



# THE PENINSULA BEACON

SAN DIEGO COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER GROUP

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2009

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## EMULATING NATURE



### Wildlife art festival puts skills on display



The 2009 California Open Wildlife Art Festival's wildfowl and fish carvers competition put skills to the test at Liberty Station on Feb. 14. The event featured wildfowl art and carvings, particularly the crafting of traditional hunting decoys, like the one being examined for buoyancy above by a judge at one of Liberty Station's outside pools. At left, another judge examines a rainbow trout made of wood for realism, presentation and craftsmanship.

PHOTOS BY KIRBY YAU | THE BEACON

### Surf Report

#### SATURDAY

Hi: 6:47 a.m.  
8:29 p.m.  
Low: 12:31 a.m.  
2:02 p.m.  
Size: 4-10 ft.  
Wind: 4-10 mph

#### SUNDAY

Hi: 7:36 a.m.  
9:01 p.m.  
Low: 1:23 a.m.  
2:39 p.m.  
Size: 2-3 ft.  
Wind: 6-14 mph

### Overdue justice

A New Jersey man faces 15 years to life for the sexual assault of a 12-year-old girl in OB in 1995. **3**

### Past meets present

Members of Point Loma High's baseball teams of old will face off with current players in an alumni game Saturday. **8**



### They've got that swing

Zzymzy Quartet will belt out old-time jazz with a treasure trove of pre-WWII music, swing, show tunes and much more. **10**

## School board muzzles JROTC's rifle ranges

PLHS subprogram among targets of zero-tolerance policy

By SEBASTIAN RUIZ | THE BEACON

The Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (JROTC) marksmanship program ended last week for Mission Bay High, Point Loma High and students across the school district.

College and high school student demonstrators waved signs both celebrating and decrying JRTOC rifle ranges on campus, lining the hallways and grassy area of the Eugene Brucker Education Center during a contentious San Diego Unified School District board

meeting Tuesday, Feb. 10.

Board members voted 3-2 in support of parent and student demonstrators' movements to remove air-pellet guns from campus in light of recent off-campus shootings involving high school students.

Board president Shelia Jackson and board member Katherine Nakamura voted to keep the JROTC marksmanship program open. Board members John de Beck, John Lee Evans and Richard

SEE RANGES, Page 5



Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps air rifle ranges, like this one at Point Loma High School, have been ordered closed by the school board. RONAN GRAY | THE BEACON

## Graffiti: Wall scrawl or a thing of beauty in eyes of beholder?

By ADRIANE TILLMAN | THE BEACON

Lisa Solberg paints murals that are raw and energetic and that require as little thought as possible. She describes her work as visual Beat writing. With a wide stroke, Solberg painted a black-and-white image of a Rastafarian Capt. Jack Sparrow with thick dreads on a wall on Garnet Avenue in Pacific Beach.

Solberg said she loves to produce large-scale murals that any passerby can enjoy.

"No one is judged for stopping and gazing at art on the street; it is totally free and open," Solberg said.

The Irvine-based skateboard company Element commissioned Solberg to paint the mural on the building façade. She was paid to create artwork on their property.

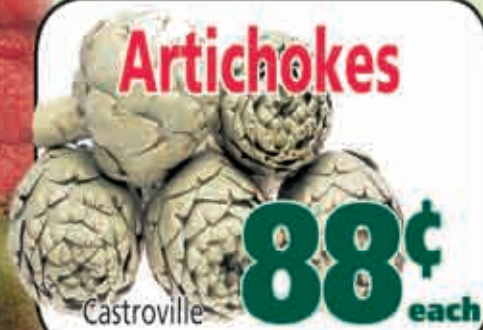
A few blocks away, a tattoo parlor opened its wall to friends who sprayed a woman's face in neon purples and blues, the sharp, flashy colors from the graffiti can. The friends were looking for a safe place to display their work, explained the tattoo parlor owner.

The lines blur, however, when graffiti artists aren't commissioned

SEE GRAFFITI, Page 7



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# Sex offender eyes 15 to life in 13-year-old assault case

By NEAL PUTNAM | THE BEACON

A New Jersey man arrested in 2007 for the 1995 sexual assault of a 12-year-old girl in Ocean Beach will be sentenced March 9 after pleading guilty to the crime.

