



A RETIRED veteran of the L.A. County Sheriff's Department who declined to give his name fishes behind his new home in Eagle, Idaho.

Taking their big pensions to Idaho

Retired California cops are seen as almost too liberal in a small-government boomtown

BY JACK DOLAN | REPORTING FROM EAGLE, IDAHO

The recent mayoral election in this sleepy, conservative town nestled in the foothills outside Boise didn't hinge on which Republican candidate was a fiercer supporter of former President Trump, or who was a stronger opponent of abortion. The key issue? Who was the least Californian.

Both staunchly conservative candidates were refugees from the Golden State. The incumbent had arrived in 2003 from Orange County with little more than the shirt on his back. His challenger, a retired Santa Clara County fire captain, came about a decade later with a six-figure pension courtesy of California taxpayers.

That made him, and the hundreds of other retired California cops and firefighters flooding into the town in recent years, seem practically socialist to the old guard who find it hard to trust new arrivals with pockets full of government cash.

"It's ludicrous" that they call themselves Republicans, Mayor Jason Pierce said during an interview on election day in early December. "You find a lot of Californians who move here don't realize how much [liberal] baggage they're bringing with them."

And that's the irony: Whether locals like it or not, California public pension money is the lifeblood of the economy in this small-government, Republican boomtown.

It's a phenomenon happening across the West, as tens of thousands of California's career civil servants — people who devoted their working lives to making state and local government function — decide California is no longer their home.

Nearly 90,000 members of CalPERS, California's main public employee retirement system, received their payments outside the state, according to a Times analysis. [See Idaho, A9]



BRAD PIKE, a retired Santa Clara County fire chief, campaigns for mayor of Eagle. He won in a runoff.

Newsom grapples with risks linked to clemency

Governor used power to free 35 elderly and sick prisoners during COVID-19 pandemic. Will he release more?

BY MACKENZIE MAYS

David Moreland had long expected to die in prison. But when the coronavirus nearly killed him in 2020, it was that brush with death that ended up freeing him.

"This is how God works," Moreland, 67, said from his cozy living room at a subsidized apartment complex for seniors in Long Beach.

When Moreland contracted COVID before vaccines were available, his oxygen levels were so low that a doctor was preparing to hook him to a ventilator, he said. Handcuffed to a hospital bed and hot and delusional with a fever, he feared he would not survive.

Yet as the virus ravaged California's overcrowded prisons, Moreland recovered from respiratory failure and a blood clot in his lungs. After a month in the hospital, he had to relearn to walk with shackles on his feet.

Then, another "miracle" happened, Moreland said: A prison guard told him he had a call from Gov. Gavin Newsom's office.

[See Clemency, A16]

In Mexico, 'Adderall' pills can be dangerous or benign

Amid a U.S. shortage, fakes made of meth and more now come in convincing bottles.

BY KERI BLAKINGER, CONNOR SHEETS AND BRITTNY MEJIA

PUERTO VALLARTA, Mexico — As a shortage of Adderall stretches into its second year, millions of patients are struggling to fill their prescriptions in U.S. pharmacies. But in Mexico, some pharmacies are selling the pricey orange pills over the counter, in sealed bottles bearing the names and logos of well-known pharmaceutical companies.

One problem: They're not real. Some are counterfeits made of methamphetamine, while others contain appetite suppressants, acetaminophen or caffeine.

Ten months after the Los Angeles Times sounded the alarm about methamphetamine-tainted Adderall knockoffs sold by Mexican pharmacies, a follow-up investigation shows the problem is more sophisticated than previously known.

A new round of testing in Cabo San Lucas and Puerto Vallarta found that counterfeiters in both beachfront [See Fake meds, A10]

Hopes dim for cease-fire in Gaza

BY LAURA KING AND TRACY WILKINSON

TEL AVIV — The death toll in Gaza grows by the hour. International pressure on Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu steadily increases. And ordinary Israelis voice more and more frustration over the direction of the deadliest war yet against the Palestinian militant group Hamas.

Yet as the year winds down, it's unclear whether the combination of factors will force even a temporary hiatus in fighting that is exacting a vast human cost, eroding U.S. support around the world and threatening to influence American elections next fall.

The death toll in Gaza, exacerbated by one of the most intensive bombing campaigns in the history of modern warfare, reached a bleak milestone Friday, sur [See Cease-fire, A4]

Where 'We never close' stands true

A San Francisco diner's 84-year-old owner vows to keep the lights on

FRANK SHYONG

It's midnight at the Silver Crest Donut Shop in San Francisco and there are no doughnuts, though people keep coming in to ask for them.

The honey buns, glazed rings and jelly-filled classics have been gone since August, when owner George Giavris hurt his back and ended up in a wheelchair. And before the doughnuts came off the restaurant's menu, it was the chili burgers, fish sandwiches and cold cuts. Then they had to close the men's bathroom. Since George got hurt, there's no cook for dinner service.

But the Silver Crest remains open 24 hours a day, every day, as it has since George and his wife, Nina, got the keys in 1970. It'll never close, George insists. Not for his back pain, nor that in his arms, legs and neck.

[See Silver Crest, A8]



THE 24-HOUR Silver Crest Donut Shop doesn't serve dinner or doughnuts, but the coffee's hot and George Giavris will pour you a shot of ouzo.

Has L.A. become hell on Earth?

Thirty years ago, Time magazine dared to ask the question. A panel of Angelenos today weighs in. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

Horse racing's uncertain future

The closure of Golden Gate Fields in 2024 is just one move that could destabilize the industry in California. **SPORTS, D6**

The best tamales in L.A. and O.C.

Sample the tasty offerings from regional Mexican, Salvadoran, Belizean and Guatemalan styles. **WEEKEND, L1**

Weather

Mostly sunny.

L.A. Basin: 66/48. **B10**



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