released Wednesday shows huge disparities in income and quality of life in L.A. County.

The report, part of the Measure of America series from the Social Science Research Council of Brooklyn, N.Y., combines health, education and earnings data into a single score on a 10-point scale across 106 cities and unincorporated areas as well as 35 community plan areas within the city of Los Angeles. It also breaks down the data by race and gender.

The report ranked San Marino as receiving the highest score in Los Angeles County, a 9.43 on the 10-point scale, followed by Manhattan Beach at 9.34 and Palos Verdes Estates at 9.30. The unincorporated community of Florence Graham between South L.A. and Huntington Park received the lowest score of 2.44, with East Rancho Dominguez at 2.59 and Lennox at 2.63 faring only slightly better.

L.A. County's overall score was 5.43 out of 10, which was higher than the U.S. value of 5.17.

Within the city of Los Angeles, the Bel Air-Beverly Crest community plan area in the Santa Monica Mountains received the highest score of 9.51, while Southeast Los Angeles – stretching from just south of downtown to Watts – received the lowest score of 2.26.

“A Portrait of Los Angeles County is designed not only to measure well-being and reveal critical gaps in opportunity, but also to provide a base to inform future policies and programs and to assess progress moving forward,” said Sarah Burd-Sharps, co-director of Measure of America and co-author of the report, in a statement.

The report also looked at earnings data. The median personal earnings in L.A. County was \$30,654, slightly less than the U.S. median of \$31,416. Palos Verdes Estate had the highest median personal earnings of \$82,813, while Westwood had the lowest at \$16,044, thanks to the large UCLA student population there.

Whites earned the most, with median earnings of \$47,600, with Asians next at \$38,000. Latinos earned the least, with median earnings of \$22,600. By gender, the report found men earned more than women across every racial and ethnic group, with white women earning \$15,000 less per year than white males.

In other measures, the report ranked L.A. County's education index score at 4.96 on the 10-point scale, slightly below the national average of 5.11, with one in five adult Angelenos lacking a high-school diploma. Additionally, average life expectancy in the county was 82.1 years, nearly three years longer than the national average and on a par with France and Israel.

Where to see Santa float in Lomita, Rancho Palos Verdes and Rolling Hills Estates, 2017

By STAFF REPORT |
PUBLISHED: November 29, 2017

Santa Claus is coming to the streets of Lomita, Rancho Palos Verdes, Rolling Hills Estates and nearby unincorporated county areas starting with a tree-lighting ceremony at 5:30 p.m. Friday. Santa will guide his sleigh through city streets from 5:30-9 p.m. beginning the same night and finishing Dec. 18.

Dates below designated with an asterisk will start at 5:15 p.m.

The visits are sponsored by and coordinated through the Lomita sheriff's station and Green Hills Memorial Park. Children of all ages are encouraged to come out, chat with Santa and get a candy cane. A sheriff's patrol car will precede Santa's sleigh announcing his arrival. Look for "Santa Stops Here" signs along the route.

Here's Santa's schedule, weather permitting:

Dec. 1: Lomita — Tree lighting in front of City Hall, 24300 Narbonne Ave.

Dec. 4*: Lomita — Area of Oak Street and Woodward and Narbonne avenues.

Dec. 5*: Lomita — Pennsylvania Avenue, Saddlevue Road, Esther View Road area.

Dec. 6: County area of La Rambla near San Pedro, roughly bounded by Seventh, First and Meyler streets and Harbor View Avenue.

Dec. 7: County areas of Academy Hills and Westfield; Rolling Hills Estates on Larga Vista Drive and in the Montecillo tract.

Dec. 8: Rancho Palos Verdes — Dodson Area (Peninsula Verde Drive, Montereina Drive, Avenida Aprenda, Pontevedra Drive, Toscanini Drive).

Dec. 11: Rancho Palos Verdes — Caddington and Strathmore areas.

Dec. 12*: Lomita — Walnut Street from Pacific Coast Highway to the Torrance border.

Dec. 13*: Lomita — Harbor Hills, Lomita Pines area along streets surrounding the south end of Eshelman Avenue south of Pacific Coast Highway.

Dec. 14*: Lomita — Viana Avenue, Cypress Street, Feijoa Avenue.

Dec. 15: Rancho Palos Verdes — Crestwood Area (Jaybrook Drive, McArthur Street).

Dec. 16: Rancho Palos Verdes — Seaview area (Schooner, Exultant and Admirable drives), Forrestal area (Sea Raven and Phantom drives, etc.), Mira Catalina area (Calle Aventura and Tarapaca Road)

Dec. 18: Rain make-up date

PALOS VERDES ESTATES

PV senior pleads not guilty to murder

Superior Court Judge ordered Terrell to return to court Jan. 9, when evidence will be presented

From Staff and news service reports

An 18-year-old Palos Verdes High School student who was freed from jail on \$5 million bail and returned to classes — sparking outrage among some parents — pleaded not guilty Wednesday to his alleged role in a gang-related killing in South Los Angeles.

Cameron Terrell, who is identified in the criminal complaint with the moniker “White Boy,” appeared in a downtown Los Angeles courtroom, where he entered his plea to one count of murder and two counts of attempted murder. Prosecutors also allege that the crimes were committed “for the benefit of, at the direction of, or in association with a criminal street gang.” Although Terrell is a white Palos Verdes Estates resident, he allegedly became a member of a predominantly black South Los Angeles street gang.

Superior Court Judge Mark Hanasono ordered Terrell to return to court Jan. 9, when a date is scheduled to be set for a preliminary hearing, where prosecutors will present some of the evidence against Terrell in connection with the crime. After spending a week in jail following his Oct. 12 arrest, Terrell was freed on bail.

