

THE SENTINEL

The daily grind

Lemoore coffee stand serves up java, A3



Halloween

Should Christians celebrate the holiday? B1



PLENTY OF SUNSHINE 93 • 53 FORECAST, A6 | SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2020 | hanfordsentinel.com

Local woman honored for work with safe driving

Ivette Stafforini was named to the second class of the Latino Inspire Awards

NOE GARCIA
Staff Reporter

HANFORD — The second class of Latino Inspire Award recipients were honored virtually on Tuesday. Representative TJ Cox of Cal-

ifornia's 21st Congressional District hosted the awards ceremony via Zoom and honored 15 members — 13 residents and two organizations — from Fresno, Kings and Kern Counties.

One of those 15 recipients was Ivette Stafforini, who was commended for her work with Impact Teen Drivers.

"It's an honor. I take what I do very seriously," Stafforini said. "I'm very passionate about safe driving, being an advocate for safe driving

in our communities, so to be recognized for the work that I have been doing for now nine years, it feels really good."

According to Impact Teen Drivers' website, they are "a leading traffic safety education nonprofit with the mission of saving lives by fighting the number one killer of teens in America: reckless and distracted driving."

Stafforini has worked for the nonprofit organization as an Education Outreach Coordinator for

a year, but has been educating her community about the dangers of reckless driving and the importance of wearing a seatbelt for nearly a decade.

Her work stems from her family's own tragedy. Stafforini's sister, Itzayana "Itzy" Chaidez, died on Sept. 2, 2011, due to distracted driving and failing to wear her seatbelt. She was 17 years old.

"After that, I wanted to educate our community to empower them to make better choices than my sis-

ter did so that no other family has to feel that way that my family feels," Stafforini said.

She tells Itzy's story by going to local school assemblies, something she's been doing for approximately eight years.

"The work that I do, it means the world," she said. "For me, even if I can save just one life, the life of one teenager because they heard my sister's story or they heard our

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CONTRIBUTED BY HANFORD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Hanford Chamber of Commerce honored its eight award winners on Wednesday.

Hanford Chamber of Commerce winners honored

STAFF REPORTS

HANFORD — The Hanford Chamber of Commerce honored the 2020 Distinguished Citizens and Business award

winners on Wednesday.

The drive-thru event had family and friends celebrate the eight award winners. The categories included Business of the

Year, Nonprofit of the Year, Teen of the Year, Female Citizen of the Year, Male Citizen of the Year, Volunteer of the Year, and two for First Responder of the Year.

The winners were Kings Gun Center, Champions Recovery, Parker Bualwalda, Michelle Brown, Gary Feinstein, Theresa Dias, Connor Kurtz and Jeff Schneider respectively.

Trump changes course, approves relief for 6 fires

DON THOMPSON
AND JOHN ANTCHAK
Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — President Donald Trump's administration abruptly reversed course and approved California's application for disaster relief funds to clean up damage from six recent deadly and destructive blazes that have scorched the state, Gov. Gavin Newsom said Friday.

"Just got off the phone with President Trump who has approved our Major Disaster Declaration request. Grateful for his quick response," Newsom said in a brief statement.

Neither he nor the White House gave details on why the administration shifted positions only hours after it initially denied the state's request for a declaration that officials

said could provide the state with hundreds of millions of dollars.

White House spokesman Judd Deere previously said California's request "was not supported by the relevant data" needed for approval and that Trump agreed with a recommendation from the Federal Emergency Management Agency administrator to reject the declaration.

"The Governor and (GOP) Leader (Kevin) McCarthy spoke and presented a convincing case and additional on-the-ground perspective for reconsideration leading the President to approve the declaration," Deere said in a statement after Trump's change of heart.

McCarthy thanked Trump in a tweet for providing "the assistance needed to rebuild and repair,"

though his office did not respond to requests for more details on what changed.

Fellow Republican U.S. Rep. Tom McClintock said in a tweet that McCarthy told him "the President has committed to reverse FEMA's decision ... and help is on the way."

Both congressmen represent areas harmed by wildfires.

