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The Desert Sun

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Palm Springs International Airport has continued to set passenger traffic records. But lately, more travelers are domestic and fewer are coming from Canada. TAYA GRAY/THE DESERT SUN

WILL SNOWBIRDS COME BACK?

Dip in Canadian tourism has many worried

Sam Morgen Palm Springs Desert Sun | USA TODAY NETWORK

Summers in the Coachella Valley have traditionally been known for their high temperatures and slower pace. Some tourists still brave the heat, but traffic eases, some businesses close for the season and locals head for the ocean on the weekends.

Usually shops, hotels and restaurants can look forward to the fall and winter, when the flocks of tourists will return like birds.

But this year, uncertainty reigns among local business leaders. Fears of an economic slowdown have stressed politicians and investors. The threat of a Canadian boycott on travel to the United States looms, especially in an area so heavily dependent on international travel.

However, some economic indicators show reasons for hope. Not all businesses have experienced a significant slowdown during the summer. Throughout the Coachella Valley, mixed messages can be seen as local leaders await the return of the busy season, and wonder how much tourism will pick up again.

“I think everybody is nervous, afraid,” said Maria Lease, the owner of Azure Palm

Hot Prings Resort & Day Spa in Desert Hot Springs. “Hopefully these tariffs are going to get settled pretty soon. People are concerned. They mention it a lot.”

Since President Donald Trump took office in January, the United States has been involved in ongoing trade negotiations with nearly every country on the planet. The president has used the threat of tariffs in an attempt to remake world trade.

While not directly tied to tariffs, tourism has been impacted by both the president’s policies, changes in prices globally and the president’s hostile rhetoric toward Canada at the beginning of the year.

Since November, the number of travelers from Canada to California has consistently been down when compared to the same months a year prior, according to data compiled by Visit California. In May, the non-profit recorded 74,400 travelers from Canada arriving by air, a 20% drop from the same month a year earlier. In June, the drop was 25%.

See TOURISM, Page 4A

GOP aims to draw itself more seats in Congress. Will Calif. do it, too?

Alexei Koseff
CalMatters

Gov. Gavin Newsom is eyeing a special election in the first week of November to ask California voters to sign off on revised U.S. House districts that could boost Democratic prospects in the 2026 midterms.

Though no new seats have been proposed yet, Newsom said Thursday that he is working with the Legislature and congressional representatives on a plan that would temporarily set aside California’s independent redistricting commission and bring an alternative map directly to the public for approval.

“We will go to the people of this state in a transparent way and ask them to consider the new circumstances, to consider these new realities,” Newsom told reporters during a visit to a Sacramento County airfield, where he showed off new state firefighting equipment.

“This is not going to be done in a back room. This is not going to be done by members of some private group or body,” he added. “It’s going to be given to the voters for their consideration in a very transparent way so they know exactly what they’re doing and they can go back in 2030 to original form with our independent redistricting intact.”

It was the most detail the governor has publicly provided so far about how he plans to respond to a burgeoning partisan redistricting war set off by President Donald Trump in recent months.

States last redrew their congressional seats after the 2020 census, to ensure the districts are roughly equal in population, and were not expected to revisit the process for another decade.

But Republican leaders are under growing pressure from Trump to help shore up a narrow GOP majority in Congress ahead of a potentially challenging midterm election. Texas lawmakers are currently rushing to adopt a new congressional map eliminating five Democratic seats, which has sparked similar efforts in other Republican-controlled states and hand-wringing from Democrats about how to counteract it.

See NEWSOM, Page 2A

Man guilty in Cabazon mall murder

Christopher Damien
Palm Springs Desert Sun | USA TODAY NETWORK

A man who shot and killed a Palm Springs jeweler during a robbery near the Cabazon outlets was found guilty of murder Friday.

Michael Moser, 66, was fatally shot during an attempted robbery near the Desert Premium Outlets in Cabazon on March 24, 2022. Reginald Charles Trice, 21, was the only defendant who took the case to trial. A jury found him guilty of murder, attempted robbery, conspiracy to commit crime and unlawful possession of a firearm. He is scheduled to be sentenced in October.

Over the past several weeks, the prosecution presented a case alleging Trice and three others concoct-

ed a plan to drive from Victorville to the outlets to target people for robberies.

Moser was traveling from Los Angeles when he stopped near the outlets to charge his electric vehicle and use the bathroom. He had worked as an executive for a variety of luxury brands like Tiffany & Co., Chanel and Harry Winston.

When Trice and an associate spotted Moser, the prosecutor said, they followed him into a bathroom and attempted to rob him. There were no cameras in the bathroom, but both sides claim when Moser fought back, the gun Trice was holding fired and shot Moser in the chest at close range. Trice and his associate, who was also injured in the shooting, fled.

See CONVICTED, Page 2A

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