Police said Terrell drove the car involved in the Oct. 1 shooting death of Justin Holmes, 21, who was gunned down at 78th Street near Western Avenue. Two juveniles also were arrested and charged with murder. Police said the pair allegedly approached Holmes and two other victims on the sidewalk and opened fire, striking Holmes.

Following his release from jail, Terrell returned to class, prompting an outcry from some parents who called him a danger to other students. About a half-dozen parents gathered at the school Nov. 13 to demand that he be suspended from classes.

That day, Palos Verdes Unified School District Superintendent Don Austin said Terrell's parents, media consulting firm President Donald Wayne Terrell and interior designer Debra Terrell, agreed to pull their son from the campus to educate him at home.



Cameron Terrell, 18, a Palos Verdes High student, was arrested in the Oct. 1 shooting death of Justin Alongino Holmes.

City council looking at making cuts to PVEPD

By VALERIE OSIER

November 30, 2017

Palos Verdes Estates has hired multiple consultants to find out where they can recover costs and save money in the wake of the parcel tax voters failed to renew earlier this year.

The city is facing a large budget deficit since the parcel tax previously brought in roughly \$5 million, funding the city's contract with the Los Angeles Fire Department.

Now eyeing new ways to make up the difference, the city is looking at increasing their current schedule of fees for services they provide and ways they can cut costs in the police department.

Raising fees to recover costs

The Palos Verdes Estates City Council voted on Tuesday to create an Ad Hoc committee to examine the fees the city charges users for different services. The objective: to recover as much of their costs as possible.

The committee, made up of Mayor Pro Tempore Betty Lin Peterson and Councilmember Jennifer King, will examine each of the 200 fees in the schedule and decide how much to increase each fee in order to recover costs to the city.

The city hired a contractor, Terry Madsen from Clear Source Financial Consulting, to do a thorough study of all the fees the city charges users, like building and planning fees. The contractor presented the council with scenarios for the 80, 90 and 100 percent cost recovery increases.

“In light of the city's fiscal situation, we wanted to give you some options for, if you wanted to, adjust fees to increase,” Madsen said in the meeting.

He explained that the cost of service was determined by multiplying the value of one hour of the staff member's time by the amount of time it takes. The goal is to

recover most of the costs that the city incurs from providing services to its residents.

“The cost of service doesn’t change depending on whether you decide to recover those costs from fees or not,” he said.

The city is currently only recovering a total of 64 percent of costs for services related to building, planning, community planning, public works and police, according to Madsen’s report. This means that the general fund is subsidizing an estimated \$560,000 in services that could be paid for by fees.

He said that an 80 percent cost recovery would result in approximately \$222,000 recovered, while a 100 percent cost recovery would net \$524,000.

He recommended that not all services be raised to a 100 percent cost recovery because it has the possibility of decreasing compliance and collaboration with the city. The council also acknowledged that some fees may need to be increased in phases.

Cuts in the police department

The council also voted on several cost-saving measures in the PVEPD, but held off on voting on the two biggest costs: the police chief position and the city jail.

The council on Tuesday voted unanimously to eliminate two service officers and one patrol officer positions, eliminate the training and personnel sergeant and assign those duties to one service officer, and reduce their contract with the Santa Monica Rangers by \$25,000.

This was the third time the council took recommendations on potential changes within the police department. The city staff produced a report for the council a week after Michael McCrary of Lewis-McCrary Partners presented his commissioned report to the council.

The reports differed: McCrary’s recommendations would save the city more than \$760,000, while the city staff disagreed with the way he reached that number.

Staff on Tuesday pointed to several potential budget reductions that would total \$661,000 in savings, which is not quite the 10 percent reduction the council was aiming for.

The cuts include the concept of eliminating a sworn captain position in favor of a civilian manager, eliminating two service officer positions and the training and personnel sergeants, among other reductions.

The report also recommended the council eliminate the parking enforcement officer which would actually cost the city \$9,063 annually because it's a revenue-producing position. City Manager Tony Dahlerbruch said that while the effect is negative right now, over time the position could incur more costs, like raises in health insurance and pension, than the revenue it brings in. The council voted to not follow this recommendation.

Councilman Sandy Davidson brought into question the city staff's significant deviation from the McCrery report's recommendations, including not eliminating two city jail positions.

"So you hired a consultant that you don't trust?" Davidson asked Dahlerbruch in the meeting.

Dahlerbruch said that he did trust the McCrery report, but he knows the consultant did not have accurate numbers because he didn't review them with the finance department.

The recommendations already implemented from the McCrery report include the city implementing a "team approach," with a Sergeant, Corporal and two officers on each team, removing the canine unit and adding two motorcycle officers 7 days a week.

The council tabled the decision to either hire a police chief or make it a civilian manager position until its Jan. 11 meeting.

City council votes to allow fence between home, parklands

By VALERIE OSIER

November 30, 2017

Good fences don't always make good neighbors.

A dispute between neighbors over a fence possibly blocking ocean views led to an hour-long discussion in the Palos Verdes Estates City Council meeting Tuesday night.

New homeowners at a property on Via Segovia and Paseo Del Mar wanted to put up a wrought iron fence with a hedge in their backyard that backs into a public parkland bluff on Paseo Del Mar.

The owners, Jeffrey and Roberta Coppersmith, wanted the fence and hedge for privacy and security, but their neighbors across the street, Scott and Sue Kidman, say it will block theirs and the public's view of the ocean. The Kidmans say their issue is primarily with the height of the proposed 6½-foot fence and that it's to be at the very edge of the Coppersmiths property.