James de Santo, 37, faces a sentence of 15 years to life in state prison. Probation has been ruled out and Santo has agreed to accept the long sentence, according to court records. He will be ordered to register as a sex offender if he is ever paroled.

DNA evidence in the attacker's sperm was taken from the scene of the June 21, 1995, attack and preserved, although the science of DNA was not as advanced as it is today. The assailant's DNA samples were added to the national database and the cold case received a match in 2006 pointing to de Santo.

To avoid a problem with the statute of limitations, the San Diego County District Attorney's Office filed charges against an unknown defendant even before the DNA was matched to de Santo. De Santo's DNA was on file because he had been arrested in the past on a narcotics charge.

The victim in the sexual assault case was called to testify in a preliminary hearing on Jan. 23, 2008. She was 24 years old at the time she testified. In 1995 the victim was a student at Ocean Beach Elementary School. The attack took place in a house on Narragansett Street.

The victim testified she was home alone in the afternoon and was reading a magazine when she saw a man in a mirror who had somehow gained entry to the home. She said the man put his hand over her mouth, carried her to her mother's bedroom and blindfolded her.

She said her clothing was removed and that she was sexually assaulted.

The man told her to count to 100 while he left the room. Later, the victim's mother picked her up for a piano lesson, and the girl told her mother about the incident.

The victim was then taken to Children's Hospital, where the DNA evidence was collected.

In accepting de Santo's guilty plea, Judge David Danielsen dismissed other charges, including four counts of a forcible lewd act on a child.

De Santo was arrested in New Jersey on June 27, 2007 and later extradited to San Diego. He remains in custody on \$3 million bail.



## Feeding the less fortunate

A host of local musicians gathered for an all-day humanitarian event at Winston's Beach Club on Feb. 15 to benefit the hungry and homeless in San Diego County. Several female musicians and one male singer, Eddie Jason Coven, gave their own time for the "Rock Fights Hunger Food Drive," and music lovers were admitted into the concert with just a single price of admission – a bag of food. The food collected, above, will be distributed to multiple Lutheran churches in the county to help offset deepening economic hardships for a growing number of residents. At right, Allegra Barley sings original songs, including one she wrote just 20 minutes before showtime.

PHOTOS BY PAUL HANSEN | THE BEACON



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**Ocean Beach | \$549,000**

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## Proud icon still standing watch

The historic lighthouse at Cabrillo National Monument in Point Loma stands in all its glory in this shot taken Feb. 9.  
COURTESY PHOTO JIM GRANT | THE BEACON

## Second man pleads guilty to beating Aussie tourist

By NEAL PUTNAM | THE BEACON

A second man who attacked an Australian tourist in Ocean Beach a year ago pleaded guilty Feb. 13 to assault with a deadly weapon and has agreed to accept a two-year term in state prison.

Francisco Montoya, 47, will be sentenced March 16 before San Diego Superior Court Judge David Danielsen. After earlier denying that he injured tourist Robert Schneider, Montoya admitted to using a skateboard to repeatedly hit Schneider on the head.

Danielsen dismissed other charges that included aggravated mayhem and torture. Probation has been ruled out for Montoya since he agreed to the two-year term, said Deputy District Attorney Patty Herian.

The other attacker in the Schneider case, Damian Maple, 22,

pleaded guilty Feb. 6 to attempted murder and assault of a second victim. Maple faces 14 years in prison and will be sentenced April 15. Mayhem, torture, and assault charges against a third victim were also dismissed.

Schneider, a surfer, was assaulted on Feb. 27 at a fire pit at the foot of Abbott Street around 5:30 a.m. It was his 26th birthday. He was thrown into the burning fire pit and suffered serious burns that needed skin graft operations. He suffered a skull fracture and was unconscious in a hospital for two weeks, according to court records. Schneider eventually returned to Adelaide with his parents.

Maple admitted to police that he had taken LSD and had been drinking tequila that night, according to court records. Maple remains in custody without bail and Montoya is being held on \$1 million bail.

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In Loving Memory

## Florence (Rohleder) Christenson, 76

Florence (Rohleder) Christenson, known by friends as "Sam" and "Sweet Angel," passed away on Sunday, Feb. 8 at the age of 76.

Florence was born Feb. 12, 1932.

