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CELEBRATION

TRAIL STARTS WITH TRESTLE WIDENING



PHOTOS BY DAN COYRO — SANTA CRUZ SENTINEL

Hundreds of community members turn out for the San Lorenzo River Trestle Bridge widening groundbreaking.

By Jessica A. York jyork@santacruzsentinel.com @reporterjess on Twitter

SANTA CRUZ » The ceremonial commemoration of impending construction to widen the San Lorenzo River trestle bridge walkway drew hundreds of people to a midday celebration Thursday.

The project and fanfare surrounding the event — attendees were offered free local beer, commemorative shortbread cookies and pint glasses — stemmed from the \$2 million project's place in a larger regional puzzle. The short stretch of 10-foot-wide walkway, replacing an existing 4-foot bridge path, represents the first leg of a planned 32-mile-long coastal rail trail pathway vision that would arc across Santa Cruz County.



Cyclists pause at the San Lorenzo River Trestle Bridge, where work has begun to widen the pedestrian walkway.

"I think all of us has used it to cross from a vibrant neighborhood to the beach area and back again," Santa Cruz County Supervisor Ryan Coonerty said of the trestle's narrow public path. "It's also a heart-raising moment, when you see families out there

with strollers, bikes and people trying to maneuver. We knew that there has to be a way that you could create access without having to rebuild the entire bridge."

The trestle bridge pathway will include a bike-friendly railing, slip resistant surface and low-level lighting. The next segment of rail trail, also located in Santa Cruz and dubbed "Segment 7," was stalled due to higher-than-projected contractor bids and a revised plan will be out to bid this spring, according to Santa Cruz Assistant Public Works Director Chris Schneider. The second phase of Segment 7 will go for city Planning Commission approval next month.

Land Trust of Santa Cruz County Executive Director Stephen Slade said his organization is

BRIDGE » PAGE 2

THE WALL

Trump threatens with emergency declaration

By Catherine Lucey, Lisa Mascaro and Zeke Miller The Associated Press

MCALLEN, TEXAS » Taking the shutdown fight to the Mexican border, President Donald Trump edged closer Thursday to declaring a national emergency in an extraordinary end run around Congress to fund his long-promised border wall. Pressure was mounting to find an escape hatch from the three-week impasse that has closed parts of the government, cutting scattered services and leaving hundreds of thousands of workers without pay.

Trump, visiting McAllen, Texas, and the Rio Grande to highlight what he says is a crisis of drugs and crime, said that "if for any reason we don't get this going" — an agreement with House Democrats who have refused to approve the \$5.7 billion he demands for the wall — "I will declare a national emergency."

Some 800,000 workers, more than half of them still on the job, were to miss their first paycheck on Friday under the stoppage, and Washington was close to setting a dubious record for the longest government shutdown in the nation's history. Those markers — along with growing effects to national parks, food inspections and the economy overall — left some Republicans on Capitol Hill increasingly uncomfortable with Trump's

TRUMP » PAGE 2

GOVERNMENT

Shutdown stymies immigrants' asylum cases

By Amy Taxin The Associated Press

The partial government shutdown over President Donald Trump's demand for a border wall is playing havoc with the nation's already backlogged immigration courts, forcing the postponement of hearings for thousands of immigrants.

For some of those asking for asylum in the U.S., the impasse could mean years more of waiting — and prolonged separation from loved ones overseas — until they get a new court date.

But for those immigrants with little chance of winning their bids to stay in this country legally, the shutdown could help them stave off deportation that much longer — adding to the very delays the Trump administration has railed against.

"It is just dripping with irony," SHUTDOWN » PAGE 2

NEWSOM

Governor offers \$144B budget, sees big surplus

By Jonathan J. Cooper The Associated Press

SACRAMENTO » California Gov. Gavin Newsom proposed a \$144 billion general fund budget on Thursday that's up 4 per-

cent from the current year and predicts a \$21.4 billion surplus from robust tax collections and slower growth of state health care costs.

