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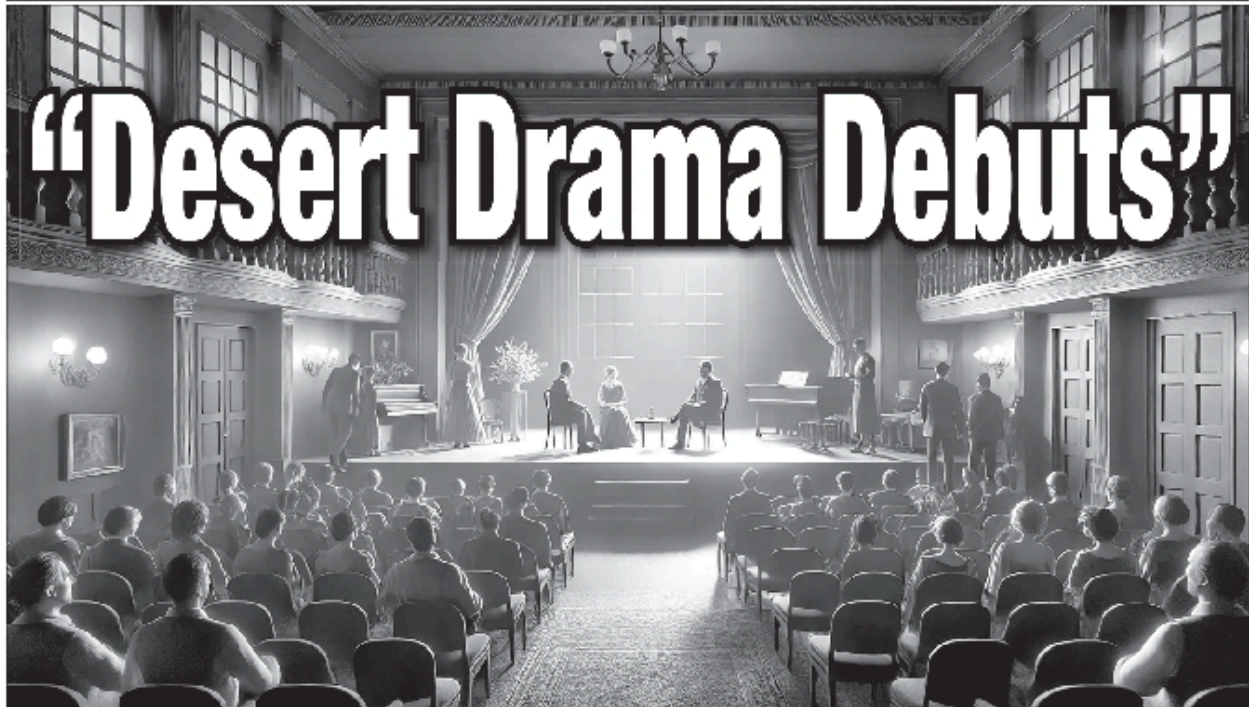
desert STAR



Proposed bill would fight the crisis of antibiotic-resistant infections see page 4.

W E E K L Y

Friday, November 15, 2024 Vol. 20 No. 90



“Desert Drama Debuts”

Desert Ensemble Theatre Debuts New Play

By Desert Star Staff

On Tuesday, November 18, Desert Ensemble Theatre (DET) will launch its 2024-25 reading series with *Dispersion of Light*, an excellent new

play by celebrated playwright Rich Rubin. The event will occur at 7:00 p.m. in Theatre Three at the Palm Springs Cultural Center, 2000 E Baristo Road. Tickets are \$20

each and can be purchased through the DET website, desertensembletheatre.org, or by calling (760) 666-2476.

Dispersion of Light is set in 1962, during a pivotal moment in the marriage of iconic artist Georgia O'Keeffe and renowned photographer

Alfred Stieglitz. The drama captures the intensity of their relationship as they grapple with professional struggles and the personal strains of infidelity, highlighting the complex interplay of art and life in a time of societal transformation. Rubin's play was recently a

semifinalist in the ScreenCraft Stage Play Competition 2024, earning recognition for its striking exploration of love and ambition.

Rubin is no stranger to the Desert Ensemble Theatre

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CVEP's Greater Palm Springs Annual Economic Summit

By Desert Star Staff

The Coachella Valley Economic Partnership (CVEP) will host its 20th Annual Greater Palm Springs Summit on Tuesday, November 19th, from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at Agua Caliente Casino & Resort in Rancho Mirage. With the theme "Data, Opportunity, Growth," the Summit aims to spotlight economic opportunities and strategic initiatives to drive sustainable growth across the Coachella Valley.

Laura James, Interim CEO of CVEP, shared insights on this year's theme, explaining, "We chose 'Data, Opportunity, Growth,' to align with our updated economic strategy and reflect our vision for an inclusive, prosperous

Coachella Valley. The event will showcase significant economic shifts over the past 20 years while highlighting unique opportunities to sustainably enhance the region's economic landscape."

In a particular moment of recognition, the Summit will honor Dick Oliphant for his exceptional contributions to CVEP and the Coachella Valley. As a founding member and board member, Oliphant has served the community with dedication and vision for over three decades. Acknowledging his impact, CVEP will present him with an award to celebrate his enduring leadership.