“Our position has never been that the applicant shouldn't get some fence or hedge, the question has always been: where and how high,” said Scott Kidman.

The Kidmans proposed that the fence and hedge be placed 2 feet back from the edge of the property, “the least visible part of the property.”

But, that would force the Coppersmiths to basically give up a portion of their own property to the public, they say.

The Coppersmiths submitted two applications for this fence: a Coastal Development Permit application was submitted because the home is located within the Coastal Zone, and a Miscellaneous Application was submitted because any fences within 20 feet of a public right of way that are higher than 3½-feet require review by the Planning Commission.

The Planning Commission had approved the fence and hedge in October, but the Kidmans appealed the decision to city council.

The Coppersmiths say that the ocean view wasn't always there.

Before the Coppersmiths bought the home, there was a barrier between the backyard and the parklands: a hedge of "unauthorized encroachment of vegetation" into the parklands. The city ordered the hedge to be removed and the Parklands Committee recommended the approval of native landscaping up to 18 inches high, which the city council later denied in May.

"(For) 51 years ... you could barely see the roof of our house and there was zero view of the ocean through the bushes," said Jeffrey Coppersmith at the meeting.

A member of the public stepped forward at the meeting to confirm that.

"As you scan, your eyes can't help but to land in their windows, not that you want them to go there, but as you look to your left, you look into their home," said Craig Ellis, a daily user of the parkland. "As a lover of the natural parklands, I will say that when that foliage was removed ... I think it was a benefit to have there."

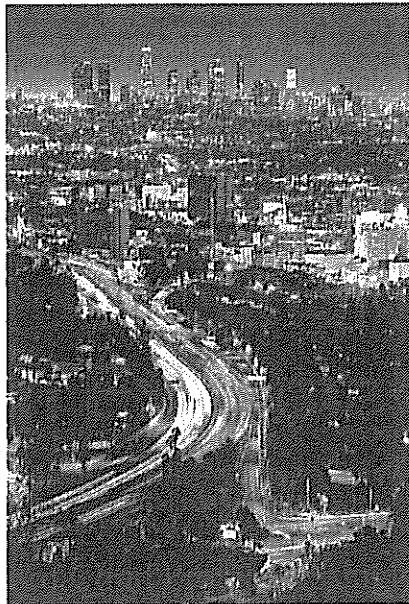
He went on to say that he is in favor of as much of a block between the home and parklands as possible.

After Ellis' statement, the city council ultimately approved the fence, suggesting that the Kidmans and Coppersmiths try to work something out without having to go through litigation.

Palos Verdes Singled Out In Report On Extreme Income Disparity

A report by the Office of Child Protection singles out Palos Verdes to compare the highest and lowest levels of well-being in LA.

By SoCal Patch, Patch Staff | Nov 30, 2017



LOS ANGELES, CA — A report released Wednesday shows that some groups of Los Angeles County residents boast the highest levels of well-being in the United States, while others have some of the lowest.

"A Portrait of Los Angeles County," commissioned by county Office of Child Protection, reveals findings based on a formula that combines data on income, health and education.

"The Portrait provides us with critical information about the well-being of communities that is greatly needed to effectively target prevention supports to the families who need them most," said Michael Nash, executive director of the office.

On the 10-point Human Development Index scale, the highest- and lowest- scoring communities are separated by seven points. In L.A. County, San Marino, Manhattan Beach, and Palos Verdes Estates top the list, all scoring over 9.3 on the index. Lennox, East Rancho Dominguez, and Florence-Graham each score lower than 2.7.

Within the city of Los Angeles, the gap is even larger. Bel Air- Beverly Crest and Brentwood-Pacific Palisades are on top with scores of 9.51 and 9.24, respectively. Southeast L.A. is at the bottom with 2.26.

The HD Index is a composite statistic of life expectancy, education and per capita income indicators, which are used to rank areas into four tiers of human development.

"The county has been prioritizing data collection and analysis to enable us to make smarter decisions to support the well-being of our 10 million residents," said county Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas. "This report provides us with a portrait that can begin to immediately inform county decision-making."

Supervisor Sheila Kuehl said the report offers an understanding of how income, health and education intersect "to contribute to whether you and your community experience well-being or live at a great disadvantage."

"We knew there were grave disparities across the county, but now we have a more reliable way of geographically pinpointing the areas of greatest need," she said.

ROLLING HILLS ESTATES

Residents plead for coyote population control

By Donna Littlejohn

Wrapping up what was nearly a four-hour discussion on coyotes, Rolling Hills Estates City Council members agreed this week to hold a community-wide workshop early in 2018 and signaled a willingness to step up aggressive, team hazing and more trapping as part of the city's existing coyote management plan. The discussion followed several speakers who expressed frustration over coyotes entering their fenced yards and killing beloved pets.

"It was on (a) Christmas day that our dog, a Westie, was eaten in our backyard," Jim Gardner told council members. "My wife was devastated. There was only a little loop of bowel left."

Council members and several coyote experts stressed the need for a collaborative, regional effort involving as many residents as possible in finding a solution, urging patience among community members.

"We know it's important, we're not taking it lightly," said Mayor Frank Zerunyan. "We're with you... We're just not going to solve it tomorrow. The council asked for more follow-up information on the feasibility of allowing trapping on public properties. Trapping is restricted now to private property only.

The council also indicated a willingness to consider changing the city's current policy on trapping being used as a last resort to being used more rapidly and proactively in problem or "hot spot" neighborhoods.

