

# Taiwan fears a Trump ad-lib in Beijing

Taipei worries even a small word change by the president could imperil the status quo.

By MICHAEL WILNER

TAIPEI, Taiwan — A resolute Secretary of State Marco Rubio took to the White House lectern Tuesday and declared the United States, under President Trump's leadership, had launched a bold new operation to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, based on the principle that international waterways must remain free.

An hour later, Trump walked it all back, ending the complex military endeavor after less than a day.

It was just the latest evidence to America's allies that the word of the U.S. government is subject entirely to the president's whims. And such is the worry fueling concerns in Taipei ahead of Trump's state visit to China this week.

Privately, senior administration officials have assured Taiwanese leadership ahead of the trip that Trump has no intention of changing long-standing U.S. policy on the island, two sources familiar with the discussions said — a stance of "strategic ambiguity" that has avoided any declarative statements on Taiwanese independence since it was coined by Henry Kissinger 55 years ago.

A White House official was definitive that U.S. policy toward Taiwan "remains the same as the first Trump administration."

"The U.S. One China policy, as our cross-strait policies are collectively known, is based on the Taiwan Relations Act, the three U.S.-PRC Joint Communiqués and the Six Assurances to Taiwan," the official said. "There is no change to our policy with respect to Taiwan."

But Chinese officials told The Times that their presi- [See Taiwan, A4]

# At Angel City, field of support for moms

By KEVIN BAXTER

For Sarah Gorden, Mother's Day is special because it's not just a celebration of motherhood. For her, it's also a celebration of perseverance, grit and survival.

Especially survival. Gorden became pregnant during her junior year of college and for most of the next 12 years, she tried to balance her life as a professional soccer player with her responsibilities as a single mother. It wasn't easy.

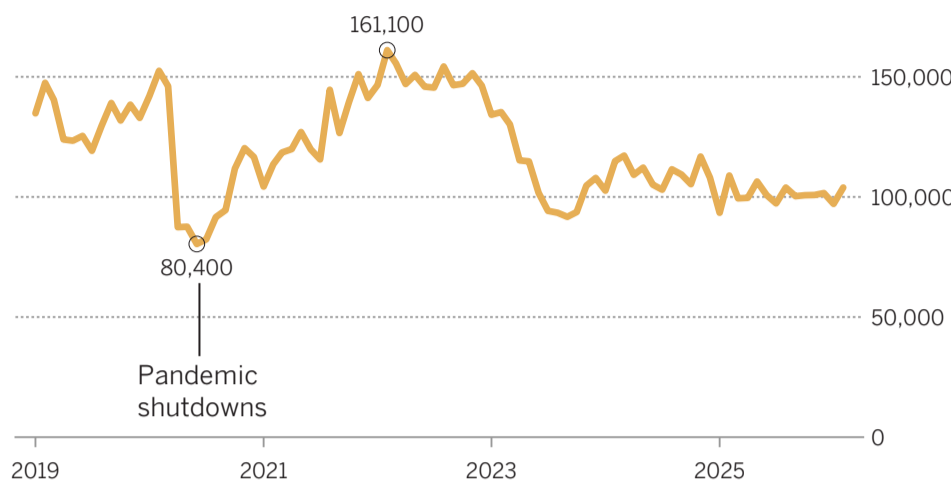
"I honestly look back and I have no idea how we got through that," said Gorden, who made \$8,000 as an NWSL rookie with the Chicago Red Stars in 2016, less than the city's minimum wage. "We're making no money. We were definitely using government assistance and government aid. And then the help of family and friends."

"I'm impressed and proud of the part of me that got through that. But it was no way to live."

As the memories come [See Angel City, A11]

## Hollywood jobs dropped in 2023 and remain below pre-pandemic levels

Jobs in the motion picture and sound-recording industry



Data are for the Los Angeles-Long Beach-Glendale area. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics via FRED

HAILEY WANG Los Angeles Times



JASON ARMOND Los Angeles Times

SCOTT NINER, president and owner of Dangling Carrot Creative, checks on a robot at his North Hollywood shop. At its peak, the firm made \$800,000 a month.

# In new plan for ancient forests, tribes have a say

By LILA SEIDMAN

Daniel Felix, 10, looks out from atop a gargantuan stump of an old-growth redwood on his tribe's ancestral land. Once, this forest on California's North Coast was replete with the ancient behemoths that can live beyond 2,000 years.

Only a fraction are left now, depleted by a logging company before the state acquired the forest in the 1940s.

This is unique public land, Jackson Demonstration State Forest, spanning 50,000 acres. Trees are plentiful here, but they might not live a millennium. California's 14 demonstration forests are required to produce and sell timber to show — or "demonstrate" — sustainable practices. Money from logging — roughly

\$8.5 million a year — pays for management of the forests by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, or Cal Fire.

Daniel's tribe, the Coyote Valley Band of Pomo Indians, has pushed to rein in the cutting — spearheaded by his late great-grandmother, Priscilla Hunter. They're part of a diverse coalition that includes environmental activists, local politicians and other tribes.

