# The San Diego Union-Aribune

sandiegouniontribune.com

FRIDAY • MAY 21, 2021



NELVIN C. CEPEDA U-T Investigators examine the panga, suspected of smuggling immigrants, that washed ashore near Children's Pool on Thursday.

## SUSPECTED SMUGGLING BOAT **CAPSIZES IN LA JOLLA; 1 DEAD**

15 in custody after lifeguards rescue 10 from waves; fourth similar attempt in a week along S.D. coast

BY KAREN KUCHER & KRISTINA DAVIS

One person died and 10 others were rescued from a suspected smuggling boat that eventually capsized off the La Jolla shore early Thursday, authorities said.

The incident is one of at least four at-sea human smuggling attempts in San Diego in just the past week, and comes nearly

three weeks after three undocumented immigrants drowned when their boat crashed near Cabrillo National Monument.

In predawn darkness, lifeguards used boats and at least one rescue board to pluck people from the water near Marine Street Thursday. The panga then continued north and eventually came into shore about a mile  $away, where\,it\,cap sized\,in\,the\,surf$  line near the Children's Pool. A submerged victim was found nearby and did not survive.

In all, 15 people were taken into custody from the small panga-style vessel, said Border Patrol Supervisory Agent Jeffrey Stephenson.

Agents first spotted the boat off the coast near Point Loma around 5:10 a.m. and tracked it to La Jolla, hoping to see where it

was going to make landfall.

Around 5:20 a.m., an agent saw several people in the water who appeared to be in distress and called San Diego lifeguards, said Border Patrol Agent Jacob MacIsaac.

Video shot by OnScene TV showed a Coast Guard helicopter circling over the water as lifeguards on a rescue boat and a rescue board worked to pull people

SEE BOAT • A9

#### CITY, UNIONS REACH DEALS **TO PROVIDE RAISES FOR 6K WORKERS**

BY DAVID GARRICK

New labor deals negotiated by San Diego Mayor Todd Gloria include pay raises for about 6,000 city workers, including 29 percent hikes for 640 engineers designed to make their pay more competitive when compared to other cities.

Gloria has reached agreements on contracts with unions representing the city's 150 deputy city attorneys, 4,000 whitecollar workers and 1,800 bluecollar workers.

The deals must be approved by the City Council after members of the unions have finished voting on them.

The mayor is still negotiating deals with unions representing the city's 1,900 police officers, 900 firefighters and roughly 100 full-time lifeguards. All of the deals are expected to be two-year agreements extending through July 2023.

Deputy city attorneys are getting 12 percent raises over the next two years — 4 percent raises on both July 1 and in July 2022, coupled with 2 percent raises in both January 2022 and January 2023.

Blue-collar workers are getting 8 percent raises over the two years, 4 percent on July 1 SEE WORKERS • A10

#### S.D. COUNCIL MEMBER EXPRESSES 'GRAVE CONCERNS' ABOUT LINCOLN HIGH WOES

Montgomery Steppe writes letter to school district citing continuing 'crisis'

BY KRISTEN TAKETA

A City Council member wrote a letter to San Diego Unified leadership Wednesday ex-"grave concerns" pressing about leadership turnover at Lincoln High and other issues, including allegations of past misspending and sexual assaults at the school.

"Perpetual missteps have turned into a crisis that continues to impact our entire community," wrote City Council member Monica Montgomery Steppe, whose jurisdiction includes Lincoln, in a letter that was published on Instagram and distributed to media outlets Wednesday.

"LHS has been a source of hope for our community, and we must improve it in order to have a full and thriving district."

But school district officials said Montgomery Steppe's letter ignores progress that has been made by Lincoln's new



NELVIN C. CEPEDA U-T FILE

For years some community advocates have argued the S.D. school district has failed to stabilize Lincoln High School.

principal, Stephanie Brown, who was picked by a committee of a dozen people in July 2019 to lead the school.

Under Brown's leadership, Lincoln's graduation rate rose from 80 percent in 2019 to 84 percent in 2020, according to state data. A record number of Lincoln students graduated early this year, the district said:

SEE LINCOLN • A11

U-T INDEX

**A4 B6** 

D1

#### **BIDEN SIGNS BILL ADDRESSING ANTI-ASIAN HATE CRIMES**

■ A4 • The president signs a measure meant to address a proliferation of assaults and other violent crimes against Asian Americans since the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic.

#### **CATHEDRAL CATHOLIC HIGH** SANCTIONED OVER PHOTOS

**B1** • A governing body for S.D. high school sports imposed sanctions on Cathedral Catholic High's football program in response to players circulating racist photos aimed at Lincoln High.