Zerunyan said the idea of forming trained citizen hazing teams also might be tried moving forward.

"I like the idea of volunteer groups that would go to these hot spots and scare the hell out of some of these coyotes," he said.

Growing concern

Tuesday night's marathon meeting reflected what's become a growing concern and frustration on the Palos Verdes Peninsula — as well as the South Bay, Long Beach, Harbor Area and Orange County — on how to manage what seems to be the growing population of so-called "urban" coyotes.

Once found only in rural areas, coyotes have been adapting to city and suburban life during the past 20 years, moving into heavily populated areas where they've found an abundance of food, shelter and other resources.

It's also a trend that has caused the wild animals to become increasingly habituated to people and living in close proximity to family homes, making them potentially more dangerous. Cities on the Palos Verdes Peninsula and in the South Bay are banding together to search for more effective regional approaches. Peninsula resident Cindy Martin, who has lost both a cat and a medium-size dog in her fenced yard to coyotes, was among several speakers who urged the city to do more, arguing that hazing merely moves the animals to other neighborhoods. "Don't tell me that shooting coyotes and eliminating (some) every year will not reduce their numbers," she said. "All we're doing is chasing them from city to city. ... This whole situation is so ridiculous. I grew up on a farm and this is not the way it works."

Dave Dodge, who heads up the state Department of Fish and Wildlife's Wildlife Watch program, said hazing has been successful but it requires strong community buy-in and education. He's conducting a hazing workshop at 3 p.m. Friday for the city of Rolling Hills Estates.

"Nobody wants to lift a finger," said Tony Trutanich of Rolling Hills Estates, who has offered to help residents deploy motion lights and other tools to deter coyotes from their yards. "Maybe it's time to get neighbors together."

Tall fencing is not foolproof, experts have said. A coyote can easily scale 6- or even 8-foot fences or tunnel under yard barriers. Gardner spent \$10,000 on new fencing but acknowledged he can only hope it's sufficient.

'I become a crazy woman'

Cat Spidell of Rolling Hills Estates told the council she's been "coyote free" for two years after employing yard deterrents, including coyote fence rollers and aviary netting to protect the animals she rescues and keeps outdoors.

She's also an active hazer.

"When I hear them (the coyotes) howling I become a crazy woman, I run out of the house and yell at them," she said.

If coyotes already are habituated, however, they become more resistant to hazing. And then, Dodge said, that coyote "can become a public safety issue.

That's one that's got to be watched."

Attorney Daniel Schuch said the city has been negligent in "allowing coyotes to plant themselves" in local neighborhoods. "It's imperative that we do something about this," he said.

Coyotes not going away

Council members said the issue isn't going to be solved quickly or by government alone.

Dodge, who said Rolling Hills Estates is one of the more proactive cities in that it allows for the trapping and euthanizing of aggressive coyotes, said the best hazing tools include canes, walking sticks, umbrellas, air horns, whistles and cans with coins.

"But the best tool is your body," he said, advising residents to "look big," scream and — very importantly — to not let up until the coyote leaves the area. Resident Sue Morgan, however, said the effects of hazing have worn off on the coyotes that have followed her and her three dogs when they walk near the Chandler Preserve and golf course early in the mornings.

"I don't know what to do," she said. "They don't care if you're 'big' or if you run after them or throw rocks at them anymore. I have three big dogs but it doesn't make any difference. The coyotes are just getting bolder and bolder. What do we do?"

Matt Whitcomb, who moved to Rolling Hills Estates with his family from Boston a year ago, said he has had a large coyote coming into his backyard, about 6 feet from his house, on several occasions. He's worried about his two dogs and two cats after seeing a coyote try to carry off a large peacock from his yard one afternoon.

"If anybody can tell me what to do right now, I'd appreciate it, so my cats and dogs don't get eaten in the next few days," he said.

Population numbers unknown

It is not known how many coyotes live in Southern California, said UC Cooperative Extension researcher Niahm Quinn, who answered questions for council members after giving a presentation.

"It's hard to know, I won't lie to you, we have no idea how many coyotes there are in Southern California," she said. "It's something we're working on and trying to figure out. Are there more than ever? Probably, but we don't know."

An online tracking form has been created for residents to use to report coyote sightings. That and other information can be found by going to the Rolling Hills Estates page and looking under Public Safety and Coyotes.

To report coyote sightings on the Peninsula:

- Rancho Palos Verdes: 310-544-5299
- Palos Verdes Estates: 310-378-4211
- Rolling Hills Estates: 310- 377-1577



Governor Brown, with Nothing to Lose, Defies Unions on Pensions

POSTED BY : CALMATTERSNOVEMBER 30, 2017

By Dan Walters.

“Freedom’s just another word for nothin’ left to lose,” singer-songwriter Kris Kristofferson philosophized in his classic blues song, “Me and Bobby McGee,” a half-century ago.

Kristofferson’s tune would be an apt anthem for Gov. Jerry Brown as he winds down his own half-century-long career in politics – especially so since Kristofferson once campaigned for him.

Unless something very unusual happens, Brown will never face voters again. Therefore, with nothing politically to lose, he has the freedom to do whatever he wants.

Brown emitted a very strong clue to his unfettered status last week when he filed a brief with the state Supreme Court in a case affecting public employee pensions, in effect asking the justices to make it easier for state and local governments to reduce benefits.

Brown is supporting appellate court rulings that upheld two provisions of the modest pension reform bill he and the Legislature enacted in 2012, one ending “pension spiking” and the other repealing the ability of public employees to purchase additional retirement credits called “airtime.” However, Brown appears to go even further, suggesting that the court set aside, or at least severely modify, the so-called “California rule.”

