



LUKE WALTON, sandwiched between LeBron James, left, and JaVale McGee, departed as coach by mutual agreement with the team. His exit follows by three days that of Magic Johnson from the front office. **GABY CORONADO** Los Angeles Times

Lakers' upheaval continues

Walton steps down as coach as front-office drama engulfs team

By **TANIA GANGULI**

The Lakers hired Luke Walton almost three years ago with visions of him helping to resurrect the franchise, bringing Golden State Warriors-style basketball south, and being the team's coach for decades to come.

Instead, on Friday afternoon, the Lakers announced they and Walton had agreed to part ways.

Perhaps most telling was

the statement that accompanied their announcement. It was not Lakers owner Jeanie Buss who announced the change—it was general manager Rob Pelinka, who became the Lakers' top front office executive by default once Magic Johnson announced his resignation on Tuesday.

"We would like to thank Luke for his dedicated service over the last three years," Pelinka's statement read. "We wish Luke and his family

the best of luck moving forward."

According to people familiar with the process, Buss remains committed to Pelinka, and he will handle the Lakers' coaching search.

The Lakers' news release included this statement from Walton: "I want to thank Jeanie Buss and the Buss family for giving me the opportunity to coach the Lakers. This franchise and the city will always be special to me and my family."

Less than three hours after the move was announced, Sacramento Kings vice president of basketball operations Vladi Divac, a former Lakers player, had contacted Walton about a meeting. The Kings fired their coach, Dave Joerg, on Thursday and Divac was delighted to find Walton available, according to a person familiar with his thinking.

"I'm disappointed for Luke," Warriors coach Steve Kerr said.

[See Lakers, A8]

BILL PLASCHE: Luke Walton is the lucky one to be leaving a Lakers team in such disarray. **SPORTS, D1**

WHO'S NEXT: Tyrone Lue and Monty Williams are among the likely coaching candidates. **SPORTS, D1**

SHERIFF'S STAFF KILL DISCIPLINE INQUIRIES

Watchdog cites a 'sharp' rise in canceled internal personnel investigations under Villanueva's tenure.

By **MAYA LAU**

Officials working under Los Angeles County Sheriff Alex Villanueva have been inactivating internal investigations of department personnel at a high rate, with most of the cancellations not conforming with department policies, according to a report issued Friday by the Sheriff's Department's chief watchdog.

A handful of the 45 investigations inactivated from Jan. 1 through Feb. 28 involve criminal allegations such as child abuse, domestic violence and having sexual relations with an inmate, according to the report by Rodrigo A. Castro-Silva, the interim leader of the Los Angeles County Office of Inspector General. Most of the other cases involve allegations of policy violations such as sleeping on duty and using derogatory language.

The inspector general also noted that other changes to employee discipline have been made in recent months, including cases in which the department moved to fire deputies for misconduct—including brandishing a weapon while intoxicated and fraternizing with a member of a criminal street gang—before entering into settlements that allowed the deputies to keep their jobs and serve days of suspension instead.

Villanueva, who has talked openly about being wrongfully disciplined as a deputy, has focused much of [See Investigations, A10]



LAUREN CANTIN, who was buried alive for six hours in a mudslide that killed her father and brother, prepares for "Teen Star" in February. **KATHY FALKENBERG** Los Angeles Times

COLUMN ONE

Buried in mudslide, she gave pain a voice

After a storm in Montecito killed loved ones, singing has been a teen's salvation

By **CATHERINE SAILLANT**
REPORTING FROM SANTA BARBARA

Lauren Cantin is fighting a case of nerves as she steps into the spotlight at the Arlington Theatre in Santa Barbara. In just a few moments she will launch into her second number as a contestant in "Teen Star," a local "American Idol"-like competition, singing for 2,000 people.

She is hoping her night will end with a crown.

Dressed in a chic red jumpsuit, the baby-faced 15-year-old, one of four finalists, looks out into the darkened theater.