A celebration of life is planned for March 6 at 3 p.m. at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1392, 4944 Newport Ave. in Ocean Beach.

## Renowned Dallas Brass to pay return visit to Correia

Members of the renowned Dallas Brass will visit Correia Middle School in a return engagement of last year, providing both a community concert and a valuable music clinic for students from Correia and Dana middle schools.

Dallas Brass, a wind ensemble familiar across the world, will perform in concert on Saturday, Feb. 21 at 7 p.m. in the Correia auditorium, 4302 Valeta St.

The event is part of the Dallas Brass "Music in Schools Project."

Tickets for the event are \$20 for adults, \$10 for students. For more information or tickets, call (619) 226-2251 or visit [www.correiamusic.org](http://www.correiamusic.org).

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## RANGES

CONTINUED FROM Page 1

Barrera voted to close the firing ranges, effectively ending the marksmanship portion of the program.

During the meeting, board members praised the students' peaceful demonstration that included about 100 Lincoln High School students, community organizers and parents.

Lt. Col. Brian Josten, Mission Bay High's JROTC instructor, said his students were disappointed with the school board's decision.

"What did the demonstrators gain?" Josten said. "I sure know what we've lost, but what was gained?"

Mission Bay High principal Cheryl Seelos said a lot of hard work and requests from students brought the Marine Corps JROTC marksmanship program to Mission Bay High about a year ago. Debate swirled over the program and potential conflicts with the San Diego school district's "zero tolerance" policy regarding weapons on campus.

"It's a collegiate sport and has nothing to do with killing people on the street," Seelos said. "We're going to fight this [school board decision]."

The air rifles use 177-caliber pellets that are slightly bigger than the more common BB used in most air pistols, JROTC officials said.

An estimated \$65,000 set aside for the program helps pay for staffing. The Marine Corps pays for the rest of the Mission Bay High program, including the cost of rifles and safety equipment, Seelos said.

Despite getting rid of the rifles and ranges, the rest of the program remains intact. School district board members voted to allow the program to fulfill physical education graduation requirements along with the school's marching band program.

Point Loma High School principal Barbara Samilson said her school was caught off guard by the school board's vote on the marksmanship training.

"We were definitely taken by surprise," Samilson wrote in an e-mail. "[JROTC marksmanship] teaches self-discipline, the value of hard work and practice and the value of working as team."

Representatives of Education Not Arms Coalition said at the meeting that the JROTC in high schools acts as a military recruiting tool. They said students were often encouraged to join the JROTC at schools throughout the district.

Seelos said students are not "tracked" into the Mission Bay program and that the school offers the course as an elective requiring parents' permission.

Rich Jahnkow, a coordinator for the Project on Youth and Non-Military Opportunities, said having air rifles on campus sends the wrong message to students.

"[Students and parents] felt it was inconsistent with the philosophy of the district to try to encourage students to not think about using violence to solve problems," Jahnkow said. "So they felt that these [ranges] did not belong."

Former Mission Bay High School student Zulema Torres, 33, joined several students and parents from the Education Not Arms Coalition at the school board meeting.

The coalition represents Latino and education groups, including the Association of Raza Educators and local high school chapters of the Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan (MEChA), a student political group.

"Many parents send their children to school ... so they could get an education, not so they can learn to shoot weapons," Torres said.

College students also joined the debate face to face outside the school board meeting.

California College Republicans representative Matthew Donnellan, 21, rallied alongside former and current high school student supporters of the JROTC program and said that those against the program are misinformed.

"The JROTC shapes students to be leaders. It's safe and supervised," Donnellan said.

Former San Diego State University MEChA president Luis Fuentes, 25, said high school should be a place to learn and "not train students to shoot" weapons.

About 81 students enrolled in the Mission Bay High School Marine Corps JROTC program last year, according to Josten. The entire district had an estimated 2,000 cadets last year.

The JROTC program's 80-year history in San Diego schools show an impeccable safety record, Josten said, with zero accidents reported during its time at Mission Bay High.

The school district has had the JROTC program in high schools since 1919. San Diego High School was the first school to offer the program.

Mission Bay High had an Army JROTC before officials moved the program to Madison High in 1962.