That rule, based on a 1955 state Supreme Court decision, is an assumption that public employee pension benefits, once granted, can never be modified, even for future work.

It is a bedrock issue for public employee unions and the union-controlled California Public Employees Retirement System, as demonstrated when they successfully pressured bankrupt cities not to reduce pension obligations, even though a federal bankruptcy judge said they could do so.

Not surprisingly, any Democratic politician who questions the rule’s legal validity or financial sustainability risks union wrath.

It explains why former Attorney General (now U.S. Senator) Kamala Harris and her successor, Brown appointee Xavier Becerra, have been reluctant to buck the unions by vigorously defending Brown’s pension reform and why the governor, with nothing to lose, decided to do it himself.

A key phrase in one of the appellate court rulings, reinterpreting the 1955 Supreme Court decision, frames the issue that the Supreme Court must decide.

“While a public employee does have a ‘vested right’ to a pension,” Associate Justice James Richman wrote, “that right is only to a ‘reasonable’ pension’ – not an immutable entitlement to the most optimal formula of calculating the pension.”

Were the Supreme Court to agree with Brown and uphold the appellate court rulings that seemingly repeal the California rule, it would be a huge setback for the unions – and a black eye for the local unions that opened the legal door by challenging the pension reform’s abolition of much-abused pension spiking and airtime.

A “reasonable pension” ruling would also be an avenue for local governments, which are now struggling to pay fast-rising “contributions” to CalPERS, to reduce

the bite by guaranteeing current benefits for work already performed but reducing them for future work.

Conversely, were the Supreme Court to defy Brown and overturn the appellate courts, the California rule would be enshrined, even mild reforms would be thwarted and the state's unsustainable pension system could either become insolvent itself or force many local governments into bankruptcy.

Obviously, these are big stakes.

South Bay Community Calendar 11-30-17

November 30, 2017

Santa has sailed back into town and can be found all over the South Bay between now and Christmas. This week you can catch him at Torrance Memorial's Holiday Festival, Riviera Village Holiday Stroll, the Hermosa Beach Tree Lighting ceremony and Alpine Village. He may even have brought his surfboard with him so keep an eye out; he could be anywhere!

Thursday, November 30

Tree fest

Torrance Memorial Medical Center 34th annual holiday fundraiser features more than 36 themed, decorated trees, live entertainment, a huge holiday boutique, opportunity drawing, children's activities and food court. \$5 general admission. General Public hours 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Torrance Memorial Medical Center, 3330 Lomita Blvd., Torrance.

Call (310) 517-4606 or visit TorranceMemorial.org/holiday festival for more information.

Riviera Village Stroll

Enjoy a parade featuring marching bands from local schools and hug that jolly guy in the red suit, Santa Claus, at the corner of Catalina and Avenue I. 5 – 9 p.m. Free. Over 300 boutiques offer unique gift idea for discerning shoppers with lights, decorations and festive music for your along the avenues, which are closed to street traffic. For questions call Ellen at (310) 251-5914 or visit rivieravillage.org.

Friday, December 1

Tea by the Sea

The 61st annual Yule Tea by the Sea, accompanied by the popular shops of vintage antiques and memorabilia, Bake Shop with homemade pastries and candies wrapped for gift giving, and the Yule Crafts for sale, homemade arts created by loving hands. View the treasured hand painted ceilings and walls of the Mediterranean architecture, and treasured art work of the Neighborhood Church. 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. \$25 each guest for one day; \$30 if purchased the day of event. The Neighborhood Church, 415 Paseo del Mar, Palos Verdes Estates.

Holiday Homes Tour

Celebrate the season with Sandpipers and tour distinctive South Bay homes

exquisitely decorated for the holidays. The weekend also includes a Holiday Market with unique artisans and Cafés featuring local dining fare. 2515/2521 Valley Drive, Hermosa Beach. Through December 3, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Pre-sale \$30/Door \$35. Open to the public is a Rooftop Happy Hour with panoramic views on Sunday, December 3 from 12 – 5 p.m. 200 Pier Avenue, Hermosa Beach. Free Shuttle. For tickets visit sandpipers.org.

Holiday open house

The El Segundo Chamber of Commerce Holiday Open House. Enjoy refreshments, raffles, prizes, music and more while indulging in a little holiday shopping at participating retailers throughout the downtown area. 5 – 8 p.m. Downtown El Segundo in and around Main Street and Grand Avenue. For additional information visit elsegundochamber.com/events-and-news or (310) 322-1220.

Saturday, December 2

Get certified

First Aid/CPR/AED training with 2 year certificate. No charge to residents and employees of Manhattan, Hermosa and Redondo Beach. Outside of the beach cities is \$55 each. Limited to 30 participants each class. Arrive at least 20 minutes before to get settled in. Class will start on time. 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. Joslyn Center, 1601 North Valley Drive, Manhattan Beach. You must pre-enroll to be assured a seat in class. Start by sending an email to Jeanne: 1certraining@gmail.com with your full name, phone, email and home address.

In memory of Randy

Randy Ruby's Memorial Paddle Out. 9 – 11 a.m. Memorial service on the beach from 9 a.m., with the paddle out to follow at 10 a.m. Torrance Beach.

Book sale

Categories include children's, teen's, art, cooking, history, biography, garden, decorating, craft, self-help, science, travel, classic as well as text books. Prices start at 50 cents with most priced at \$1. 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. Manhattan Beach Library, 1320 Highland Ave., Manhattan Beach. For additional information call the help desk at (424) 241-0532 or email MBFOL90266@gmail.com.

