



ECONOMY
Key inflation gauge sees biggest spike in 39 years
Business » A7



GIRLS SOCCER
Cards sweep Mariners, gain inside track to title
Sports » B4



COLORADO FIRE
Big Sur wildfire now 75% contained
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Santa Cruz Sentinel



Saturday, January 29, 2022

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ENVIRONMENT

PISMO CLAMS MAKE A MYSTIFYING COMEBACK



STEPHANIE SECREST FOR THE BAY AREA NEWS GROUP

Cal Poly San Luis Obispo students on Jan. 16 search at low tide for tagged clams they began burying in August as part of a project aimed at bringing sustainable native clams back to Pismo Beach, once called the "Clam Capital of the World."

Cal Poly students try to solve puzzle amid poacher crackdown

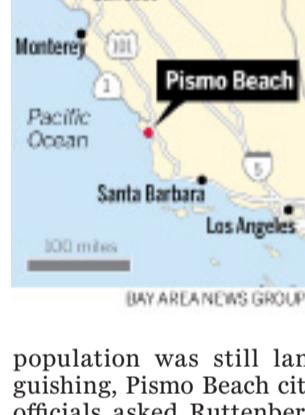
By Graycen Wheeler
Correspondent to the Sentinel

PISMO BEACH » Once a cherished central California fishery, Pismo clams went missing from their namesake beach for decades.

The treasured shellfish, however, are now making a steady, triumphant return. No one knows exactly why.

But Ben Ruttenberg, the director of the Center for Coastal Marine Sciences at Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo, is determined to find out.

In 2014, when the clam



great idea,'" Ruttenberg recalled. "And then we realized that it was a lot more complicated than the simple question that they were asking."

To truly understand the life cycles and movements of Pismo clams and unravel the mystery of why they're making a surprise comeback, students from his lab are doing monthly clam surveys and also festooning the mollusks with identification numbers, QR codes and metal washers that allow clams buried in the sand to be found with metal detectors.

During the Pismo clams'

glory days in the 1950s, marine biologists had come up with estimates of the growth rates and lifespans of the clams. But Ruttenberg discovered that nobody knew if the estimates still held true for today's Pismo clam population. He also learned that no one had studied how the clams move around throughout their lifetimes.

"We realized that there was this incredible vacuum of information about this cool creature that was so culturally important here," Ruttenberg said.

The QR codes on the buried clams link to a survey, where clam-spotters can report information about the clams' location and well-being. Since Ruttenberg's team

CLAMS » PAGE 2

INFRASTRUCTURE DISASTER

Bridge collapses, drops bus into Pittsburgh ravine

By Gene Puskas and Mark Scolforo
The Associated Press

PITTSBURGH » A 50-year-old bridge collapsed in Pittsburgh early Friday, requiring rescuers to rappel nearly 150 feet and form a human chain to reach occupants of a bus that had plummeted with the span into a park ravine.

The collapse came hours before President Joe Biden was to visit the city to promote his \$1 trillion infrastructure law, which has earmarked about \$1.6 billion for

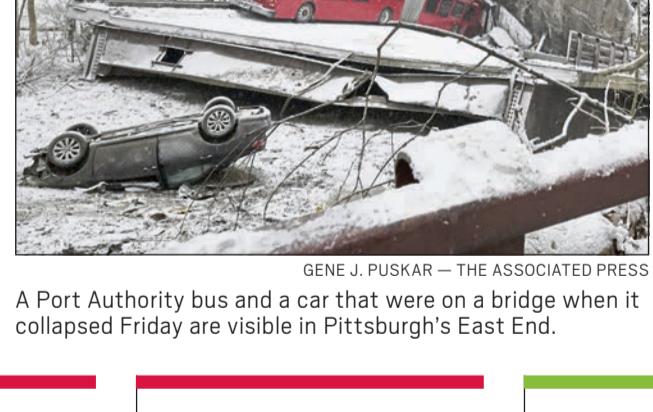
Pennsylvania bridge maintenance.

There were minor injuries from the collapse but no fatalities, said authorities, who also flew drones to make sure no one was under any collapsed sections. Five other vehicles were also on the bridge at the time. The cause was being investigated and crews were searching under the debris for additional victims.

City officials said the

Forbes Avenue Bridge over Fern Hollow Creek in Frick

BRIDGE » PAGE 5



GENE J. PUSKAS — THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
A Port Authority bus and a car that were on a bridge when it collapsed Friday are visible in Pittsburgh's East End.

COVID-19

Omicron drives deaths higher than delta wave

COVID-19 variant sweeping U.S. surpasses last fall's delta wave in its death toll, expected to rise considerably. **PAGE A6**

BUSINESS

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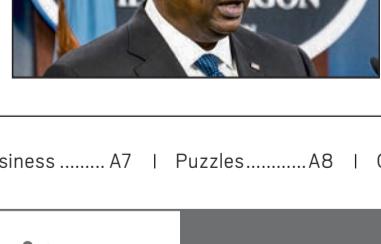


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UKRAINE

Austin: Putin has full range of military options

U.S. defense chief says Russia's troop buildup on Ukraine border puts Putin in a strong strategic position. **PAGE A10**



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