The state had planned to appeal the denial and believed it had a strong case, Brian Ferguson, a spokesman with the governor's Office of Emergency Services, said before the reversal.

Newsom had asked for the major disaster declaration on Sept. 28 to cover fires in Fresno, Los Angeles, Madera, Mendocino, San Bernardino, San Diego and Siskiyou counties.

The 30-page request described the disasters and pointed out that damage assessments were incomplete because the fires were still raging and access was difficult.

Federal major disaster declarations allow for cost-sharing for damage, cleanup and rebuilding between the state and federal governments. They also activate relief programs led by FEMA.

The dispute surfaced as a representative of one fire-stricken area warned that time was running out to clean up debris before rain and snow arrived, bringing the threat of mudslides and toxins being washed into a river watershed.

Denials of relief are rare and Newsom, a Democrat, has previously

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Trump courts voters in must-win states

STEVE PEOPLES, DARLENE SUPERVILLE
AND BILL BARROW
Associated Press

FORT MYERS, Fla. (AP) — Backed into a corner and facing financial strains, President Donald Trump went after his opponent's family and defended his own struggle to contain the pandemic on Friday as he fought to energize his sagging reelection bid in the nation's Sunbelt. With Election Day looming, Democrat Joe Biden pushed to keep voters focused on health care in the Midwest.

Trump was campaigning in Florida and Georgia, neighboring states he carried four years ago and must win again to extend his presidency. His decision to devote Friday evening's prime-time slot to Georgia in particular highlighted the serious nature of his challenge in the 2020 contest's closing days: Far from his original plan to expand into Democratic-leaning states, he is laboring to stave off a defeat of major proportions.

No Republican presidential candidate has lost Georgia since George H.W. Bush in 1992. And earlier this week, Trump had to court voters in Iowa, a state he carried by almost 10 points four years ago.

In Florida on Friday, the president derided the Bidens as "an organized crime family," renewing his daily claims about the candidate's son, Hunter, and his business dealings in Ukraine and China.

More to the point for Trump's Florida audience, he spoke directly to seniors who have increasingly soured on his handling of the pandemic.

"I am moving heaven and earth to safeguard our seniors from the China virus," Trump said, using his usual blame-shifting term to describe the coronavirus. He also offered an optimistic assessment of the pandemic, even as a surge of new infections spread across America.

"We are prevailing," the president said, promising to deliver the first doses of a vaccine to seniors when it's ready.

Despite the tough talk, Trump's actions on the ground in Florida underscored the conflicting messages his administration has sent throughout the pandemic. All of the president's security personnel and support staff were wearing face masks when Air Force One touched down, but Trump and Florida's Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis were bare faced.

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TCSO arrests man driving stolen tractor

STAFF REPORTS

CORCORAN — Tulare County Sheriff's deputies arrested a Lindsay man Wednesday after he was allegedly found driving a stolen tractor, officials said.

Just before 7 p.m., TCSO deputies were called to the rural area of Road 24 and Avenue 156 in Corcoran for a suspicious male walking near an agriculture equipment yard.

Navarro

When they arrived, deputies said they found a man driving a large John Deere tractor on the road and stopped him. The man behind the wheel was identified as 29-year-old Jaime Navarro of Lindsay.

Through their investigation, deputies said they learned the tractor was stolen out of Tulare County. They said a records check of Navarro also revealed he is on parole after being released from custody on multiple felony charges.

Authorities said Navarro was

later booked into the South County Detention Facility.

Anyone with information about this case is encouraged to call the Tulare County Sheriff's Office at (559) 733-6218, or send anonymous information by sending a text or email to TCSO@tipnow.com or calling (559) 725-4194.

Tulare County Sheriff's Office said this John Deere tractor was stolen out of Tulare County.

CONTRIBUTED BY TULARE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



- Galleries: High School Basketball
- Column: Tom Elias
- Videos: See local videos of events and sports

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CLASSIFIEDS	B5	OBITUARIES	A5
COMICS	B3	COMMENTARY	A4
FAITH	B1	COMMUNITY	A3