#### ISRAEL, **HAMAS AGREE TO CEASE-FIRE IN GAZA**

Bilateral truce reached after 11 days of fighting; hundreds killed, wounded

BY STEVE HENDRIX, LOVEDAY MORRIS, SHIRA RUBIN & HAZEM BALOUSHA

**JERUSALEM** 

A cease-fire aimed at ending 11 days of withering combat between Israel and Hamas militants took effect early today, hours after Israel's security cabinet voted to approve an Egyptian initiative to stop the fight-

The cabinet, made up of top security officials and ministers, voted unanimously to accept what Israel described as a bilateral and unconditional cease-fire. Facing mounting international pressure, including from President Joe Biden in recent days, the Israeli government said it decided to bring the air and artillery campaign to a halt after significantly degrading Hamas's military infrastructure and killing many of its command-

Hamas, which governs the Gaza Strip, said it had also agreed with the Egyptian proposal, which came into force at 2 a.m. local time. "The Palestinian resistance will abide by this agreement as long as the occupation is committed," said Taher al-Nounou, a media adviser to the head of the Hamas political bureau, referring to Israeli forces.

The conflict has taken a steep toll. Israel pounded Gaza with airstrikes and artillery fire, causing extensive SEE CEASE-FIRE • A13

#### **COUNTY HAS** UNVEILED **NEW WAY OF** HANDI ING YOUTH CRIME

Plan puts juvenile offenders in early diversion program before criminal case is filed

BY TERI FIGUEROA

In an effort to keep more youths out of the criminal justice system and dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline — the district attorney on Monday unveiled an approach to get young people facing criminal charges into a diversion program before a case is filed.

And that includes high-level misdemeanors and some felonies.

"It's truly a sea change in the way that we treat our youth in San Diego County," District Attorney Summer Stephan said.

The newly created Juvenile Diversion Initiative will allow some minors facing criminal charges to enroll in an early intervention program. If they complete it successfully, prosecutors will not file charges and the arrest record will be sealed.

Juvenile Court focuses on rehabilitation over punishment, and diversion programs already exist. Here, there are two differences: Qualifying offenses include higher-level misdemeanors and some felonies, and the program is offered before a case is filed, not after. That second part is

'key," Stephan said. "The program keeps them out of them courthouse and out of the juvenile justice system completely," Stephan told reporters at a news con-

SEE JUSTICE • A10

WEEKEND

#### **GRAB YOUR POPCORN**

Hollywood is bringing out the big stuff and hoping audiences are ready to return this summer. E1



|   | Comics    | C5        | Editorial | <b>B4</b> | Lottery    |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|
|   | Crossword | <b>C7</b> | Horoscope | <b>C7</b> | Obituaries |
|   | Dear Abby | <b>C7</b> | Letters   | <b>B4</b> | Sports     |
| - |           |           |           |           | me de      |

If you don't wear it, we will BUY IT







Stocks

Television

Weather

**C3** 

**E4** 

**A16** 





**IMMEDIATE CASH OFFER!** 

Call today for a confidential free evaluation.



(858) 771-0275 1135 Prospect St., CJ Charles Jewelers La Jolla, CA 92037







#### TREASURY DEPT. LOOKS TO BOOST COMPLIANCE

Officials say closing 'tax gap' could bring in \$700B in revenue

THE WASHINGTON POST

#### WASHINGTON

The Treasury Department on Thursday announced a plan to raise \$700 billion through new tax compliance measures, a potentially key source of revenue for the Biden administramultitrillion-dollar tion's

spending proposals. In a 22-page report, Treasury officials identified a number of policies to increase enforcement — from more reporting requirements to new tools for auditors — aimed at closing the "tax gap" between what taxpayers owe to the federal government and what they actually pay.

The Treasury's Office of Tax Analysis estimated that the changes could bring in an additional \$700 billion in tax collections over the next decade, as well as \$1.6 trillion in the decade after that. The Treasury Department said on Thursday that the tax gap is about \$600 billion per year, though Internal Revenue



IRS Commissioner Charles Rettig has said the tax gap could exceed \$1 trillion per year.

Commissioner Charles Rettig recently said the number could exceed \$1 trillion per year. Even partially closing that gulf could go a long way to paying for Biden's spending proposals, which include trillions of dollars for infrastructure, child care, manufacturing, and other domestic spending

priorities. "At the crux of these proposals is a commitment to revitalizing tax enforcement," the Treasury's paper states. "Working to close the tax gap reflects a commitment to ending our twotiered tax system, one where

most American workers pay their full obligations, but high earners who accrue income from opaque sources often do not."