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## GUEST COMMENTARY

## Turning the city into a new county is a viable option

By KIRK MATHER

Recently, City Councilman Ben Hueso proposed the concept of consolidating city and county government and functions into one entity, like San Francisco does. The U-T [San Diego Union-Tribune] has come out opposed to this idea.

Hueso is right and wrong. The U-T is wrong and right. The answer is less than Hueso's current vision but a much greater vision than the U-T has shown.

Predictably, the county board of supervisors isn't receptive to the idea. I imagine the 17 other cities in the county would be concerned about losing local control and would initially oppose such a measure if they were asked to participate.

There is another approach, however. Why not explore the possibility of the city of San Diego becoming California's newest — the 59th — county? Let San Diego County and the other 17 cities carry on — or invite some of those cities to join the new county if it makes fiscal sense.

Currently, San Diego County receives 38 cents back on each dollar of property tax we send to Sacramento. The county keeps some and each municipality gets some. The state average is 47 cents returned on the dollar. Los Angeles and San Francisco get better than that based on the percentage they received under a formula conceived pre-Prop 13. San Diego County suffers, and has done so for years, because we have traditionally been very fiscally prudent.

Would a new county be able to negotiate a better deal or distribute more of the city of San Diego's dollars back into the city (theoretically a new county) limits? If the answer is even a tepid maybe, then Mayor Jerry Sanders and the City Council would be derelict in their duties if they failed to investigate their options.

The county does perform some functions within the city, but, presumably, a new county would get funds for those same county functions and offset those costs. The big stumbling block could be prisons. Likely a new county would have to contract out jail services. Happily, we have a county jail in Downtown already. Interestingly, if the new county was set up to contract out jail services, it might be able to solicit bids

from the current county, Orange County and maybe elsewhere — competition might beget further savings.

Would the new county be big enough, by acreage or population? The answer to both questions is yes. The city of San Diego has more than 1.2 million people. That would rank as the 16th most populous of the 58 counties in California. At 324 square miles, the new county would be nearly four times larger than San Francisco and be the 6th county with fewer than 600 square miles.

Conversely, the remaining county would be very large and have a greater population if only San Diego city splits off.

Should the city go it alone?

A logical argument can be made for two counties where just San Diego County is now. Would Chula Vista, National City (Ron Morrison will knee-jerk "no"), Imperial Beach and Coronado most logically be served by a proposed new county? Probably. Do the socioeconomics and distance from Downtown of Encinitas, Carlsbad, San Marcos, Solana Beach, Santee, Oceanside, Vista, Escondido and Poway call for alignment with the existing, but restructured, county? Probably.

What about El Cajon, La Mesa and Lemon Grove? The latter two share lots of common boundary with San Diego but "feel" (not very scientific I know) like they should be with El Cajon in a restructured county. Finally, Del Mar presents good arguments either way. We need dialogue.

I would strongly encourage Councilmember Hueso, Mayor Sanders and the rest of the City Council to investigate creating a new city/county. Then the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), an existing third party with the expertise to investigate what a new county might be comprised of, could offer the forum for a dialogue to devise a plan best suited for our region. SANDAG is made up of representatives of all the potentially impacted incorporated cities and the county already.

— Kirk Mather is a Point Loma resident who served former Mayor Susan Golding as her officer of common sense and as program manager to the Regional Government Efficiency Commission.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## PL church blatantly disregarding traffic rules

I was inspired by [Peninsula Community Planning Board member] Cal Jones' letter to the editor on the Rock Church ("PCPB member questions church special permit," Feb. 12 Beacon, page 6).

I have witnessed firsthand the blatant disregard for parking regulations by the members of the Rock Church. Their lack of respect for the community and visitors to Liberty Station is so upsetting that I avoid that area completely on Sundays. I am not surprised to read the comments of Cal Jones in the Beacon and can't believe [church members] want to "legally" do what they have been doing all along.

When church lets out, the members walk across to the parking lot near Trader Joe's and Vons with blatant disregard for the "no parking" signs where they enter their cars that are parked adjacent to those signs. Any group that disregards the law in such a manner does not deserve any concessions nor permits to block public streets.

I would also like to issue a warning to anyone in the Liberty Station area to be aware of the people who direct traffic. They do NOT seem to know what they are doing, nor do they secure safety for anyone. Watch out and do not proceed in traffic until you know for certain that it is safe.

