



Photographs by ROBERT GAUTHIER Los Angeles Times

BEEKEEPER Lauren Wood tends to the hives at the 2nd & PCH outdoor mall in Long Beach. “The goal is to keep expanding,” the mall’s general manager said, with the target of harvesting 20 pounds of honey per year.

Buzz at Long Beach mall is sweet and bee-autiful

Hives, honey make property stand out in commercial real estate market while helping the environment

By ROGER VINCENT

On an afternoon in late summer, the bees that live at a Long Beach mall were flying high, winging their way back to their hives atop a parking garage.

Upon their return, they emptied the “pollen pants” they were sporting on their hind legs to make food for the colony’s offspring. The colorful clusters of pollen are a sign of the bees are well and producing more honey than they need to eat.

“Your bees are healthy, happy and looking good,” the beekeeper’s monthly report to the mall’s owner said. “We were able to make a hefty harvest from Hive 2.”

Far from happenstance, the arrival of the bees at 2nd & PCH came at the invitation of Center-Cal Properties, which owns the outdoor mall. Treated like val-

[See Bees, A9]



THE AREA where the hives are is landscaped with fragrant native plants that bees find appealing, such as Spanish lavender.

President does an about-face, pardons his son

Biden says Hunter, who pleaded guilty in one of the cases, was a victim of unfair political attacks.

By MATT HAMILTON

President Biden on Sunday issued a “full and unconditional” pardon to his son Hunter, who was convicted by a jury of illegally purchasing a handgun in Delaware and pleaded guilty to tax charges in Los Angeles.

Biden and his staff had repeatedly and publicly stated he would not pardon Hunter. The about-face came about two weeks before his son was set to be sentenced — potentially facing a prison term — by federal judges on both coasts.

In explaining the controversial and extraordinary action, Biden claimed Hunter was the victim of unfair political attacks.

“The charges in his cases came about only after several of my political oppo-

nents in Congress instigated them to attack me and oppose my election,” Biden said in a statement released Sunday.

“No reasonable person who looks at the facts of Hunter’s cases can reach any other conclusion than Hunter was singled out only because he is my son — and that is wrong,” he continued in the statement.

“There has been an effort to break Hunter — who has been five and a half years sober, even in the face of unrelenting attacks and selective prosecution,” the president said.

President-elect Donald Trump has openly called for his political enemies to be prosecuted, and Biden, with less than two months left in his presidency, suggested “attacks” on his son would not let up.

“In trying to break Hunter, they’ve tried to break me — and there’s no reason to believe it will stop here. Enough is enough,” the president declared.

Republicans condemned the move, with Rep. James [See Pardon, A5]

Move feeds debate over politics, justice

With Trump’s vows of retribution and now Biden’s pardon, some see a perilous moment for the legal system.

By KEVIN RECTOR

Democrats have warned for months that Donald Trump, if elected again, would bend the Justice Department to his own political will. But President Biden’s announcement Sunday that he had issued a sweeping pardon for his son Hunter — for any crimes he may have committed over a decade — suddenly left the president’s allies on the defensive.

Biden said he did it, after promising he wouldn’t, because he felt his own Justice Department had treated his

son unfairly — that “raw politics” had “infected” Hunter Biden’s prosecution on gun and tax evasion offenses and “led to a miscarriage of justice.”

Trump, who during his first term pardoned a slate of political allies and who has long condemned the Justice Department as politicized and in need of an overhaul, blasted the decision, suggesting the pardon was an “abuse and miscarriage of Justice” itself.

The pardon immediately fed into an already roiling debate nationally around [See Debate, A5]

Some Democrats express dismay

Critics say the pardon might embolden Donald Trump to do the same for his allies. **NATION, A4**

State releases new plan to protect Joshua trees

The blueprint calls for limiting development and mitigating wildfire danger in the desert

By ALEX WIGGLESWORTH

The Joshua tree is cherished for its distinctive silhouette and singular role as a linchpin of the Mojave Desert ecosystem. Yet the iconic succulent is losing suitable habitat at a brisk clip due to climate change, worsening wildfires and development, scientists and environmental advocates say.

A new plan by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to ensure the Joshua tree’s survival calls for limiting development in certain areas, including those where the plant may be able to thrive in a future anticipated to be warmer and drier, even as other portions of its range become uninhabitable.

The draft plan also calls on government agencies to develop strategies to mitigate and fight wildfires that threaten Joshua trees.



ALLEN J. SCHABEN Los Angeles Times

MORE THAN a third of the western Joshua tree’s range in California is private acreage, including some of the fastest-growing communities in the region.

“It’s groundbreaking in that it’s really the most comprehensive attempt done by the state of California or really any entity I’m aware of in the United States on how to manage a species that’s clearly threatened by climate change,” said Brendan Cummings, conservation director of the Center for Biological Diversity.

The nonprofit petitioned to list the western Joshua tree as threatened under the state Endangered Species Act in 2019.

The plan does not spell out exactly how much land should be prioritized for protection, or where it is. But it lists criteria for ranking its conservation value, like having a high density of healthy Joshua trees and existing within an area where conditions are cooler and wetter than much of the rest of the range. It sets a goal of identifying priority conservation [See Trees, A6]

Schools wrestle with phone bans

L.A. is among districts with a mandate looming and trying to figure out how to enforce it. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

Galaxy’s fans had seen enough

Team’s return to the MLS Cup final began with a boycott that got ownership’s attention. **SPORTS, B10**

Messy business of film releases

“Moana 2,” “Wicked,” “Gladiator II” are hits, but that doesn’t mean the industry is doing great. **BUSINESS, A8**

Weather

Partly sunny.
L.A. Basin: 70/48. **B6**

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