The Treasury Department's estimates face skepticism from many tax experts, and some of their new enforcement mechanisms could face political blowback among congressional lawmakers. The plan states that audit rates "will not rise relative to recent years" for those earning under \$400,000 per year, which is in line with the president's campaign pledge not to raise taxes on middleclass taxpayers but may blunt the effectiveness of the Treasury's plan. Increasing IRS enforcement is seen as politically easier than other measures, such as raising

The key part of the tax compliance proposal is to increase the size of the IRS budget by about \$80 billion over a decade, nearly doubling it. That funding would go to increasing the number of IRS agents and personnel; the tax agency's budget was cut by about 20 percent because of changes pushed by congressional Republicans.

The second key proposal is to strengthen requirements surrounding what banks must tell the IRS about their customers. The IRS would then use information provided by the banks to "better target enforcement activities," the Treasury said Thursday, a measure in particular aimed at improving voluntary compliance through a deterrence effect.

The third and fourth parts of the plan involve updating IRS technology some of which dates back to the 1960s — so it is better at identifying tax evasion, as well as new penalties on tax preparers who "commit or abet" tax fraud.

#### WORKERS

and 4 percent in July 2022. Those workers are represented by Local 127 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees.

White-collar who are represented by the Municipal Employees Association, are getting 9 percent raises over the two years — 4 percent on July 1 and 5 percent in July 2022.

In addition, a "substantial" number of MEA members — in particular, jobs where large pay gaps exist are getting "special salary adjustments," union general manager Mike Zucchet said Thursday.

Multiple studies by the city over the last five years have shown pay gaps as large as 50 percent for many jobs, which labor leaders have blamed partly on a fiveyear pay freeze included in

the 2012 ballot measure that also cut pensions for city employees.

City officials have previously used special salary adjustments to boost pay for librarians, emergency dispatchers, paralegals, sewer inspectors and many other jobs with relatively low sala-

While Zucchet said he can't reveal the entire list of jobs getting special salary adjustments until the contract is presented to the City Council, he said a variety of engineering jobs will get 29 percent raises.

That's because the city's salary studies show that engineers working for San Diego make between 17 percent and 37 percent less than their counterparts other government agencies.

The special raises go to all city engineers whether they are senior engineers, associate engineers, assistant engineers or junior engineers. Zucchet said there are 640 people now working in these jobs, with 160 more engineer jobs vacant because the city has struggled to fill them.

The raises for engineers include the 9 percent that all MEA employees will get, plus additional 10 percent raises in both January 2022 and January 2023. With compounding, the raises will amount to 32.1 percent increases.

The focus during the negotiations has been on closing gaps between what San Diego pays for most jobs and the salaries paid for those jobs in the private sector and at other government

As a result, Gloria is offering significantly smaller raises to police officers, firefighters and lifeguards than he offered to deputy city attorneys, white-collar workers and blue-collar workers.

A recent city analysis found that deputy city attorneys in San Diego make roughly 50 percent less than their counterparts. Police officers, who got a package of raises in 2017 totaling more than 30 percent, have moved closer to the median salary for law enforcement in the region.

Gloria is offering police officers, firefighters and lifeguards annual raises of less than 3 percent. Negotiations are ongoing.

If those offers are accepted, the collective pay raises from this spring will cost the city \$40 million to \$50 million during the fiscal year that begins July 1, and as much as \$100 million in subsequent years

But not all of that cost will impact the city's \$1.7 billion general fund because many of the workers, including the engineers, work outside the general fund in the city's water and sewer divi-

david.garrick@sduniontribune.com

#### **JUSTICE**

ference in front of the Juvenile Courthouse.

Every year, about 1,900 youths are charged in Juvenile Court for a variety of offenses. Under this new approach, officials estimate that roughly 500 of them will be offered the chance to avoid prosecution.

"I think at the end of the day the research is very strong that if you keep kids away from the criminal justice system they don't start viewing themselves as a criminal," Stephan said after the news conference. "They look at what they have done as a blip or mistake, as opposed to who they are as people."

The program begins this summer, and will be available for youths accused of most misdemeanors as well as many felonies classified under the law as non-serious. Such offenses might include theft, commercial burglary, felony vandalism, auto theft and grand theft.

Minors accused of committing serious crimes murder, sexual assault or carjacking and other violent crimes — will not be eligible for the diversion.

The idea is to get to the root of what caused the behavior and address it.

Core to the program are the principles of restorative justice, said Khamel Johnson, a restorative justice specialist with the District Attorney's Office.

The program is free. It is also voluntary, and it requires buy-in from the accused minor. The parents or caregivers are also expected to play a role.

"We can't go through without including mom and mentors," Johnson said. "It is a very specific and methodical part of our diversion process."

Victims of crimes can also participate if they so choose.

Stephan also said the approach will provide the youths with "culturally competent" resources. Participants include community members and organizations that can pro-



County District Attorney Summer Stephan is changing way youth crimes are handled.

vide mentorship and facilitate programming.

The program roughly six months, and if the youth still needs help the case can be handed off to others who can continue providing care.