Korla Eaquina  
Point Loma

## SDUSD's hope for budget 'miracle' unrealistic

Sixty million dollars is a lot of money. Since payroll is 80 percent of a school district's budget, the current 2010 shortfall for San Diego city schools amounts to \$48 million in lost jobs.

I have made a proposal that would preserve all of the jobs. But action is required now. So far, I am speaking to myself.

Picking away at the deficit remains the current board majority's attempt to balance a budget. The newly elected group is hanging their hat on bits and pieces of the immense total. If one ignores the \$48 million, as they seem to be doing, you are dealing with books and supplies, water, heat and electricity.

These overhead items are not easily cut, and tinkering around the margin may save a few million, but doing that is like sticking one's head in the sand to avoid danger.

The net effect of inaction is poorly considered massive cuts or a negative certification by the county superintendent.

The negative certification will increase the costs of Proposition S bonds, and can require appointment of a district czar to oversee the operations of the school system. Then the board will not have any decisions to make, because the new district czar will have the power to decide on his/her own.

To put this 2009-10 financial

shortfall in perspective, the \$48 million amounts to the beginning salaries of 1,000 teachers. That represents about one-sixth of the teaching staff. Ignoring it is a total lack of fiscal competency.

The miracle expected by the board majority includes federal bailouts; stealing the required district 2 percent reserve of \$20 million (\$60 million minus \$20 million equals \$40 million — thus 80 percent = \$32 million in salaries); and the use of other funds with "flexibility!"

We are about to lose massive numbers of enriching programs, increase class sizes and risk financial ruin because of the new board majority's unwillingness to see the realities facing this district.

The furlough of workdays I proposed can save up to \$80 million over two years and would preserve valuable programs and eliminate layoffs.

Drastic as it seems, the plan, if implemented this year, along with the examination of other savings, would preserve the board's ability to guide the district through the current minefield and keep class sizes at the present level.

I have yet to have seen any proposal that can offer the advantages and savings that the furlough plan would provide.

John de Beck

SDUSD board member for beach community schools in Ocean Beach, Point Loma, Pacific Beach, Mission Bay, Bird Rock and La Jolla

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# GRAFFITI

CONTINUED FROM Page 1

to spray their art over public walls, and the issue soon lands in the lap of police and community activists when art slides into destructive tagging — including Ocean Beach and Point Loma.

“The problem is when people who are trying to become good [graffiti artists] are damaging other people’s properties,” said community relations officer David Surwilo, who works in the Western Division.

Many graffiti taggers seem most concerned with making their presence known or marking their territory.

“Sometimes people get discouraged and wonder how [the police] are going to catch them,” said Officer Phil Franchina, who works for the Graffiti Strike Force in the Northern Division that covers La Jolla and Pacific Beach. “No one sees them doing it but eventually they get caught.”

Franchina estimates the Graffiti Strike Force arrests an average of 30 offenders out of the 80 to 100 cases the unit handles each month. Violators can be charged with a felony if their graffiti damage exceeds \$400. Most offenders, however, are charged with a misdemeanor, according to Franchina.

Police encourage residents to take photos of graffiti in their communities before removing it to help police apprehend culprits. Residents who catch graffiti perpetrators in action should call 911.

Along the coast, graffiti vandalism tends to pick up in the warmer summer months and slow down in the winter.

“We’re always in business,” Franchina said. “There is always

someone who will take over for the taggers.”

In Point Loma and Ocean Beach, police realized that taggers tend to live in the community, as opposed to gangs showing up to flex their muscles. Offenders range from teenagers to 35-year-olds. Police are often able to apprehend repeat offenders. It’s more difficult to find the group of teenagers — mostly boys — who get their hands on a box of spray cans and go on a graffiti spree for a few weeks.

“If we stop seeing a moniker, then we’re content with that,” Surwilo said. “That’s crime prevention at its best. That doesn’t mean that we won’t go after them.”

The scribbles and monikers are a huge headache for community groups that strive to stay on the heels of taggers. In Ocean Beach, community activists carry around \$20 graffiti removal kits they’ve purchased themselves to remove graffiti as soon as it appears. If the community waited for the city to clean the fresh graffiti, the problem would escalate, according to Bill Klees, chair of the Point Loma Association that is charged with community beautification and service.

