

S. Korea-U.S. alliance may be reframed

INSIDE, 5A



VENTURA COUNTY STAR

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Texas detention center alarms critics

Fort Bliss is at site of WWII internment camp

Eduardo Cuevas and Lauren Villagran USA TODAY

FORT BLISS, TX – Americans of Japanese heritage say they hear echoes of their families’ forced internment in the Trump administration’s newest immigrant detention site. Homeland Security officials say President Donald Trump’s sweeping mass deportation campaign requires a build-up of detention centers to bridge the gap be-

tween arrests and removals. They’ve turned to the U.S. military and private contractors to get the job done, including erecting the nation’s largest immigrant detention site on Fort Bliss in El Paso, Texas. But stewards of Japanese American history, including the children and grandchildren of those who were held in detention, are criticizing the use of Fort Bliss and the plans to expand immigrant detention on American military bases. Fort Bliss was a “cog” in the United States Japanese internment machine, said Brian Niiya, a historian and content director at Densho, a nonprofit that chronicles

Japanese American internment. Niiya’s grandfather, the managing editor of a Japanese language newspaper, was arrested the night of Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on Dec. 7, 1941, and held in six different internment camps over the next two years. “It’s important to look to this past to maybe try to understand what’s going on in the present and what the end results could be,” Niiya said.

DHS: Detaining the ‘worst of the worst’

The Fort Bliss facility, also known as

Camp East Montana, rises like a white tent city on a flat desert plain. It falls within the confines of the military base but is visible from El Paso’s bustling Montana Avenue and sits adjacent to an unmarked building that is the local headquarters of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. At a cost of \$1.2 billion, the camp has the capacity to detain 5,000 people. Roughly 1,000 men were being held there in mid-August, according to U.S. Rep. Veronica Escobar, D-Texas, whose district includes Fort Bliss.

See DETENTION, Page 2A



The Eaton Fire burns through a neighborhood on Jan. 8 in Altadena. The recent wildfires in the state caused between an estimated \$95 billion and \$164 billion in financial losses. More than 30 people died. JUSTIN SULLIVAN/GETTY IMAGES

Slow, steady progress for LA fire victims

Many just starting the process of rebuilding

Terry Collins USA TODAY

Chien Yu recently offered to take his 12-year-old son Hudson for a haircut. It seemed like a harmless suggestion, but the shaggy-haired boy’s answer reminded Yu that his two sons are still processing the trauma they’ve endured this year. The last time they all got haircuts together, Hudson reminded him, was the same day his school and their home of six years burned to the ground. “I forgot. I was blown away, he remembered,” Yu said. “So I just dropped it and went without them.” A firefighter in Pasadena, California, Yu long ago developed skills to block out such tragedies. But the wildfire that tore through Los Angeles and their Altadena neighborhood early in 2025 literally struck close to home. “It’s so much more personal now,” the

See FIRE, Page 2A



Kim and Chien Yu, along with their sons Atticus, left and Hudson, attend the Los Angeles Dodgers 2025 home opener honoring area firefighters. Chien Yu, a Pasadena firefighter, battled the Eaton Fire right after his family evacuated their home, which they lost in the blaze. PROVIDED BY CHIEN YU

College district to study plan for new Santa Paula campus

Tony Biasotti Ventura County Star USA TODAY NETWORK

Three years ago, officials with the Ventura County Community College District were in talks to buy property at the east end of Santa Paula for a new college campus. That property, owned by the agricultural company Limoneira, is now fallow farmland, no closer to being a college campus than it was in 2023. But it’s still for sale, and the district is now taking the first steps down a road that could lead it to a satellite campus there or elsewhere. The college district’s board of trustees met Aug. 21 at the Museum of Ventura County Agricultural Museum in Santa Paula. The only item on the agenda was a discussion of the district’s plans for Santa Paula, Fillmore and the rest of the Santa Clara River Valley. The board didn’t take a formal vote, but at the end of the meeting, the trustees agreed that the district will conduct or commission a study on the

See CAMPUS, Page 4A

County gets \$28 million California housing grant

Isaiah Murtaugh Ventura County Star USA TODAY NETWORK

Ventura County has won a nearly \$28 million state grant to build and operate 88 units of supportive housing just outside Camarillo, the state housing department announced Aug. 21. The Homekey+ award is part of a new state project targeted at mental health treatment and housing. Dignity Moves, a San Francisco-based nonprofit, will build the planned supportive housing project on county-owned land at 1732 Lewis Road. Many Mansions will take over when construction is complete, operating the development and providing case management services for tenants who are coming out of homelessness. Rick Schroeder, the Thousand Oaks nonprofit’s CEO, said he expects the project to take another bite out of the county’s homelessness numbers,

See GRANT, Page 2A

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