Stephan said successes with a similar diversion program for adult defendants — just a 5 percent recidivism rate — helped convince her the Juvenile Diversion Initiative could work. After about two years of intensive work to craft the program, Stephan said, it was "time to take the leap."

The National Conflict Resolution Center won the county contract to run the \$2 million initiative. paid for by the District Attorney's Office. The center will work with different community groups throughout the region to implement the program.

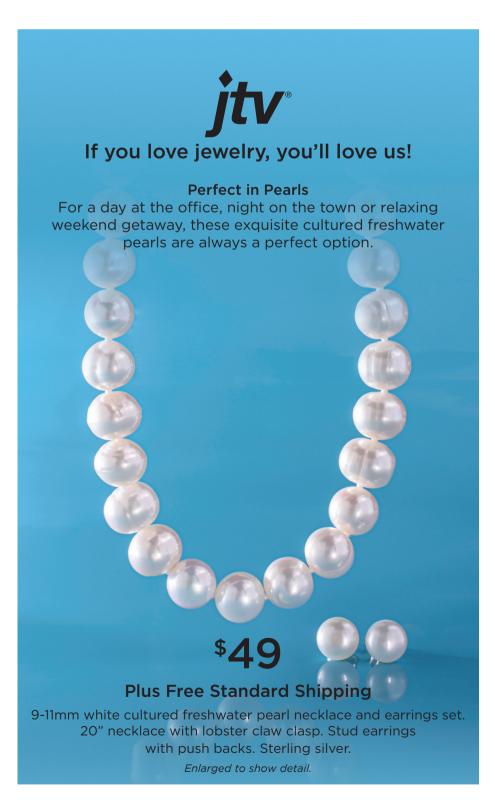
Center President Steve Dinkin said the program is "unique in size and scope across the nation."

said Stephan youths will be held accountable, and their progress will be tracked.

So will the progress of the program itself. The district attorney asked the San Diego Association of Governments, or SANDAG, to track the overall data, including recidivism rates. She also wants the review to ensure the program is offered evenly to all qualifying youth.

"I have greatest confidence that it is going to be a model for the nation," Stephan said.

teri.figueroa@sduniontribune.com



JTV Item: SCM002

To receive this special offer, use code PEARLPOP21 888.515.0202 or visit jtv.com/exquisite Visit jtv.com/tv to find JTV in your area.



jtv.com • #JTVjewelrylove

One coupon code per customer; one coupon code per order. Offer valid through June 23, 2021 at 11:59p ET. While supplies last.

# Help find

... for a pet like

### **Berlin**

#### Sponsor a pet in the monthly **Adopt a Pet** feature

The Union-Tribune's Adopt a Pet pages feature more than 100 sponsored photos of animals from local shelters and rescues published in the Classified section. By sponsoring a pet, you are ensuring a shelter animal publicity that could lead

to an adoption and a second chance!

**1 Sponsor for \$33.50** 



Berlin, Rottweiler, M 2yr 723406 San Diego Humane Society - Gaines St. 619.299.7012 sdhumane.org

Your sponsorship caption will appear under the pet's photo and info

or \$25.00 each for 2 or more Please indicate how many pets and in what month(s) you'd like to sponsor -

pets in 🎞 May pets in 🖵 June 🔃 pets in 🖵 July

Next publication Friday, May 28, 2021

Deadline to sponsor by phone is Thursday, May 27, 2021

| To sponsor<br>a pet | Call 866.411.4140 (select option 4 or mail in this form. |
|---------------------|--|
|                     |  |

| NAME   |        |
|--|--------|
| ADDRESS  |        |
| CITY   |        |
| PHONE  |        |
| EMAIL  |        |
| VISA • MC • DISCOVER • AMEX #  |        |
| SIGNATURE  | CC EXP |
| If paying by check, make payable to<br>Your check will be converted to an el<br>O Please check here to opt-out of el |        |

CHOOSE ONE | text to appear in ad • up to 20 characters Sponsored In Memory Of

| S | oq | ารด | rec   | d B | У    |     |      |    |    |     |    |    |   |    |     |      |     |    |      |    |      |     |    |    |    |    |
|---|----|-----|-------|-----|------|-----|------|----|----|-----|----|----|---|----|-----|------|-----|----|------|----|------|-----|----|----|----|----|
|   |    |     |       |     |      |     |      |    |    |     |    |    |   |    |     |      |     |    |      |    |      |     |    |    |    |    |
|   |    | Ma  | ail t | his | s fo | orm | ı. n | os | tm | ark | ed | bν | М | on | dav | /. N | 1av | 24 | 1. 2 | 02 | 1. t | o A | do | nt | аΡ | et |

P.O. Box 120201, San Diego, CA 92112 Brought to you by The San Diego Union-Tribune