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MINOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

66ers' GM job fulfills field dream

King High softball player felt a calling to career in sports, though path curved

By Brian Robin
CORRESPONDENT

It's almost a cliché, but Hollee Haines saw herself as superagent Jerry Maguire, not Theo Epstein or Mike Veeck. She saw herself sitting at the front of a desk negotiating a baseball contract for her client opposite an Epstein or an

Andrew Friedman, two of the most impactful and successful baseball general managers of their generation.

Like Epstein, the legendary breaker of baseball curses and chief architect of the 2004 Boston Red Sox and 2016 Chicago Cubs, which shattered 86-year (Red Sox) and 108-year

(Cubs) world championship dry spells, Haines even went to law school and pounded the contract law books, all the better to help show players where the money is while showing her a career path she dreamed about since childhood.

But a funny thing happened on the way to showing her clients the money. Haines realized she'd rather sit behind the

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Hollie Haines, general manager of the Inland Empire 66ers baseball team, takes in the view at the 66ers' San Manuel Stadium in San Bernardino on Friday. ANJALI SHARIF-PAUL — STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Flower, plant shops facing price sting



A worker sweeps a cold storage room at Orange County Wholesale Flowers in Santa Ana on April 13. With Mother's Day around the corner, floral shops and nurseries across Southern California have been hit hard as fuel surcharges are added to freight costs to receive and deliver flowers. PAUL BERSEBACH — STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Rising fuel costs from Iran war force merchants to pay higher freight bills

By Pat Maio
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Jesus Gomez keeps a large glass candy jar on his desk where his delivery drivers slip fuel receipts for cash reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses.

Since the Iran war began Feb. 28, Gomez, the owner of Orange County Wholesale Flowers in Santa Ana, has taken away the gas credit cards for his fleet of diesel- and gas-fueled refrigerated trucks that deliver flowers to florists throughout Orange, parts of eastern Los Angeles and Riverside counties. This new expense system, he says, helps cut down on fuel costs.

"My guys used to just go out and fill up at any Shell station, but I had to collect the cards, and pay them cash to find the cheapest gas station around," said Gomez, who blames the Iran war on the forced switch. "It's a tragedy. It was pretty stupid to start something with-



A shopper looks over fertilizer options in Lake Forest on April 10. The closure of the Strait of Hormuz has limited supplies and caused prices to spike. JEFF GRITCHEN — STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

out thinking of the consequences.

"This gas thing is just hurting us so bad. Some floral shops are closing. People are buying less, but it's costing me more."

With spring planting in

full force and Mother's Day nearing, the supply chain for flowers, shrubs, vegetables, fruit trees and even fertilizer is experiencing a price shock from the U.S.- and Israel-led war against Iran.

In the six weeks since the

conflict began, the average price of gas in California is 25% higher, up \$1.17 per gallon to \$5.864, as of April 16. Prices have settled somewhat, but not enough for Gomez.

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MIDDLE EAST WAR

Iranians fire on 3 ships in strait

Attacks in key waterway for oil shipments comes a day after Trump extended a ceasefire

By Jon Gambrell and David Rising
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — Iran fired on three ships in the Strait of Hormuz and seized two of them Wednesday, intensifying its assault on shipping in the key waterway.

The attacks came a day after President Donald Trump extended a ceasefire while maintaining an American blockade of Iranian ports.

The standoff between the U.S. and Iran has effectively choked off nearly all exports through the strait, where 20% of the world's traded oil passes in peacetime, with no end in sight. Iranian media

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SOUTHLAND

Home prices see biggest decline since May 2023

Are Southern California home prices finally beginning to crumble?

According to data from real estate tracker Attom, February's \$800,000 median sales price for the six-county region was down 2% compared with a year earlier. Attom tracks sales of houses and condos, both existing homes and newly constructed.

My trusty spreadsheet's review of these



Jonathan Lansner
COLUMNIST

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L.A. COUNTY

Teen girl died of 'penetrating injuries,' objects

By Nathaniel Percy
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Celeste Rivas Hernandez, the 14-year-old girl found dead in the front trunk of a Tesla SUV belonging to singer D4vd, died of "multiple penetrating injuries caused

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A photo of Celeste Rivas Hernandez is displayed Monday as L.A. County District Attorney Nathan Hochman, right, announces murder charges against singer D4vd. DAVID CRANE — STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Parents of Lake Elsinore teen found dead in D4vd's car break their silence

City News Service

The parents of a teenage girl from Lake Elsinore whose dismembered body was found in the trunk of a Tesla owned by singer D4vd, who is now facing murder and other charges, broke their silence Tuesday, thanking the community for its support and praising the teen as a "beautiful, strong girl."

The 21-year-old singer, whose real name is David Anthony Burke, appeared in a downtown Los Angeles courtroom Monday afternoon, and one of his attor-

neys entered a not guilty plea to the charges on his behalf.

Burke is accused of killing Celeste Rivas Hernandez, whose body was found Sept. 8, just days after what would have been her 15th birthday.

The criminal complaint alleges that the murder occurred on or about April 23, 2025.

Burke was also charged with continuous sexual abuse of a child under age 14 between Sept. 7, 2023, and Sept. 7, 2024,

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FORECAST

Riverside
79/52

Temecula: High 77 Low 45
Desert: High 89 Low 63
Mountains: High 61 Low 32

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