The program will feature a report from Laura Hope,



Laura James, Interim Chief Executive Officer

Interim Superintendent/President of College of the Desert, detailing the college's economic impact on the region. An engaging panel titled "Born Here, Drawn



Dick Oliphant

to Here" will showcase local success stories featuring Coachella Valley natives and those drawn to the area. Moderated by Bansoo Parikh, President



Laura Hope, Interim Superintendent/President of College of the Desert

of Bank of America Inland Empire, panelists include Amanda Avarado, Director of Engineering at Proecht;

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Fed Lowers Rates Amid Falling Inflation



By Desert Star Staff
In a decisive move this

November, the Federal Reserve approved its second

consecutive rate cut, trimming its benchmark borrowing rate

by a quarter of a percentage point. This adjustment marks a notable shift in the financial landscape, with potential effects rippling through mortgage, credit card, and auto loan rates. As households and businesses navigate these lower borrowing costs, Chair Jerome Powell has signaled a stance of cautious flexibility, leaving the door open for further adjustments depending on economic conditions.

The impact of this rate cut is not limited to consumer lending; Wall Street also took notice, responding with a surge that propelled the S&P 500 and NASDAQ to new heights. This rally underscores the market's confidence in the Fed's strategic approach post-election, as investors welcome the potential for more favorable

borrowing conditions. The cut aims to sustain economic momentum amid uncertainties in global markets, providing a buffer against potential slowdowns while encouraging investment and spending.

As the Federal Reserve weighs future moves, Powell emphasized a data-driven approach, balancing inflation control with economic growth. This latest cut reflects a nuanced response to evolving economic indicators, positioning the Fed to support a stable path forward. For consumers and businesses alike, the implications of today's decision could ease borrowing costs, offering potential relief for those managing loans and spurring confidence in the economy's resilience.

Newsom Moves to "Trump-Proof" California

By Desert Star Staff

In response to Donald Trump's recent presidential victory, California lawmakers, led by Governor Gavin Newsom, are taking swift action to shield the state from potential federal policy shifts. Newsom announced a special legislative session dedicated to what he calls "Trump-proofing" California laws. This initiative aims to reinforce provisions on critical issues like climate change, immigration, healthcare,

and civil rights, areas where California's progressive policies have frequently diverged from federal stances.

The Governor highlighted concerns that Trump's administration might attempt to roll back environmental regulations and immigrant protections, areas where California has often led with more ambitious standards. Newsom emphasized that California would not waver in its commitment to these issues, stating that

the state must be ready to act independently if federal policy clashes with California's core values.

California's Democratic leadership has rallied behind Newsom's plan, viewing it as necessary to protect the state's residents and environment. Lawmakers are exploring ways to safeguard California's clean energy initiatives and immigrant support systems, considering legal frameworks that would make it harder

for federal mandates to override state policies. The move reflects California's long-standing position as a policy leader, often setting trends in environmental and social justice matters.

Only some people, however, are on board. Some California Republicans have criticized the special session as a misuse of taxpayer dollars, arguing that the state should instead focus on pressing issues like homelessness and economic

recovery. They contend that Newsom's initiative is premature and reactionary, noting that Trump's policies remain largely unknown at this early stage.

As California braces for potential challenges from Washington, Newsom's plan to "Trump proof" state laws signals a proactive stance, setting the stage for what could become an intense political standoff between state and federal governments over California's future direction.

CA criminal justice reform suffers blow with passage of Prop. 36

By Desert Star Staff

Advocates of criminal justice reform warn the passage of Proposition 36 will mean a sharp reduction in funds for anti-crime initiatives. The measure raises the penalties for specific drug and theft crimes, making more felonies that carry jail time.

Will Matthews, a spokesperson for Californians

for Safety and Justice, a nonprofit public safety advocacy organization, said voters were fed false promises that Prop. Thirty-six would reduce property crime by forcing more people to choose between treatment and incarceration.

"It was a disingenuous initiative that now will result in billions of dollars being

divorced away from treating addiction, treating mental illness, and helping folks coming home from a period of incarceration," he said.

Prop. 36 repeals parts of Proposition 47, which funneled the savings from reduced prison costs into programs designed to combat poverty and addiction - the root causes of crime.

Christopher Hollenbrook, a political science professor with Cal State Dominguez Hills, agrees that Prop 36 will cost the state hundreds of millions of dollars, money he says will be diverted from anti-crime initiatives.

"There's no way you can pass '36' and not put more people in jail. The more money you spend on incarceration,

the less you spend on other things," Hollenbrook stated. "That is an accurate assessment for Prop. 36, and it seems to be one voters decided they were OK with."

Prop. 36 was primarily funded by such retail giants as Home Depot, Target and Walmart, hoping that the prospect of higher penalties would deter retail crime.

CVEP's Greater Palm Springs Annual Economic Summit

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Grace Garner, Palm Springs City Councilmember; Marisa "Riley" Estrada Rivera, a diversity advocate in emerging

tech; and Jim Gomes, Founder of Twin Palms Advisors.

Drawing more than 500 business, civic, and education leaders annually, the Summit is a prime opportunity for

networking and learning from the region's top influencers and decision-makers. Event sponsors include Presenting Sponsor College of the Desert, Platinum Sponsor Agua

Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, Platinum Sponsor Hunter | Johnson, and Gold Sponsor Bank of America.

The event begins with breakfast and networking

at 8:00 a.m., followed by the main program from 8:45 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Registration is available at cvcp.com or by contacting CVEP at 760-340-1575.

"Desert Drama Debuts"

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audience, having written Kafka's Joke. This 2023 production received outstanding acclaim, grossing high ticket sales and

winning five Broadway World Palm Springs Awards, including Best Play. This history of success sets high expectations for Dispersion of Light, and DET is excited to present Rubin's

work to the community again.

The reading will feature a talented cast, including Melnie Blue, James Flaherty, Charles Herrera, Angela Lande, and Lizze Schmeling. Under

the skilled direction of DET Artistic Director Jerome Elliott Moskowitz and produced by

Chuck Yates, the reading series promises a memorable night of theater in Palm Springs.

Check us out at
www.desertstarweekly.com