Now they may finally get their wish. Assemblymember Chris Rogers (D-Santa Rosa) has introduced a bill that would nix the forests' logging mandate, instead prioritizing values such as carbon [See Tribes, A8]



PAUL KURODA For The Times

SPIRIT RUNNERS dash through Jackson Demonstration State Forest, the center of a decades-long fight between environmentalists and loggers.

Voices STEVE LOPEZ COLUMNIST

## What voters want: Sidewalks fixed

I'm going to start this story on a quiet tree-lined street in Mar Vista, where a couple I met with on Thursday — the day after the L.A. mayoral debate — have a problem.

It's not an unusual matter, as things go in Los Angeles. On both sides of the street, the sidewalk rises and falls, uprooted and cracked by shallow roots

because over many decades, the trees were not properly maintained.

John Coanda, 61, who grew up in Los Angeles, was never bothered by torn-up sidewalks as a kid.

"In fact," he said when he first emailed me about his predicament, "my friends and I sometimes used the ramping pavement as jumps for our bicycles."

But his wife, Barbara,

was diagnosed in 2024 with ALS, and she uses a wheelchair. When John pushes her, they can't use the sidewalk if they want to go to the store or meet with friends, or just enjoy a nice pass through the neighborhood without getting into a vehicle.

So John pushes Barbara's wheelchair in the street, which creates an [See Lopez, A11]

# Businesses that helped build Hollywood face 'decimation'

Series of crises trigger unprecedented run of closures among film industry's backbone.

By STACY PERMAN AND SAMANTHA MASUNAGA

For Vince Gervasi, chief executive of Triscenic Production Services, it was yet another body blow.

His company, a leading supplier of set and scenery storage and transportation for the film industry, was poised for a turnaround after nearly three years of losing money.

Then, last week, he said a line producer on "Shark Tank," one of his long-standing clients, called him to say the hit ABC reality show was relocating production from the Sony Pictures Studios lot in Culver City to Atlanta.

"They said it was too expensive here to do anything," Gervasi recalled being told. "I said, 'Are you kidding me?' This show has money."

For the last six years, Triscenic had dedicated a 70,000-square-foot warehouse at its Santa Clarita facility to store the show's items, transporting them in 30 custom-made semitrucks between seasons.

Battered by the pandemic, the dual labor strikes, economic down-

turns and consolidations, Gervasi told The Times in 2024 that he had laid off 78 of his 85 employees and winnowed down his once-buzzing operations that housed sets and scenery across 2 million square feet in 41 buildings to half that, with the expectation that things would bounce back.

Like many other local film industry veterans, he is still waiting.

"I've been doing this for 41 years. I've seen the good and the bad — this is a complete decimation. It's unprecedented."

From florists to prop rentals to catering and beyond, production services and craft businesses are the hub and spoke of L.A.'s film and TV industry. But many of these businesses — some of which have been family-operated for generations — are struggling to weather a post-pandemic slump in film activity deepened by runaway production, media consolidation and the end of the streaming boom.

Film shoot days in the Los Angeles region have fallen nearly 50% since 2019, according to FilmLA data reviewed by The Times. Employment in Los Angeles County's motion picture and sound recording industry has similarly plummeted, with a loss of some 57,000 jobs in the last four years, federal labor data show.

[See Hollywood, A14]

# Harris' big donors in 2024 express doubts for 2028

Skepticism over a potential presidential bid is at odds with favorable polling.

By JUSTINE MCDANIEL AND BEN WIEDER

WASHINGTON — As Kamala Harris eyes a possible 2028 presidential bid, there is little outward enthusiasm among her biggest 2024 backers to fund a repeat performance, adding to uncertainty about the former vice president's prospects in what is sure to be a crowded primary field.

The Times reached out to more than two dozen top donors to the biggest pro-Harris super PAC in 2024. Several of them said they do not plan to support her should she choose to run, or declined to talk about her. Others did not respond.

"I don't think it's a helpful narrative [for 2028] to start with the 2024 hangover," said one fundraiser for Harris' 2024 campaign, who requested anonymity to speak

candidly. "There is an enormous appetite for new blood — something fresh, something that really represents the future, not the past."

That narrative is poised to present Harris' biggest challenge if she decides to run — particularly if it jeopardizes her ability to pull in crucial funding. Though few in the party want to criticize Harris, few appear inclined to endorse her, and conversations about her prospects often come down to one thing: Democrats' anxiety about winning.

"She's run, she's lost, so the question's going to be, is there somebody that gives Democratic voters more of a sense that they could win?" said Dick Harpootlian, a longtime South Carolina Democratic strategist. "That's what all of us are looking for. We want to win in '28."

The chatter among party elites appears at odds with recent polling in Harris' favor, including in April's Harvard Center for American Political Studies/Harris Poll, which showed Harris lead- [See Harris, A10]

## Abortion pill suppliers' backup plan

High court is weighing whether to restrict access to the country's most popular method. CALIFORNIA, B1

## Plum envisions title for Sparks

After winning championships in Vegas, guard thinks a playoff run is in the cards. SPORTS, D1

## Weather

Some sun. L.A. Basin: 77/58. B8

Opinion Voices ..... A16  
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## Neil Diamond's hits, ranked

A rundown of the pop legend's biggest songs to mark his new album. ENTERTAINMENT, E4

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