There's a knot in her chest as she thinks about her father and brother, both of whom died in the early

morning hours of Jan. 9, 2018, when mudslides tore through their Montecito home.

She scans the audience for a glimpse of her mother, who after the slide had been found atop a debris pile, suffering from massive gashes in her right leg and arm.

Lauren pushes away memories of being buried alive for six hours. Fifteen months after the disaster, those memories can resurface at any time, and she knows she needs to avoid the emotional black hole that opened during her trauma.

Lauren breathes deep and hits her first note, showcasing the voice that continues to be the instrument of her salvation.

Singing has allowed her to move on with her life. Even if the specter of the [See Singer, A6]

Trump suggests he may release immigrants in California

In his latest jab at the state, he proposes busing detainees into 'sanctuary cities' and the districts of critics.

By **NOAH BIERMAN**

WASHINGTON—President Trump taunted California on Friday with an attention-grabbing threat to dump detained migrants into the state's "sanctuary cities," despite warnings from his advisors that such action would run afoul of the law.

The presidential rhetoric seemed geared toward provocation, and it was unclear how seriously he intended it. Trump has made previous threats against the state, including one to withhold disaster relief money after devastating wildfires, without ultimately following through.

Trump both tweeted and spoke about the proposal after the Washington Post published a story on Thursday revealing that the idea

had been discussed several times in recent months. Administration officials told the newspaper that the idea had been "floated and rejected," but Trump undercut their denials on Friday, insisting he was still giving the idea "strong consideration."

The plan would call for busing migrants from detention centers near the border and releasing them into the districts of Democratic lawmakers and other opponents of Trump's immigration policies. Though many other states have sanctuary counties and cities, Trump has repeatedly singled out California for criticism.

California certainly is always saying, "Oh, we want more people," Trump told reporters during an unrelated White House event Friday. "And they want more people in their sanctuary cities. Well, we'll give them more people. We can give them a lot. We can give them an unlimited supply. Let's see if they're so happy."

"They're always saying they have open arms. Let's see if they have open arms," [See Trump, A7]

In southern Mexico, U.S. claim of migrant crackdown rings false

Mexicans are weary of Central American migration, but their kinder approach belies Trump account.

By **PATRICK J. McDONNELL**

MAPASTEPEC, Mexico—If the Mexican government is cracking down on Central American migrants—as President Trump recently asserted—there was no evidence of it here in this remote town in southern Mexico.

Roughly 3,000 migrants, mostly arrivals on recent caravans, had found temporary quarters in a sun-baked sports complex, where residents scramble for shade beneath tents and rough lean-tos crafted from branches and palm fronds.

But they weren't being detained or readied for deportation. Instead, they

were being processed for permits that will facilitate travel north to the U.S. border.

"We want our children to have a future without fear of gangs," said Oscar Amilcar, a Salvadoran hunkered down with his wife, two children and migrants from Guatemala and Honduras.

They all planned to resume their journeys soon and present themselves to U.S. border authorities to claim asylum.

It was a far different picture than the one Trump painted earlier this month when he announced he was holding off on his threat to shut the U.S.-Mexico border because Mexican authorities were "apprehending people now by the thousands and bringing them back to their countries."

"Nobody's ever seen anything like it," he said during a visit to the California border city of Calexico.

[See Mexico, A4]



CENTRAL AMERICAN migrants hoping to reach the U.S. journey through Hidalgo, Mexico, on Friday. **ISABEL MATEOS** Associated Press

Driver sentenced in racing deaths

Deaio Lockhart makes a plea deal for 22 years in prison in a fiery 5 Freeway crash that killed three people in 2016. **CALIFORNIA, B3**

Weather
Sunny and breezy.
L.A. Basin: 79/55, B6

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HOME & DESIGN

READING NOOK

Finally, a chance to curl up in my chair

By CURTIS SITTENFELD

I can't tell you the date on which I acquired most things I own — clothes, cookware, even my car — but the precise winter day in 2011 on which I purchased my Crate & Barrel armchair and ottoman is engraved forever in my brain because less than 24 hours later, I gave birth.

