

Ranking top potential free agents for 2027

SPORTS, 1B



VENTURA COUNTY STAR

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Rubio sees progress in Hormuz talks

Mediators working to facilitate negotiations

Tala Ramadan, Parisa Hafezi and Nandita Bose

REUTERS

DUBAI – U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said on Aug. 4 there has been progress made in discussions with Iran and Oman on getting more ships through the Strait of Hormuz but no final agreement has been reached. “There’s been progress made in those talks, but not finality yet. We’re hoping that will happen very shortly,” Rubio told reporters at the State Department. Qatar said mediators were making progress in efforts to end the U.S.-Iran war on Aug. 4, although Tehran has de-

nied President Donald Trump’s assertion that talks are already underway. Oil prices fell quickly after the comments from Qatar, extending steep losses on Aug. 3 on hopes that an arrangement could soon be reached to unfreeze traffic through the blockaded Strait of Hormuz. But for now, the strait remained virtually shut, with another ship reportedly coming under attack while trying to cross it. Trump said on Aug. 3 that talks with Tehran had started and Iran faced a “last chance” to reach a deal. Iranian officials insisted no negotiations with the United States were taking place. Iran says its only talks are with Oman about the strait, and that no major meetings were planned.

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Iran has halted most traffic through the Strait of Hormuz while Washington maintains a blockade of Iran-related shipping and ports, disrupting a corridor that normally carries about a fifth of global oil and liquefied natural gas shipments. AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



Site grading is currently underway at the former Lost Canyons Golf Club in Simi Valley July 24. The course has been closed for the past 10 years and is being redeveloped with more than 300 new homes. JUAN CARLO/THE STAR

Lost Canyons project moves closer to reality

Proposed housing development in Simi Valley advances through the approval process

Tony Biasotti

Ventura County Star

USA TODAY NETWORK

The former Lost Canyons golf course in Simi Valley is moving another step closer to becoming a neighborhood of houses, as the city takes up the latest

updates to the development plan. The Lost Canyons project will go before the Simi Valley City Council on Aug. 10, said Sean Gibson, the city’s deputy environmental services director. The council has already approved a development of 364 single-family homes for the site; the purpose of the Aug. 10 hearing

will be to formalize a revised version of the plan that replaces the old golf course with more open space. “The writing was on the wall for some time that the golf course would not be part of their plan, and this makes it official,” Gibson said. The Simi Valley Planning commission approved this new version of the development plan on June 3, and the City Council has final approval.

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Decision on Santa Paula Hospital nears; options raise fears

Tom Kisken

Ventura County Star

USA TODAY NETWORK

A consulting firm and the Ventura County’s top administrator will recommend the County Board of Supervisors replace Santa Paula Hospital with a system they said will meet many community needs but will be less than a hospital. At a sometimes emotional community meeting in Fillmore on Aug. 3, residents of the Santa Clara River Valley were told again the small, deep-in-the-red hilltop hospital with low patient census will close in 2030. The 63-year-old facility, now run by the county, will no longer meet state seismic requirements. County leaders have said they won’t retrofit the facility because It would cost more than \$36 million, also incurring more than \$10 million a year in other expenses. It’s an equation that has for many months sparked fear in a growing, lower-income, largely Latino valley that includes Santa Paula, Fillmore and Piru. People worry about having to go to the Ventura County Medical Center or elsewhere for care needed immediately. “It’s just going to negatively affect people in the valley and their medical outcomes,” said Fillmore Mayor Albert Mendez. Jonathan Freedman, consultant with Health Management Associates, presented a report of options that included replacing the facility with a micro-hospital that would include four

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Senate committee backs Blanche’s nomination

Aysha Bagchi and Zachary Schermele

USA TODAY

Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche won the support of a key Senate committee Aug. 4 to be confirmed in his role permanently, but his pathway to approval from the full Senate isn’t assured yet. The 12-10 Senate Judiciary Committee vote on party lines took place a day after Blanche’s nomination got a major boost as Republican Sens. John Cornyn of Texas and Thom Tillis of North Caro-

lina agreed to support him. They did so after Blanche formally dropped a proposed \$1.776 billion “anti-weaponization” fund and clarified limits to President Donald Trump’s controversial immunity on tax issues. “We want to express our gratitude to Mr. Blanche and his staff for working with us on this, and we look forward to voting to advance his nomination out of the Senate Judiciary Committee soon,” the two senators said in a joint statement Aug. 3. Both are leaving the Senate in Janu-

ary. Tillis chose not to run for reelection and Cornyn lost his primary to a Trump-backed challenger. Tillis had also said, on July 16, that he wouldn’t provide his support until Blanche met with a group of women who have accused convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein of abuse. Blanche met with those women later that day, although several expressed disappointment following the meeting. A vote from the full Senate could take

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A vote from the full Senate on Todd Blanche’s nomination could take place before the end of the week. JONATHAN ERNST/REUTERS FILE

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