Resin par-tay

Resin Hermosa Beach Artist Collective Art of Winter Party. New work as well as affordable original art: this year, be original, buy original. Free. 4 – 9 p.m. 618 Cypress Ave., Hermosa Beach. RSVP at facebook.com/events/378712725914900/?active_tab=about.

Full moon hike

Explore nocturnal sights with an expert naturalist under a full moon at the George F Canyon Nature Preserve. Must be age 9 and up. \$12 per person. 5 p.m. 27305

Palos Verdes Dr. E., Rolling Hills Estates. RSVP required at pvplc.org, Events & Activities. (310) 541-7613 for further information.

Sunday, December 3

Lunch with Santa

Lunch plus face painting, crafts, clowns and photos with Santa (bring your camera). Price includes a ticket to Torrance Memorial's Holiday Festival. Shop the South Bay's largest holiday boutique, Children's Marketplace and Senior's Marketplace for one-of-a-kind stocking stuffer items under \$5. 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. Torrance Memorial Medical Center, Richard B. Hoffman, M.D., Health Conference Center, 3315 Medical Center Drive, Torrance. \$15 per person (minors must be supervised by a paid adult). (310) 517- 4728 or TorranceMemorial.org/holidayfestival to purchase tickets or for more information.

Nikolaus Day

Celebrate the season with Alpine Village's Nikolaus Day noon to 6 p.m. Goodie bags for the first 200 kids, face painting, kids Christmas karaoke, pictures with St. Nikolaus 3-5 p.m., plus holiday gift vendors, specialty stores and traditional German Christmas goodies like stollen, bratwurst and cookies. 833 W. Torrance Blvd., Torrance. (310) 327-4384.

Art show

6th Annual Friends of Mychal's Art Show features original art works by individuals with developmental disabilities across the Los Angeles area. 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. Free admission. All are welcome. Mychal's Learning Place, 4901 W. Rosecrans Ave., Hawthorne. (310) 297-9333 or mychals.org for additional information.

Mini-Train Rides

Southern California Live Steamers provides mini-train rides every first Sunday of the month from 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. Donations are appreciated. noon – 4 p.m. Wilson Park, 2200 Crenshaw Blvd., Torrance. Check them out on Facebook facebook.com/SoCalLiveSteam/.

Turn the switch

Hermosa Beach holiday tree lighting, live music performances, Santa's Holiday Village, Carousel and more. 3 – 8 p.m. Downtown Hermosa Beach, at Pier and Hermosa avenues. hbchamber.net.

Monday, December 4

Active transportation

Beach Cities Health District (BCHD) Interactive Community Workshop with Blue Zones Project's Dan Burden, one of TIME's six most important civic innovators in the world. Residents participate in hands-on activities and share ideas about the

things they care most about in the design of their streets and neighborhoods. 6 – 7:30 p.m. Joslyn Community Center, 1601 North Valley Drive, Manhattan Beach. For additional information and to register, visit bchdevents.bchd.org/event/streets-all-community-workshop.

Tuesday, December 5

Parent and child workshop

Join a morning of fun and learning with your babies and toddlers. Talk to experts on early childhood literacy, development, and health while your child learns through play and art. For ages 0-3 years and their caregivers. Registration required. Call Kay Wantuch at (310) 379-8475 or email: kwantuch@library.lacounty.gov. Hermosa Beach Library, 550 Pier Ave.

YOUNG ENGINEERS GEAR UP FOR LOCAL VEX ROBOTICS CHALLENGE IN PALOS VERDES ESTATES

Dec 2nd | Students Showcase STEM Skills with Custom-Built Robots at Palos Verdes High School

Palos Verdes Estates, CA – December 2, 2017 – More than 300 middle school and high school VEX Challenge students and mentors from around Southern California will unite at the Palos Verdes High School VEX Tournament, co-hosted by The Palos Verdes Institute of Technology (PVIT) and Rolling Robots of Rolling Hills Estates, CA, on Saturday, December 2, 2017 for the VEX Challenge In the Zone tournament. The action-packed event will feature more than 30 teams who will collaborate with other schools in a series of back-to-back robot challenges. Participants strive to succeed by strategically executing the VEX game In the Zone, with robots they designed, built, and programmed completely by the students using VEX Robotics hardware.

PVIT is the award-winning engineering program at Palos Verdes High School. The program encourages students to explore engineering as a way to strengthen problem-solving skills and to have fun in a student-centered, collaborative environment. Over 150 students on fifteen different engineering competition teams, made possible by the Peninsula Education Foundation and the Palos Verdes High School Boosters Club, are supported by over thirty professional engineering mentors from the community.

This event will take place in the PV High gym, 8:30am – 5:00pm.

Contact: Palos Verdes High School NAME: Lorraine Loh-Norris

PHONE: 310-378-9471 x626

E-MAIL NORRISL@PVPUSD.NET

New movie to show often hidden side of Palos Verdes Peninsula

By VALERIE OSIER pvnews.com

Wednesday, November 22, 2017

The Bay Boys, the drug culture and the affluent nature of the Palos Verdes Peninsula will be on the big screen for the world to see in the new movie, “The Tribes of Palos Verdes.”

The movie is based on a novel of the same name and follows a family of four that moves to the Peninsula from Michigan for a fresh start.

The trailer starts off with beautiful shots of the Peninsula: the ocean, beaches, nice homes and spectacular views. It quickly shows the cracking facade of a perfect-looking family through the eyes of teenager Medina, played by Maika Monroe.