I also can remember how it felt to wander around the second floor of that suburban store; I was so huge and sore and slow that it felt heroic, as if meandering among beds and bureaus and rugs should count as Olympic-level exertion. In anticipation of having a second child, I had, for the first time, rented an office space — actually a one-bedroom apartment around the corner from my family's house — and I furnished my new office with a desk and shelves I'd already been using. The chair and ottoman set were the only new items I acquired. I envisioned myself sitting on the chocolate brown fake-suede and marking up rough drafts of my novel-in-progress, and the importance of this activity to me can be inferred by the fact that selecting the place I'd do it was essentially my last act before delivering a baby.



CURTIS SITTENFELD

The rented apartment turned out to be a relatively short-lived experiment — I held on to it for 18 months — during which I rarely sat in the brown chair. When I was in that office, I sat at my desktop computer and wrote with the fervor of a woman with two children under the age of 3 and a part-time babysitter.

It was only when my family moved to a bigger house, I reverted to working in a home office, and I placed the brown chair in the master bedroom that I actually began using it. But not the way I'd originally pictured. I rarely sit there while marking up my own work. Instead, it became, and still is, the place I read other people's books. I slouch against the back cushion, my legs propped up in front of me, and I consume story collections and novels, memoirs and biographies. Sometimes I read there in the afternoon, for research for my own fiction, and often I read there at night after my children have gone to bed and before I do.

The book I'm currently reading is "Look How Happy I'm Making You" by Polly Rosenwald. It's a frank, smart, poignant-without-being-sentimental story collection about, as it happens, pregnancy and new babies. Its stories matter-of-factly depict the complexities of wanting to be pregnant, being pregnant and wishing you weren't, and announcing to an infant, "I'm your mother. Isn't that strange? What do you think of me? I mean, be honest." Indeed, the version of me who wandered enormously around Crate & Barrel could easily be a character in the collection. But that was eight years ago, and my own children are no longer babies.

I'm glad I can immerse myself in Rosenwald's scenes of longing, frustration and delight, and I'm also glad I can close the covers, stand up from my chair, and revert to being myself.

SITTENFELD is the author of "Prep," "American Wife," "Eligible," "Sisterland" and, most recently, "You Think It, I'll Say It," her first collection of short stories.



CLOUD S wall-mounted concrete toilet paper holder by Lyon Beton, \$125.99. AllModern.com



BULLET + STONE collection of door hardware, \$395 and up. Locate a retailer at DesignerDoorware.com.



THE AVALON 72-inch concrete soaking tub by Native Trails is hand-formed and polished, \$9,490. NativeTrailsHome.com.

Concrete moves indoors

SEAN DAGEN Native Trails

By **BONNIE MCCARTHY** >>> Concrete — the composite building material made from stone, sand, cement and water — is having a bit of a moment in the home design world. Used to create everything from book ends to home furnishings, concrete fits in especially well with modern, contemporary, rustic and industrial architectural design.

Rock of ages

"We've seen the use of concrete growing quite a lot in contemporary architectural building," said Joseph Di Benedetto, executive director and product designer at Designer Doorware in Altona, Australia, who launched the Bullet + Stone collection of contemporary concrete door fixtures, attributing the trend in part to a resurgence of interest in mid-19th century Brutalism, the 1950s and '60s style of architecture that celebrated block-like forms of concrete and steel.

Although the material has been around literally forever (some people believe the Great Pyramids may have been built with a combination of limestone and concrete), building with composite has cycled in and out of favor. "I think architects have always loved concrete on some level," said Aber Sweis, design partner at the Los Angeles-based firm SweisKloss. "In regard to buildings it felt like the use of concrete did go away because there was something about it that made it more of a political statement [in the Brutalist era], with a very powerful look that was not friendly, but that was more in the design than the material because there are a lot of beautiful churches that are incredibly inviting and made of concrete as well."

