



INSIDE | A2

TOUCH-AND-GO

After almost two years circling an ancient asteroid hundreds of millions of miles away, a NASA spacecraft this week will attempt to descend to the treacherous, boulder-packed surface and snatch a handful of rubble



SPORTS | B1

CHECKERED FLAG

Joey Logano used every bit of the track to hold off Kevin Harvick over a long, finishing green-flag run to win the NASCAR Cup Series race Sunday and earn a spot in the championship round at Phoenix

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\$2

Town urges Newsom to rethink COVID plan

By **Angela Stevens**
Special to Victorville Daily Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

Apple Valley Mayor Scott Nassif has sent Gov. Gavin Newsom a letter urging him to allow certain “sub-regions” — the town included — to reopen

despite San Bernardino County’s place in the most-restrictive tier of the state’s reopening framework.

The sub-regions include those in the county with low population density and low rates of coronavirus infection, according to a press release.

Essentially, the letter asks Newsom to give consideration to communities where COVID-19 has had less of an impact.

“Our concern with the tier based reopening plan is that it is based on results from entire counties rather than

communities,” Nassif wrote. The Town Council unanimously approved sending Newsom the letter last week via a resolution.

In the letter, Nassif noted that San Bernardino is the largest county by area in the United States, adding that

the smaller San Francisco, Ventura and San Diego counties operate in less-restrictive tiers despite having “similar or worse incidences of COVID-19.”

“Our County is
See NEWSOM, A5

Going dark



In this Oct. 23 file photo, Elijah Carter 11, left, and Robert Haralson, 12, help shop for their parents in a darkened Olivers Supermarket during a blackout in the Rincon Valley community in Santa Rosa, Calif. [KENT PORTER/THE PRESS DEMOCRAT VIA THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

Utility lacked basic training before blackouts

By **Michael Liedtke and Justin Pritchard**
The Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — When Pacific Gas & Electric cut power to large swaths of wildfire-prone Northern California last fall, few of the

emergency personnel managing the blackouts for the nation’s largest utility had learned the fundamentals of managing an emergency in their home state.

The utility entered 2019 planning to “de-energize” its aging electric grid during

autumn windstorms, so that downed lines couldn’t spark a blaze. Yet among the hundreds of people who handled the blackouts from PG&E’s emergency operations center, only a handful had any training in the disaster response playbook that California has

used for a generation, The Associated Press found.

Predictably enough, the October 2019 outages brought chaos from the San Francisco Bay Area to the Sierra Nevada, as more than 2 million people

See BLACKOUTS, A5

Saturday night blaze chars 14 acres in Oak Hills

By **Jose Quintero**
Victorville Daily Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

Firefighters made quick work of a vegetation blaze Saturday night in Oak Hills caused by a vehicle fire.

The fire was held to just over 14 acres near El Centro Road and Bellflower Street, just west of Interstate 15, according to San Bernardino County Fire Department spokesperson Mike McClintock.

The blaze was reported at 7:12 p.m. and firefighters stopped the spread within 40 minutes, McClintock said.

No structures were threatened or injuries were reported. McClintock said the fire department responded with five engines, two battalion chiefs, a hand crew, water tender and a dozer.

The United States Forest Service and CalFire also assisted in battling the vegetation blaze, he said.



Firefighters responded to a vegetation blaze in Oak Hills on Saturday night near El Centro Road and Bellflower Street. [SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT]

Lewis Center celebrates 30th anniversary

Staff Reports

The Lewis Center for Educational Research in Apple Valley is celebrating its 30th anniversary with a documentary and a fundraiser that carries a simple call to action: \$30 for 30 years of service to the local and global academic community.

The first half of the two-part documentary captures the story of how Rick Piercy, in 1985, began work to bring a new kind of educational experience to the High Desert based on hands-on science, according to a press release. Piercy’s work paid off five years later when the Lewis Center, then called the Science and Technology Center, was dedicated on Oct. 19, 1990.

Piercy, former president and CEO, returned to serve as the guide through the history of the Lewis Center, which operates the Academy for Academic Excellence in Apple Valley, the Norton Science and Language Academy in San Bernardino and the GAVRT Radio Astronomy Project in the Mojave Desert near Fort Irwin alongside NASA/JPL.

“This is such a nice way to honor all of those who played a part in the history and accomplishments of the Lewis Center,” Piercy said in the release. “It’ll also help young people realize what incredible things you can accomplish when you work together.”

When it opened, the facility boasted a computer center, weather station, telecommunications center, observatory,

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