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Who's dying in state from COVID?

Victims are getting younger; people of color still more likely to die of disease

Hannah Getahun CalMatters

It's been longer than a year and a half since COVID-19 first arrived in California, and the demographics of who is dying from the virus are changing.

More than 68,000 people have died in California during the pandemic, including nearly 5,000 in Riverside County.

In recent months, those who are dying are younger on average. And, unsurprisingly, people of color are

still among the most devastated by COVID-19, with the highest death rates among Native Hawaiians/Pacific Islanders and Black people.

See DEATHS, Page 6A

Meeting set on La Quinta surf resort proposal

Coral Mountain will be topic of joint study session Tuesday

Sherry Barkas Palm Springs Desert Sun | USA TODAY NETWORK

Plans for a resort community with wave park boasting technology created by world champion pro surfer Kelly Slater will be the topic of a joint La Quinta City Council and Planning Commission study session on Tuesday. The plans have brought loud opposition from nearby residents.

Coral Mountain Resort — with a 150-room hotel, nearly 17-acre private-use wave pool and up to 600 residential units including custom homes — is planned for 386 acres of mostly vacant land on the southwest corner of Avenue 58 and Madison Street.

The land is currently zoned for general commercial, low-density residential and open space-recreation use and was initially approved for a 750-home, low-density residential community with an 18-hole golf course with small neighborhood store.

The project developer, CM Wave Development LLC, is seeking general plan and zoning amendments to allow for the hotel.

See RESORT, Page 5A

Redistricting process for Riverside County supervisorial districts beginning this week

City News Service

The Board of Supervisors will hold its first public hearing on redrawing supervisorial district boundaries in Riverside County on Tuesday and is inviting residents seeking to express their thoughts on the subject to testify.

The redistricting process was delayed five months because of the coronavirus public health lockdowns that hampered the publication of 2020 Census data by federal officials. The board is tasked with completing district redraws by Dec. 15, and Tuesday's meeting will be one of likely only three opportunities for the public to submit opinions in person.

According to census figures, the county grew 10.4% over the last decade, with the population increasing from 2,189,641 in 2010 to 2,418,185 by 2020, a

See REDISTRICTING, Page 7A

A tradition resumes



After being canceled in 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Morongo Thunder & Lightning Powwow returned to Cabazon over the weekend. It was the 30th annual event put on by the Morongo Band of Mission Indians. ● **ABOVE:** Ronald Lodgepole dances as he brings in the eagle staff ahead of the Morongo color guard during the grand entry ceremony on Saturday. The eagle staff serves much like a flag to represent a Native American community and is brought in just before the color guard to symbolize the original ownership of the land. ● **RIGHT:** A Native American dancer in traditional regalia performs. PHOTOS BY ANDY ABEYTA/THE DESERT SUN



See more photos from the ceremony inside on Page 2A.

MORE INSIDE PAGE 3A



iHub streaming radio now Radio111

Radio111's co-founder John McMullen says the new name better reflects the station's Coachella Valley focus. RADIO111

USA TODAY

Enough COVID vax for seniors, kids

With more than 40 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines available, U.S. health authorities said they're confident there will be enough for both older Americans seeking booster shots and young children. 13A

US wins Ryder Cup

The Americans won back the Ryder Cup and perhaps a whole lot more Sunday, sending a strong message with their youngest team by giving Europe its worst loss ever. 1B

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COACHELLA VALLEY

iHub Radio to re-launch online

Local talk and news platform RadioIII has kicked off fall season

James B. Cutchin
Palm Springs Desert Sun
USA TODAY NETWORK

iHub Radio, which launched three years ago as the Coachella Valley's only local online talk radio platform, is re-launching as RadioIII. The platform will include a range of local programming from new and longtime hosts and kicked off its fall season this past weekend.

RadioIII co-founder and senior content director John McMullen said the new brand will better reflect the platform's Coachella Valley focus.

"Most people don't know what the iHub is," McMullen said. "The new identity is something (that can resonate with) almost everyone here."

iHub, short for Innovation Hub, is a business incubator and accelerator program run by the Coachella Valley Economic Partnership with locations in

See RADIO111, Page 4A



Radio111 co-founder and senior content director John McMullen said the new brand will better reflect the platform's Coachella Valley focus. RADIO111

Cathedral City man dies in Palm Springs crash

Maria Sestito
Palm Springs Desert Sun
USA TODAY NETWORK

A 52-year-old man died after being struck by a vehicle in Palm Springs late Saturday night, according to the Palm

Springs Police Department.

The man, identified as Amadeo Tapia of Cathedral City, was hit in the area of East Palm Canyon Drive and South Farrell Drive about 10:15 p.m., Sgt. Michael Delaney said.

Tapia was transported to Desert Re-

gional Medical Center and pronounced dead at 10:51 p.m.

The driver of the vehicle remained at the scene and was cooperative, Delaney said. Additional details were not immediately available. The investigation is ongoing.

Maria Sestito covers issues of aging in the Coachella Valley. She is also a Report for America corps member. Follow her on Twitter @RiaSestito, on Instagram @RiaSestito_Reporter or email her at maria.sestito@desertsun.com.