It's the largest projected surplus since at least 2000, accord-

ing to state finance officials.

The new governor's budget devotes \$13.6 billion of the windfall to build the state's reserves and to pay down state debt and its growing pension liability. It's in keeping with his promise to

follow the fiscally frugal path of his predecessor, termed-out Gov. Jerry Brown.

Like Brown, Newsom said he is girding the state against an inevitable recession.

BUDGET » PAGE 2

SHUTDOWN

Payday without pay hits federal workers

Payday will come without any checks for about 800,000 federal employees affected by the government shutdown. PAGE A9



LOS ANGELES

Judge sees no reason to delay teachers strike

A judge found no reason to delay a teachers strike next week against the nation's second-largest school district. PAGE A4

BUSINESS

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SOCIAL MEDIA

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Real estate advertisement for Pat Leggett, Realtor, listing a property at 641 Beach Drive, Rio Del Mar, 3 bedrooms, 2.5 bathrooms, 2,520 sq. ft., \$3,900,000.

TODAY IN HISTORY

1861

Alabama became the fourth state to withdraw from the Union.

1908

President Theodore Roosevelt proclaimed the Grand Canyon National Monument.

1963

The Beatles' single "Please Please Me" was released in Britain by Parlophone.

1978

Two Soviet cosmonauts aboard the Soyuz 27 capsule linked up with the Salyut 6 orbiting space station, where the Soyuz 26 capsule was already docked.

1989

Nine days before leaving the White House, President Ronald Reagan bade the nation farewell in a prime-time address, saying of his eight years in office: "We meant to change a nation and instead we changed a world."

2003

Calling the death penalty process "arbitrary and capricious, and therefore immoral," Illinois Gov. George Ryan commuted the sentences of 167 condemned inmates, clearing his state's death row two days before leaving office.

Birthdays

Country singer Naomi Judd is 73. World Golf Hall of Famer Ben Crenshaw is 67. Singer Mary J. Blige is 48. Musician Tom Rowlands is 48. Actor Marc Blucas is 47. Singer Robert Earl Keen is 63. Actress Phyllis Logan is 63. Actress Amanda Peet is 47

Star report

Jamie Lee Curtis rails about being photobombed

Jamie Lee Curtis did her best to dodge the models carrying trays of drinks at the red carpet of the Golden Globes. The actress wanted to avoid promoting the products they were displaying, but with so many photographers snapping away there was no way for Curtis to avoid being photobombed in at least some of the pictures. In the photo, Curtis is smiling and posing for the cameras while the so-called Fiji Water girl, who went viral for her photobombing skills, stood to the side displaying her tray of bottled water. — Cicero Estrella, Bay Area News Group

LOTTERY

WEDNESDAY'S WINNING NUMBERS

Daily 3 Afternoon: 6, 4, 3

Daily 3 Evening: 4, 5, 0

Daily 4: 9, 4, 0, 6

Fantasy 5: 8, 9, 11, 16, 17

Daily Derby

1st: 5, California Classic

2nd: 10, Solid Gold

3rd: 4, Big Ben

Race Time: 1:48.58

SUPER LOTTO PLUS

Wednesday's drawing: 3, 28, 29, 43, 44

Mega Number: 18

Saturday's estimated jackpot: \$9 million

MEGA MILLIONS

Tuesday's drawing: 13, 26, 29, 38, 64

Mega Number: 5

Friday's estimated jackpot: \$50 million

POWERBALL

Wednesday's drawing: 6, 19, 37, 49, 59

Powerball: 22

Saturday's estimated jackpot: \$96 million

Bridge

FROM PAGE 1

zation "came late to the game," beginning to fundraise to provide matching funds to match project grants. The group's donation helped fund a study proving the pathway could be widened without rebuilding the bridge in its entirety — a \$4 million savings, according to Santa Cruz Mayor Martine Watkins. The city plans to study a similar approach to another railroad bridge crossing, over the Santa Cruz Small Craft Harbor, Schneider said.