The power of touch

Today, contemporary concrete design has shifted from its formerly formidable and imposing aesthetic to embrace the material's organic roots in a modern collaboration of earthy elements.

Using concrete in combination with wood, warm-toned metals and tactile materials creates a sense of nature and balance in both product and building design.

"There's something really peaceful about [concrete]," Sweis said, "and yet it's very powerful, strong and permanent. If you buy something made out of concrete, it feels like it's been around awhile... it feels like it has just existed."

In addition to an inherent sense of soul and design gravitas, concrete has a surface "you just want to touch," Sweis said. "I feel like it absorbs its surroundings, it absorbs heat if it's warm, and if you touch it in the morning it's cold. It emanates different things, and I think it does the same thing with light... it just feels alive, in a way."

"The touch of it is amazing," Di Benedetto said. "You may think of it as cold and rough, but it's not; it's very smooth and pleasant to use."

T.J. Eads, lead industrial designer for Indianapolis-based luxury faucet and fittings manufacturer Brizo, believes the longing for substance and style is a reaction to our in-



VETTIS concrete faucets designed by T.J. Eads and sculpted by Christopher Shannon. Brizo is taking reservations for the limited-edition pieces, \$2,500 and up. Locate a showroom at Brizo.com.



HAUTEVILLE bar stool with concrete-inspired seat and rebar legs designed by Lyon Beton, \$495. Wayfair.com

creasingly virtual landscape. "Millennials, and [people] younger than that, have been raised in a tech world," Eads said, "where there are a lot of flat screens and glass surfaces, and they want that tactile feel... They want those elements, like concrete, within their house — whether it's a drawer pull or a faucet... they want texture."

Even faucets? Yes

"I think it's often perceived as a more functional, utilitarian type of material for side-

walks, driveways," Eads said. "But right now, people really appreciate the aesthetic, the imperfection. Imperfect is the new perfect."

For his part, Eads recently debuted a sculpted, limited-edition Vettis concrete faucet for Brizo. "It was inspired by a waterfall," he said, "the pairing of the water and the stone."

The material's popularity was equally motivating.

"There are [concrete] countertops, sinks, all kinds of home-good products; you can find them at Target, you name it," Eads said. "It's everywhere."

"People hop on the trend train," said Los Angeles-based Homepolish interior designer Mandy Cheng. "They see it, they love it, they want it, and it's affordable. It looks cool, and you can implement it in any type of space, really. The longevity is really appealing."

DIY design

"It's just so versatile," Sweis said. "You can be really creative with all the different things you can make out of it, which is why you're seeing more and more of it."

Cheng installed a custom concrete sink in a client's home — "navy blue with stripes carved into it," she said. "The fact that you can mold a stone that way is crazy."

Cheng said concrete offers endless potential for creativity, making it a current favorite on the DIY home-improvement scene.

"You can make really cool shapes out of it," she said, "and the fact that you can pour a lamp with it is pretty cool."

Both slick, highly coated, epoxy-finished concrete as well as roughly finished stone with exposed rebar and aggregate are in demand.

"You'll see both ends of the spectrum," Eads said, "but I really think people love the rawness of it; they want to see and touch and feel it now."

"It just feels nice, solid," Cheng said. "It feels natural and real."

Caring for concrete

To care for concrete, Cheng suggests treating it like you would any natural stone surface.

"Some people like the rustic effect of a weathered, worn look," she said, "but if you want your furniture to last without cracking, then you should treat it like you would a marble countertop."

If the porous surface has been sealed with a wax or finish, treating it with an abrasive cleanser will break down the protective barrier. Instead, clean concrete with a pH-neutral cleaner like a solution of liquid dish soap and water, working up to harsher solutions as needed.



HESTON round coffee table designed with reclaimed pine base and aged concrete top by Thomas Bina, \$1,325 and up. RestorationHardware.com

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