“As soon as we see it, it’s gone,” Klees said. “We don’t call [the city]. To wait for it to go through the channels of the city, it stays up too long and then it appears more and more.”

Residents who wish to report graffiti vandalism can call the graffiti hotline at (619) 525-8522.

## Public art

Solberg’s artistic expression is far and above tagging empty lots or playground equipment, but some graffiti vandalism is considered pure art. The coastal communities, how-

ever, tend to exhibit the more sanctioned variety.

Not surprisingly, mural art is everywhere in an environment where people live perpetually outdoors. It serves as community art, advertisement and decoration.

The late Rich James, an Ocean Beach icon, embodied the essence of coastal artwork. James’ murals of undersea life can be seen all over OB, from octopuses to diving dolphins. Utility boxes portray his love for the underwater world.

“Art, you just do it!” James is quoted on a website dedicated to his memory, richjames.org. “The action has magic, grace and power.”

James, who passed away in April, was famous for riding around OB in his baby blue 1965 Chevy convertible, dubbed “the dolphinmobile,” that he continuously painted and repainted and treated like a moving canvas.

James decided to involve the community in the mural-making process. Every year at the OB Street Fair and Chili Cook-Off, individuals paint a square of the community murals that have appeared on the sides of stores and as a backdrop for parking lots.

The public display of art is as ancient as the Catacombs of Rome.

Ocean Beach resident Janis Ambrosiani runs Walls With A View, Inc. that paints murals for businesses. Ambrosiani painted a 50-foot-long history of electricity for Mission Electronics in Ocean Beach.

Outside Hodad’s hamburger restaurant on Newport Avenue, Ambrosiani painted a picture of the Hodad logo — a frumpy man surfing atop a hamburger.

“Ocean Beach gave me a lift-off when I first started my business,” Ambrosiani said. “They opened all their walls to me and it was great.”

5

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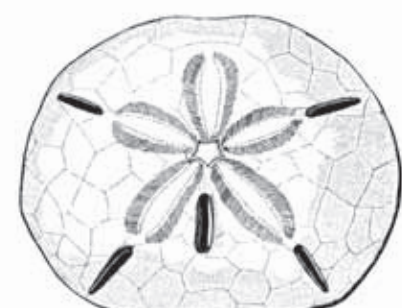
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## Glitz, glamour and grace on ice

The "Smucker's Stars on Ice tour" dazzled spectators with a host of some of the most well-known and impressive performers in the world at the San Diego Sports Arena on Feb. 7. Left, U.S. Olympic silver medalist Sasha Cohen portrays an angel as she skates for the audience. Top right, two-time Olympic bronze medalists Xue Shen and Hongbo Zhao, of China, skate in tandem. Bottom right, special guest Jeffrey Buttle, a U.S. Olympic bronze medalist and former world champion, shows off his stuff in front of an enthusiastic audience.

PHOTOS BY PAUL GALLEGOS | THE BEACON



## PLHS alumni game to showcase past, present

By KEITH ANTIGIOVANNI | THE BEACON

The 12th annual Point Loma High School (PLHS) alumni baseball game will take to the field Saturday, Feb. 20 at Dana Middle School. "The alumni game is a great way to kick off the season and helps our players understand that the program is bigger than just this year's team," said PLHS head baseball coach Jon Posternack.

The first pitch is at 1 p.m. but the alumni and players will be in the batting cages as early as 11:30 a.m. "Last year we had [former PLHS alum and former San Diego Padres pitcher] David Wells from the 1982 CIF championship team play in the alumni game," Posternack said. "He pitched to our kids for three innings. It was a great opportunity for our players to play with someone who made it to the majors. The atmosphere for the alumni game is very loose and relaxed. We have a great time."

The game was organized 12 years ago by Point Loma alums Steve Vargas and Tommy Evans, both members of the 1973 CIF championship squad.

"The alumni game started when a buddy of mine, Tommy Evans,

and I were talking after softball one night about bringing back the guys from the 1973 CIF team to play against the current team," Vargas said. "We called Jeff Hill, who was the baseball coach at that time, and he liked the idea."

About three-quarters of the 1973 team participated in the inaugural alumni game. Some of them came from as far as Texas to play in the game. Vargas recalls that the game ended up in a tie. "We were winning after 7 innings so Coach Hill suggested that we go 9 innings and that's how it ended up in a tie," Vargas said.