Slade predicted that the completed trail system will "transform this county," getting locals and tourists alike off area roads.

"It was a big issue for our board, because this is not normal Land Trust work and the key sentence that I think sold our board, and I think we need to remember it, because we're losing track of it with all these side issues," Slade said. "The key sentence to the board was that this trail was within one mile of 92 parks, 45 schools and half the population of the county."

Largely missing from Thursday's city event, presented in coordination with the 20-year-old trail booster organization Friends of Rail and Trail, was the controversy that has tinged the long-term effort in recent years.

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission, whose board is made of representatives from each of the county's jurisdictions and owns the rail line, is set at a coming meeting to settle on investment priorities for the rail trail corridor and other regional transit projects. The final Unified Corridor Investment Study may reaffirm the vision laid out in the 2013 Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail, but might also support a new direction — the "no-rail" option call-



DAN COYRO — SANTA CRUZ SENTINEL

Dan Fallorina hands out commemorative cookies with a logo infused on the frosting at Thursday's groundbreaking.

ing for removal of the county's railway rather than its incorporation into planning.

Manu Koenig, director of Santa Cruz County Greenway, a nonprofit group advocating for the no-rail option, was among the gathered audience Thursday. He alleged the RTC is "prioritizing freight" over bike and pedestrian safety.

"Of course widening the existing crossing on this trestle is a good thing. We're going from 4 feet to 10 feet," Koenig said. "It's rather radical over-estimation to say that this is a 'game changer.' The key issues of this segment haven't been solved. The way the crossing is currently planned for bikes and pedestrians, now both have to go up the ramp on the side and they have to go on the very narrow sidewalk up there."

George Dondero, who

served as RTC executive director for 12 years, until his retirement last year, said support for the existing rail and trail vision was apparent at Thursday's gathering, and through voters' passage of Measure D, the 2016 countywide transportation initiative. The "enthusiasm and positive anticipation for this project" was "just the tip of the iceberg," he said.

"In public life, the opposition always speaks louder and they show up for more public meetings than anybody else," Dondero said. "And that's because most people think that things are running well and they don't need to come out and say positive things. It doesn't necessarily mean that the naysayers are the majority."

Contact reporter Jessica A. York at 831-706-3264.

Trump

FROM PAGE 1

demands.

Asked about the plight of those going without pay, the president shifted the focus, saying he felt badly "for people that have family members that have been killed" by criminals who came over the border.

Trump was consulting with White House attorneys and allies about using presidential emergency powers to take unilateral action to construct the wall over the objections of Congress. He claimed his lawyers told him the action would withstand legal scrutiny "100 percent." But such a move to bypass Congress' constitutional control of the nation's purse strings would spark certain legal challenges and bipartisan cries of executive overreach.

"We're either going to have a win, make a compromise — because I think a compromise is a win for everybody — or I will declare a national emergency," Trump said before departing the White House for his politically flavored visit to the border. He wore his campaign-slogan "Make America Great Again" cap throughout.

It was not clear what a compromise might entail, and there were no indications that one was in the offing. Trump says he won't reopen the government without money for the



EVAN VUCCI — THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

President Donald Trump gestures after arriving at McAllen International Airport for a visit to the southern border Thursday in McAllen, Texas.

wall. Democrats say they favor measures to bolster border security but oppose the long, impregnable barrier that Trump envisions.

No negotiations were taking place at the Capitol.

Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina said at one point that he didn't "see a path in Congress" to end the shutdown, then stated later that enough was enough: "It is time for President Trump to use emergency powers to fund the construction of a border wall/barrier."

Visiting a border patrol station in McAllen, Trump viewed tables piled with weapons and narcotics. Like nearly all drugs trafficked across the border, they were intercepted by agents at official ports of entry, he was told, and not in the remote areas where he wants to extend tall barriers.

Still, he declared, "A wall works. ... Nothing like a

wall."