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Buyer of tiny Nevada town finds plentiful water underground

Eli Segall LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL

CAL-NEV-ARI, Nev. — There isn't much in Cal-Nev-Ari besides a cluster of homes, some businesses and an unpaved airstrip.

But the town's new dominant property owner believes the desert outpost might have something else: an underground river of sorts that doesn't run dry.

Jerry Tyler, president of mining firm Heart of Nature, told the Las Vegas Review-Journal there appears to be something like a river flowing beneath the remote community south of Las Vegas, and that it replenishes when water is pumped out.

"We could have an unlimited amount of water," he said during an interview in Cal-Nev-Ari's casino and restaurant building. "It's not like there's just one amount that once we take it all out, we're out."

Tyler's group controls a speck of a town off U.S. Highway 95 that many people in Las Vegas, some 70 miles away, have probably never heard of or stopped to see. But the buyers could be sitting on plenty of water in a region grappling with drought.

Tyler doesn't know how much water flows beneath Cal-Nev-Ari. But the quality is high, and the natural resource was a big draw for the buyers, he said during a recent telephone interview with the Review-Journal.

"The quality of the water, and the potential abundance of it, was a key reason why we bought the town," he said.

Heart of Nature majority owner Universal Green Technology acquired the bulk of Cal-Nev-Ari in late July for \$8 million from town co-founder Nancy Kidwell, buying just over 550 acres of mostly vacant real estate.

The town's water provider, Kidwell-owned Spirit Mountain Utility Co., boasts 32.8 million gallons of annual water rights. It uses far less, having sold nearly 9.5 million gallons last year, state records show.

Fred Marik, a former listing broker for Kidwell's holdings in Cal-Nev-Ari, said the water quality is "phenomenal," and he indicated several prospective



The new primary owner of a tiny southern Nevada town says there appears to be plentiful water beneath the desert highway outpost with a name that marks its spot near the state lines of California, Nevada and Arizona. BIZUAYEHU TESFAYE/LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL VIA AP

buyers had viewed it as something that could be sold.

Cal-Nev-Ari's water system uses a 200,000-gallon main storage tank and a network of service lines. It supplies 123 customers, the vast majority of which are single-family homes, according to a 2019 filing with the Public Utilities Commission of Nevada.

Just 244 people lived in Cal-Nev-Ari as of 2010, the U.S. Census Bureau reported.

Kidwell, who is in her 80s, sold her holdings after years of trying. She told the Review-Journal she never assessed the volume of water underground.

But, she noted, she pumped plenty of water for Nevada Department of Transportation projects, and the wells never drew down.

Kidwell and late husband Everette "Slim" Kidwell founded Cal-Nev-Ari in the mid-1960s, having noticed its then-abandoned airstrip while flying by. They acquired 600-plus acres from the federal government and named the

town after its home state and the two nearby.

Kidwell is selling the water company to Tyler's group, a deal that requires approval from the Public Utilities Commission, she said.

The buyers already acquired hundreds of acres of land in Cal-Nev-Ari, including its airstrip, RV park, mobile home park, motel, convenience store and casino and restaurant building.

Tyler, who sells products for the agricultural industry, plans to build a 100,000-square-foot processing facility in Cal-Nev-Ari and would use water for his business, including for liquid fertilizers.

He also envisions more restaurants, a larger hotel and homes for staffers who work at his plant. He wants to pave the airstrip to attract more pilots.

Water is a pressing issue in the fast-growing desert metropolis of Las Vegas, underscored by the visible bathtub ring at nearby Lake Mead, the country's largest reservoir.

RadioIII

Continued from Page 3A

Palm Springs, Palm Desert and Indio. iHub Radio got its start there in May 2018 and took its name from the program.

RadioIII will see the return of several hosts from iHub Radio's early days, including Jay Alvarez, who hosted a mid-day show with his late father Marvin Alvarez on iHub from 2018 until early 2020. Alvarez will host a program titled "Your Best Life" airing Monday from 8 to 10 p.m. focused on inspiring and positive-mindset-related content.

The station will also feature new hosts and programming such as former state senate hopeful Joy Silver, who will talk "progressive issues and politics" and activism on a show titled "Outspoken!"

Other RadioIII program topics run the gamut from cannabis, cars and fantasy football to LGBTQ+ issues.

The platform will feature interviews with Coachella Valley local journalists from outlets including The Desert Sun, one of its partners, discussing issues such as crime, business and the environment.

"We go a lot deeper into the topics than TV news can do," McMullen said.

The RadioIII co-founder said the platform's core selling point to prospective listeners, as well as advertisers, is its local focus.

"It's that we're local. Period," he said. "I know that sounds cliché, but it's real ... I didn't want to be the babysitter of a satellite-fed syndicated radio station."

McMullen, who has spent decades in the radio industry, said that a full slate of truly locally produced content is rare in a market of any size.

"Our opportunity is to be relatable to our neighbors and that's what makes us different from any other talk station that gets into this market," he said.

RadioIII is available to stream for free through its website at RadioIII.com, using the TuneIn Radio app from any phone or smart device or through digital dashboard systems such as Apple CarPlay and Android Auto.

James B. Cutchin covers business in the Coachella Valley. Reach him at james.cutchin@desertsun.com.



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