When Medina’s father (Justin Kirk) has an affair, her mother (Jennifer Garner) breaks down and her twin brother (Cody Fern) starts using drugs. Medina turns to surfing to escape her family life and is confronted with an exclusive surf community and the so-called Bay Boys, an alleged gang.

The film alludes to a larger theme on the Peninsula: the lives of the people who live there aren’t always as beautiful as the natural environment of the area, says Southbay therapist Greg Allen, who works with struggling families and youth with his non-profit, Freedom4U.

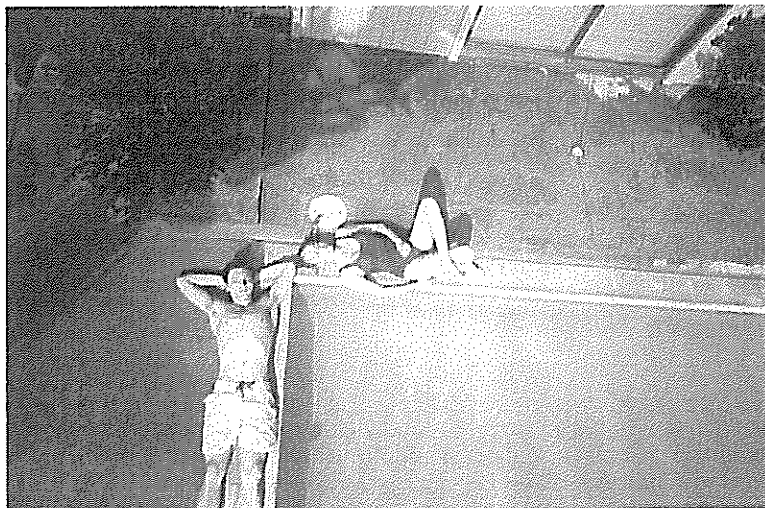
“The reality is that having a higher social economic environment actually leads to more personal problems,” Allen said in an email. “The pressure to succeed and achieve for adults and their kids overwhelms the natural balance of what should happen in the family.”

The film is set to open in theaters and on-demand Dec. 1.

Review: Strong Performances Anchor ‘The Tribes of Palos Verdes’

THE TRIBES OF PALOS VERDES DIRECTED BY BRENDAN MALLOY, EMMETT MALLOY

By TEO BUGBEENOV. 30, 2017



Cody Fern and Maika Monroe in “The Tribes of Palos Verdes,” directed by Emmett and Brendan Malloy.

When Medina Mason (Maika Monroe) begins to tell her family’s story in “The Tribes of Palos Verdes,” they have just made a fresh start in paradise — Palos Verdes, an affluent suburb of Los Angeles. While her mother, Sandy (Jennifer Garner), struggles to adjust to their new neighbors’ plastic smiles, Medina’s father, Phil (Justin Kirk), decides to moves on, leaving Medina and her twin brother, Jim (the newcomer Cody Fern), in their mother’s increasingly unstable care.

Directed by the brothers Brendan and Emmett Malloy, “The Tribes of Palos Verdes” portrays the cultish fixations that can arise within volatile families. As the mother forces the weight of her sadness onto her son, the father pushes his daughter to be his advocate with his estranged wife, and the son projects his anxiety onto his sister. As Medina’s world churns, she takes up surfing, which gives her the only head cool enough to narrate this tale of family dysfunction.

It is the film's great fortune that the Masons are portrayed by an exceptional team of actors, starting with Ms. Monroe, who is the calm eye at the center of the storm. The bellows of this tempest come from Ms. Garner, who ably depicts the demanding neediness of the vulnerable matriarch. Yet the Malloys' filmmaking never rises to the level of the actors' nuanced performances. The actors are energized, but the camera enervates. The colors have been bled from the California sunshine, and the camera alternates wanly between shaky close-ups and indifferent establishing shots. In "The Tribes of Palos Verdes," even the sea seems stifled.

The Tribes of Palos Verdes

- **Directors** Brendan Malloy, Emmett Malloy
- **Writers** Karen Croner, Joy Nicholson (novel)
- **Stars** Maika Monroe, Cody Fern, Jennifer Garner, Justin Kirk, Noah Silver
- **Rating** R
- **Running Time** 1h 44m
- **Genre** Drama
-

'Tribes of Palos Verdes' film loosely based on Lunada Bay Boys

Michael Hixon

Nov 30, 2017

A family struggles to survive a disintegrating marriage after moving to Palos Verdes from the Midwest in the new film “The Tribes of Palos Verdes,” opening in limited release Friday, Dec. 8, in Los Angeles and on VOD Friday, Dec. 1.

The film's back story resembles the saga of the so-called Lunada Bay Boys, a notorious group of surfers accused of using violence and other means to keep outsiders from their surf spots in Palos Verdes.

In the film, 16-year-old Medina (played by Maika Monroe) heads to the waves to cope while her parents (Jennifer Garner, Justin Kirk) face marital strife. Her twin brother Jim (Cody Fern) turns to drugs as he becomes involved with the local surfing clique.

Fern, in his first American feature film, said Jim is a sensitive, life-of-the-party teen, who becomes a tragic character when his family falls apart.

“Today's audiences are more receptive to complicated characters,” said the Australian actor. “People don't want simple good guy, bad guy, black, white ... we understand areas of gray particularly with (the dad's) character. There's a lot of gray. People say he's the villain of the piece, but in a big way he's a man trying to move on with his life, who also happens to have children.”

After his medical practice begins to thrive, Phil Mason (Kirk) copes well with the family's move from Michigan. His wife Sandy (Garner), however, has a tough time fitting into the affluent beach community, putting a strain on the marriage.