He argued that the U.S. can't solve the problem without a "very substantial barrier" along the border, but offered exaggerations about the effectiveness of border walls and current apprehensions of those crossing illegally.

Sitting among border patrol officers, state and local officials and military representatives, Trump insisted he was "winning" the shutdown fight and criticized Democrats for asserting he was manufacturing a sense of crisis in order to declare an emergency. "What is manufactured is the use of the word 'manufactured,'" Trump said.

As he arrived in Texas, several hundred protesters near the airport in McAllen chanted and waved signs opposing a wall. Across the street, a smaller group chanted back: "Build that wall!"

Shutdown

FROM PAGE 1

said Sarah Pierce, policy analyst at the nonpartisan Migration Policy Institute. "This administration has put a lot of emphasis on speeding up court cases, and the shutdown obviously is just going to cause massive delays."

The shutdown has furloughed hundreds of thousands of government employees and halted services that aren't deemed essential, including, in many instances, the immigration courts overseen by the Justice Department.

Hearings involved detained immigrants are still going forward. But untold thousands of other proceed-

ings have been postponed. No one knows for how long; it depends on when employees return to work and hearings can be reset.

Immigration experts said cases could be delayed months or years since the courts have more than 800,000 pending cases, according to the Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse at Syracuse University, and many courtsrooms are tightly booked.

Immigration Judge Dana Marks, former president of the National Association of Immigration Judges, said she has at least 60 hearings a day in her San Francisco courtroom and no space on her docket for at least the next three years.

"The cases that are not being heard now — there is no readily available place

to reschedule them until at least 2022 or beyond," Marks said of her courtroom.

Immigration judges hear a wide range of complex cases from immigrants from across the world, some who have recently arrived in the United States, others who have lived in the country for years and the government is seeking to deport.

Immigration judges have long sought more staffing to handle the ballooning caseload, which has roughly doubled in five years following a surge in Central American children and families arriving at the southern border. The Trump administration has tried to speed up the courts by assigning immigration judges quotas and stopping them from shelving cases.



RICH PEDRONCELLI — THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Gov. Newsom has released his first state budget, offering his clearest outline yet of his plan to significantly boost spending on services for children while maintaining his promise to be fiscally prudent.

Budget

FROM PAGE 1

"The message we are advancing here is discipline, building a strong foundation on which everything else can be built," Newsom told reporters in Sacramento.

Newsom's proposal kicks off negotiations with the Legislature. Lawmakers have until June 15 to approve a balanced spending plan or lose pay.

Newsom previously outlined more than \$2.5 billion in spending proposals focused on early childhood education and health care. He's also asking lawmakers to vastly expand the state's paid leave program for new parents. He's framed his budget as a "California for All" agenda that looks to close the gaps between rich and poor.

The Democratic governor announced his plans during a time of sustained prosperity in California, which clawed back from a \$27 billion deficit following the Great Recession that required deep and painful cuts to education, health care and just about every other service offered.

This year, state revenue has soared since lawmakers and Brown approved a \$139 billion budget for the

fiscal year that ends June 30.

The nonpartisan legislative analyst projected in November that lawmakers would have a \$15 billion surplus to allocate next year on top of \$15 billion in the rainy day fund, which is at the maximum allowed under the state Constitution.

Newsom emphasized paying off debts accumulated over the years. He wants to make a \$3 billion one-time payment to California's teacher pension fund on behalf of schools to help districts that are seeing more of their budgets eaten up by pension obligations.

He's proposing \$1.4 billion for higher education. The bulk, about \$400 million, would go to the community college system with the goal of making tuition free for two years.

He wants to invest \$500 million in infrastructure to provide more childcare and \$750 million for kindergarten programs. And he's calling for boosting a tax credit for the working poor by a total of more than a half-billion dollars.

Saying California is "not playing small ball," Newsom is also seeking more than \$1 billion to combat the most populous state's homeless problem by encouraging new affordable housing.

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