

STEVEN P. DINKIN A Path Forward

MASS SHOOTINGS: THE NEW NORMAL IN THE M

January 2023 will be remembered as a murderous month. Forty mass shootings were committed in the United States and more than 60 people died.

As defined by the Gun Violence Archive, a mass shooting is an incident in which at least four victims are wounded or killed, not including the perpetrator.

Sadly, it was a coast-to-coast phenomenon. But I find myself thinking about two tragedies suffered in separate California communities just two days apart. The shootings claimed the lives of 18 people and injured 10 more.

On Jan. 21, a gunman opened fire at Star Ballroom Dance Studio in Monterey Park. The attack left five men and six women dead and nine people wounded. Then, on Jan. 23, another gunman killed five men and two women at two mushroom farms in Half Moon Bay. Another man was critically injured.

The two mass shootings — just hundreds of miles apart in

our state — share distressing similarities. Both alleged shooters were men of Asian descent over age 60. Nearly all the victims of the Monterey Park attack appear to be of Asian descent, too. In the Half Moon Bay shootings, police said the victims were Asian and Hispanic.

While taking someone else's life is already inexplicable, I've been wondering why these men would murder people of their own race. Somehow, it seemed especially surprising in the aftermath of the pandemic, when hate crimes proliferated at the hands of people who blamed the entire Asian race because COVID, it was believed, started in China.

But federal crime data show more often than not, murder is intraracial.

As David M. Kennedy, director of the Center for Crime Prevention and Control at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, explained, "Homicides overwhelmingly happen among people who know each other. (It's) a phenomenon of social networks. Most people's relationships are

primarily with someone of their own race or ethnicity. As long as anybody has studied homicide, this has been the pattern."

In 2018, the most recent year for which FBI reporting is available, 81 percent of White victims were killed by White people; 89 percent of Black victims were killed by Black people. The report did not include data for Asian-on-Asian killings.

Yet we were taken aback to learn that Tyre Nichols, a young Black man, had been severely beaten by five Black police officers in Memphis, Tenn., following a traffic stop.

Nichols died three days later; the officers were fired two weeks ago and charged with second-degree murder and other crimes. Two additional officers were relieved of duty on Monday.

The videotape of the beating was horrific, no matter the race of the officers or the victim.

It's been speculated that the shooting in Half Moon Bay was motivated by a workplace grievance, as the gunman was employed at one of the farms he

targeted. In Monterey Park, the shooter was known to frequent the Star Ballroom — but his motive may never be known. He killed himself after the shooting.

In a recent New York Times article, professors Jillian Peterson and James Densley, who run the Violence Project, a research center, reported on their study of 150 mass shootings over 50 years. It was a gut-wrenching read.

Peterson and Densley found many similarities among the perpetrators, nearly all of whom were men. Often, they were isolated from their families or communities. They had a sense of despair but wouldn't ask for help. Instead, they turned to extreme ideologies and actions to cope with their failures and find a sense of purpose.

The authors concluded that the gunmen chose mass shootings as a way to "seize power and attention, forcing others to witness their pain while attempting to end their lives in a way that only they controlled."

I'm not sure their analysis

LAGOON

FROM B1

In January and early February the geotechnical crew drilled as deep as 100 feet in spots within the "weir basin," which is the area between the weir and the railroad bridge. Elsewhere in the lagoon and along its edges the crew drilled to 10 feet, including the "rail basin" between the railroad bridge and South Coast Highway.

"They want to see what's down below," said Kim Smith, a senior regional planner at SANDAG.

Information from the core samples taken will help determine how much of the dredged material is clean enough to place on the beach, Smith said.

Sediment samples collected at selected intervals will be tested for things such as grain size, density and shear strength. The material also will be analyzed for any metals and other constituents, and to determine what types of plants could grow in it.

The deepest testing took place in an area within the



ADRIANA HELDIZ U-T

Cattails and reeds are decreasing the surface area of the lagoon as they grow along its banks. The growths are also a potential fire hazard.

tion. Always shallow, the lagoon water marsh and provide cent stage has cost the

911 calls in El Ca

Dispatchers grade calls threatening a situation. Calls that do not need a response made up less during a recent four-year period are now eligible to be

Less-serious calls 797

Data from May 12, 2022 through

Emergency room at East County's

The average number of people to see a health care professional in an emergency room at San Diego State University in recent years.



Sources: Heartland Fire and