“Everyone thinks they are doing their best,” said Kirk, who earned a Golden Globe nomination for his role in “Weeds.” “I know from my character's perspective, he's had a hell of a time with his wife.”

“The Tribes of Palos Verdes” is based on the best-selling novel by Joy Nicholson, who based the story on her own life and move to the town. Excerpts of the novel were published in Surfers Journal when the novel was released in 1998. Karen Croner's adapted screenplay was given to producer Robbie Brenner (“Dallas Buyers Club”) in 2008, who was able to get the film made as “Dallas Buyers Club” hit the awards circuit in 2014.

Fern said his agent initially called him to audition for a small role in the film as one of the Bay Boys. But when he went in, he read for Jim and landed the role.

From the beginning, Fern said they did not feel welcome in Palos Verdes, where it was shot as well as in San Pedro.

“It was very frightening for us to be there at times, there were slashed tires, there was localism,” Fern said.

Kirk added, “They were there. They were aware of our movie ... they would drive by in their cars slowly with their tops down.”

Fern said that in the film Palos Verdes itself has been made into a villain, but he can understand how a community can be distrustful of outsiders.

“This family is a transplant that comes into an area that does not want them there, that is essentially against ex-pats,” Fern said. “I come from a very small country

town and I understand what that process is like when outsiders come in, It can be very frightening for people who live somewhere to have other people come into their home and take over their beaches.”

“The Tribes of Palos Verdes,” which is directed by Emmett Malloy and Brendan Malloy, and also stars Alicia Silverstone, Elisabeth Rohm and Goran Visnjic, opens at the Laemmle Royal in Los Angeles on Friday, Dec. 8.

Jennifer Garner On The Emotional Toll Of Playing A Mother With Mental Illness

ANNE COHEN

NOVEMBER 29, 2017



It's sometimes easy to forget how great of an actress Jennifer Garner is — media portrayals tend to highlight her as the potential friend who would be fun to get brunch with, rather than the next Meryl Streep. This is interesting, given her four Emmy nominations for the wonderful *Alias*, and memorable roles in critical darlings like *Juno* and *Dallas Buyer's Club*. But Garner's performance in *The Tribes of Palos Verdes*, which hits theaters December 1, demands to be noticed and talked about seriously. It's one of the darkest roles you've ever seen her take on; and thanks to her fearless delivery, it really, really works.

Based on the 1997 coming-of-age novel by Joy Nicholson, *Tribes* focuses on teenage Medina (Maika Monroe), who finds solace in surfing as her family unit implodes around her. Garner plays Sandy, Medina and her twin brother Jim's (Cody Fern) mom, whose struggles with mental illness only intensify after her surgeon husband moves the family to the prim and proper community of Palos

Verdes, California. While her kids are out on the ocean, Sandy prowls around the house in her pink robe, cursing the constant barrage of waves crashing into the land below her house. Consumed by her own perceived slights and aggressions, she's blind to her son's descent into dangerous drug-use, instead constantly turning to him for the attention she doesn't receive from her husband.

To prepare for such an emotionally demanding role, Garner had to set some boundaries for herself on set and refrain from the social aspects of the job that she usually enjoys. "On this set, I spoke less to people than I think I ever have in my whole career," she tells Refinery29. "It was all, 'head down, I have to get through it.' And certainly we were all in it together, so it wasn't like it was a me, or an us, vs. them. But it wasn't like, 'Hi, I baked something this morning!'"

Emmett and Brendan Malloy, brothers and co-directors on the film, say they made it a point to give Garner space to navigate the heavier scenes that her character takes on. "Her dressing room was almost like her locker room," Brendan says. "She was in there, almost like a caged animal, pacing, knowing that she was going to go out. We pushed everybody to know that when she comes out, it's on. We're rolling the cameras. We're not going to mess this up."

Though we, as viewers, never find out what form of mental illness Sandy is living with, Garner says she and her directors had several conversations with therapists in order to establish some consistent behaviors. Sandy's paranoia and co-dependence on her son makes her relationship with her daughter extremely volatile, a mix of resentment, jealousy and empathy, that Garner says she was excited to play out on screen.

"I have a mom and I have daughters, and I know how underneath it all, it's just such a full relationship," she said. "That's why I love playing moms in films. There's no relationship that can raise the stakes more quickly than that with your children. And while I hope that my kids and I never end up in any place near this, I do know that I love them enough that if things went awry, I know that it would be more explosive than anything else in my life."

You can see that back and forth in this exclusive clip from the film, which shows Sandy enviously taking in her daughter's looks and desirability while manically cutting herself out of a pair of Spanx.

Sandy's insecurities about her own value as she starts to age are heightened in the Palos Verdes community where women spend their days wearing tennis dresses and eating salads with dressing on the side. As a woman who regularly deals with the pressures put on women's bodies in Hollywood, Garner says she can relate — to a certain extent.

"I've never been a cool girl," she says. "I really like all the cool girls, and I always have. If I'm with them, I won't be uncomfortable, but that's just because they're nice. Women that I know in this town are nice. But I won't not just plop myself into the center of them because that's not how I live in the world. I would be nervous, or embarrassed, or awkward, or shy. And so, I do understand — but you can't even compare the way Sandy looks at the world. She's looking for the hypocrisy, she's looking for the underbelly of the town that she's found herself in. And that's not the way I would look at the world at all."

Like many great things, Garner's performance isn't always easy to watch, but it will stick with you long after the credits roll.

The Tribes of Palos Verdes opens in theaters and will be available on demand on December 1.