The younger set of Pointers are coming off a mediocre 2008 season in the highly competitive Western League. PLHA ended the season at .500 in the Western League at 6-6 and the same percentage overall at 13-13.

"Last year we didn't have quite enough, but we are going to try and turn the corner this year," Posternack said.

Point Loma finished the 2007 season at 17-15.

The alumni game represents Point Loma baseball's tradition of success, including CIF championships in 1973 and 1982. Past

PLHS squads have sent their share of players to the professional ranks, including Wells and Don Larsen.

Larsen played in the majors from 1953 to 1967, won two World Series championships in 1956 and 1958 and pitched a perfect game in the 1956 World Series.

Wells played from 1987 to 2007, including time with the Padres. He also won two World Series titles in 1992 and 1998 and pitched a perfect game in 1998.

Other Pointers who made it to the major leagues were Rigo Beltran and Cecil Espy.

Alumni who advanced to the minor leagues are Craig Settles, Rod Lindsey, Randy Clark, Thomas Fuller, Steve Grimes, Rantie Harper and Edwin Hook.

Dave Camara of the 1982 CIF championship team has also assisted Vargas in bringing back the alumni.

"The guys from the 1973 team are in their early 50s now, so we are hoping the younger guys like Dave in their 30s and 40s will take over the reins from us," Vargas said. "My son is at Point Loma High and if he makes varsity next year I would like to play in the game for one more year."

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# 'Driving Miss Daisy': Like father, like son

Realism hits home for director as PL group opens new production

By JOSEPH GREENBERG | THE BEACON

Point Loma Actors Workshop will raise the curtains on its production of the acclaimed "Driving Miss Daisy" Friday, Feb. 20, at 8 p.m. at the Point Loma Assembly with a poignant and close-to-home meaning for the show's director.

The comedy-drama, written by Alfred Uhry in 1987, is a story of friendship, love and hope amid a sea of racial turmoil in mid- to late-20th-century America.

The themes surface through a plot centering on an elderly Jewish widow who reluctantly develops a friendship with her African-American chauffeur during both characters' later lives.

The play examines how American racial consciousness transforms over the decades, moving from a society once permeated with racism and prejudice and its transition toward tolerance and equality.

Director John H. Cochran cast New York stage actress Betsy Bruce Osmun as Daisy and National Theatre of Great Britain actor Ken Oberlander as Boolie, Daisy's son.

Cochran, a nationally recognized stage and film actor himself, had some difficulty finding an actor to play Hoke Coleburn, Daisy's chauffeur.

"I couldn't find someone who identified with the role enough, and that's why I decided to take the role myself," Cochran said.

Cochran grew up in Columbus, Ga., roughly a 20-minute drive from Atlanta, where the story takes place. The story also very strongly reminds Cochran of his father, Jack Cochran Sr., whom Cochran feels is a living artifact of that time period.

There are a number of physical elements from the story that Cochran and his father remember.

"My dad remembers the downtown Atlanta streets mentioned in the play as being nothing more than dirt lanes that allowed cattle herders to move back and forth," Cochran said.

Those same paths are now major thoroughfares, Cochran said. Cochran is thus no stranger to the story.

"All of these things drew me to the play, and I decided to honor my father by putting on a play that connected with him so much," Cochran said.

Cochran added that his father's life is deeply impacted by the evolution of racial consciousness in America, as are the lives of Daisy and Hoke.

"[Cochran Sr.] deals with the memories of a vivid encounter with the Ku Klux Klan juxtaposed with the current staff of friendly and caring all-Caucasian nurses that visit and take care of him," Cochran said.

"At 92 years of age, my dad is still trying to put it all together, and the play speaks about how that process is undertaken," Cochran said.

"And I think the characters of the play struggle with these same issues," he said.



Nationally recognized stage and film actor John H. Cochran, left, is shown with his father, Jack Cochran Sr. The senior Cochran experienced much of the racial prejudice and intolerance of the era portrayed in "Driving Miss Daisy," which the younger Cochran will direct at the Point Loma Assembly beginning Friday, Feb. 20.

COURTESY PHOTO

Cochran's selection is profound and perhaps timely, as it opens in the wake of a still-changing American society that just inaugurated its first African-American president.

