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'PURE, GENUINE JOY'

BTS FANS TAKE ON STANFORD



BTS fans look at a leaflet while waiting in line to purchase merchandise before Saturday's concert at Stanford Stadium. BTS will perform its third show Tuesday. PHOTOS BY JOSE CARLOS FAJARDO — STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Stadium welcomes thousands of people as K-pop boy band performs 3 nights at tour's only stop in Northern California

By Molly Gibbs
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Outside Stanford Stadium on Saturday, Ashley Keele and her daughters carried four grocery bags stuffed with handmade necklaces, buttons, stickers and photo cards — two years' worth of preparation for a BTS weekend they had been waiting for since the K-pop group went on hiatus.

Keele, 41, and her daughters, Jocelynn, 16, and Annette, 6, traveled from Sacramento for the show and planned to attend all three Stanford concerts, hoping to hear different surprise songs each night.

Keele said her family has



Thousands gathered at Stanford Stadium for K-pop boy band BTS' first tour since the group went on hiatus so its members could complete military service in South Korea.

been drawn to BTS since 2019, when she discovered the band's song "Mikrokosmos" would immediately calm down her son, who has

autism. The band's welcoming community and lyrics about self-love, she said, are what make BTS so special.

"It's just magical music,"

she said. "Once you know someone likes BTS, it's like you click ... there's nothing more inclusive than a K-pop concert."

They were among thousands of fans who turned Stanford Stadium near Palo Alto into a sea of purple Saturday as BTS opened a three-show run, the group's only Northern California stop on its sold-out "Arirang" comeback tour.

Fans of all ages were decked out in sparkly jerseys, friendship bracelets, merch with band members' faces and outfits from the group's music videos. They milled about under the hot sun, waiting in line in hopes of grabbing

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CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

2 supes to face tough terms

Confronting no challengers for reelection, leaders set to encounter budget battle ahead

By Sierra Lopez
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MARTINEZ — Contra Costa County Supervisors John Gioia and Ken Carlson face no challengers in their June 2 reelection bids, but the next four years could bring one of the county's toughest budget fights in years as federal cuts threaten the local health care system.

Gioia has served on the Board of Supervisors since 1998 and represents District 1, which includes west county cities Richmond, Pinole, San Pablo and El Cerrito, and unincorporated communities like El Sobrante and Kensington.

First elected to the board in 2022, this will be Carlson's first bid for reelection representing District 4, which encompasses cities such as Concord, Walnut Creek, Pleasant Hill, and Clayton.

Without opponents on the ballot, Gioia and Carlson both said they focus their time on the day-to-day work of running a county without the distractions of campaigning.

"It's a full-time job and there's a lot to do, so I don't want to be distracted," said Carlson, a former Concord police officer of 30 years and Pleasant Hill councilmember of 10 years.

The top priority going forward for both is addressing Trump administration policy changes and Republican-approved budget cuts to health care



Carlson



Gioia

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ALAMEDA COUNTY

Lawyers dispute sheriff's claim on recordings at jail

Records indicate technician had concerns on conversations in 2019

By Nate Gartrell
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DUBLIN — Under fire for recording a 2024 confidential legal visit between a lawyer and her client, the Alameda County Sheriff's Office has responded by blaming the attorney, using an argument that one judge has already cast doubt on in court.

The March 2024 audio recording captured a meeting between Deputy Public Defender Sara Star and her client, Crystal Espinoza, in which they discussed the active murder case against her, an apparent violation of fundamental constitutional protections. The recording was turned over to the public defender by the Alameda County district attorney.

But a public statement from the Alameda County Sheriff's Office called the Bay Area News Group's reporting "false" — first denying that the sheriff's office records privileged conversations at all, before asserting that "the recorded interaction in this case occurred solely because" Star and Espinoza "acknowledged and consented to the recording" by continuing the conversation after a disclaimer

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CALIFORNIA

Questions, smoke linger for victims of fire

Damage from Palisades brushfire has left families wondering if it's safe to go back

By Emily Baumgaertner Nunn
THE NEW YORK TIMES

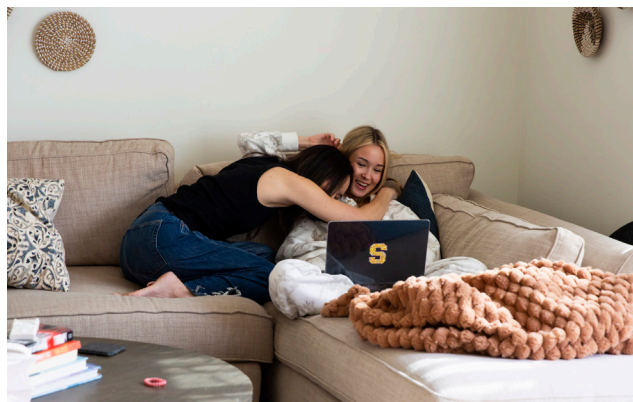
The evening before Pearl's senior year began, Michelle Villemare watched her daughter unravel. The school hadn't released her class schedule yet, Pearl complained. She knew there were logistical complexities to operating a 2,400-student high school in a retrofitted department store, but couldn't they get just this one thing right? And how could it take so long to get back to their real campus?

In the next breath, she started pressing Michelle about the status of their smoke-damaged home in the Pacific Palisades, a mile and a half from the school's grounds.

Why wasn't Pearl allowed to go pick up a dress that was still hanging in her closet there? Wasn't there a way to wash the toxic metals off?

Michelle could see the frustration and grief swirling in her daughter's eyes. It had been seven months since they had gotten word that, after one of the most destructive wildfires in Los Angeles history, their home and Pearl's high school — though badly damaged — still stood. There was talk of the community rising from the ashes. Pearl and her classmates were told that, soon enough, life would return to normal.

But the house repair was moving slowly, and school administrators had pushed back the expected date of return. Now it was August,



Michelle Villemare and her daughter, Pearl Abrahams, sit together at their rental while restoration of their Pacific Palisades home continues. JENNA SCHOENEFELD — NYT

and Pearl was starting the last year of her childhood in an Airbnb more than an hour away, tears streaming down her face.

Oh, God, Michelle thought. Maybe there was more riding on the return to campus than Michelle had realized.

Palisades Charter High

School, or Pali High, had always been an idyllic campus — Hollywood's set for "Carrie," "Teen Wolf" and "Freaky Friday," among other films — with its dolphin mascot and sprawling quad and stippled palm trees

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