Theatergoers are encouraged to turn out and witness this story of two unique figures who shed societal constraints and form a deep friendship that serves as an example for people in America and the world over.

The Point Loma Assembly is located at 3035 Talbot St.

Performances will continue Feb. 21, 27 and 28 and March 6, 7 and 13, with the final show March 14.

Tickets are \$15, \$12 for students, seniors and military. Call (619) 225-0044 to reserve seats or to get information.

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# Zzymzzy Quartet puts that old-time swing back in play

By BART MENDOZA | THE BEACON

Vintage jazz from the pre-amplification era, roughly the period between Prohibition and the end of World War II, might seem like the least likely music to stage a revival. However, for the Zzymzzy (rhymes with "whimsy") Quartet, the era is a treasure trove of songs and sounds that has led them to a new, young, hip audience.

The quartet, which performs at the Ocean Beach Peoples Co-Op on Friday, Feb. 20, actually brushes upon a range of pre-World War II music, from show tunes to swing and beyond.

"There is a worldwide mini-craze right now for gypsy jazz — which is basically anything that sounds like (guitarist) Django Reinhardt when he was young and buck-wild," said guitarist Beston Barnett. "Because I play with that Django-ish je-ne-sais-quoi, and since I did name my son after the guy, I can see how we might fall into that category," he said.

He said there are some differences, however.

"We sing the old tunes, lovingly, and I make some attempt to arrange them in a manner more akin to outfits like Benny Goodman's than Django's quintet."

The end result is a sound that has

attracted both avid listeners and swing dancers.

Why would thirty/forty-some-things in San Diego in 2009 play old-time jazz?

"Well, on the one hand, it's great music that all four or five of us have been listening to, via parents' or grandparents' record collections all our lives," Barnett said. "For another, once you can do it it's a joy to play. And it's not the easiest trick in the book — there's way more than three chords," he said. "For me, gigs with the ZQ are twice as fun as any other group I've played with. I wish we gigged every night."

The group comes with an impressively diverse resume. Barnett has spent time with his own hip-hop combo as well as with Ghanaian highlife group Bolga Zohdooah. Meanwhile, vocalist Peter Miesner was a key member of the iconic rhythm and blues band The Crawdaddys as well as garage rockers The Tell Tale Hearts.

Rounding out the group, clarinetist Matt Gill is a fixture of local stage productions, with bassist Patrick Marion also heard playing alongside groove-oriented jazz combo Pocket and auxiliary member and bassist Paul Hormick, formerly with Hot Club of San Diego.

Together for four years, the Zzymzzy Quartet can trace its



The Zzymzzy Quartet brings its gypsy jazz to life at the OB People's Food Co-Op on Friday, Feb. 20.

COURTES PHOTO

beginnings to the birth of Barnett's son, Django.

"I met Pete Miesner through his wife, who assisted at Django's birth," Barnett said.

Having coincidentally recently acquired a Selmer-style guitar similar to the type that the original Django played, Barnett took it to a party at Miesner's house.

"Though my own knowledge of old show tunes and standards is small potatoes next to Pete's librarian-like stacks of tracks, we discovered a shared fondness for Irving Berlin," Barnett said.

With Marion and Gill soon rounding out their lineup, the quartet began gigging under the short-lived name The Speak Easy Quartet.

The shift to Zzymzzy Quartet was for both artistic and pragmatic reasons, said band members.

"We like it more than our original name because it functions better on the Internet and because it heightens our air of mystery," he said. "We're, alphabetically, the Last Word in gypsy swing, see?" Barnett said. "Zzymzzy was actually coined by a critic in the '30s to describe his favorite jazz group — so it actually contains some authentic-era Zeitgeist, though you'd need Wikipedia to work it out."

According to Barnett, the best parts of working with the quartet is singing harmony with Miesner and whenever dancers hit the floor.

"We do have something you could

actually call a little following with the swing kids (and) it's a pleasure to play to them," Barnett said. "I always imagine pointing my notes at their feet."

Though he is unsure about recording plans, Barnett is hopeful the Zzymzzy Quartet is built to last.

"At the very least, I'd say we've got another 15 years in us," he said. "If I did this for 15 years, I'd be so at home in the music I could loll in it like a raft on the river. That sounds good to me."

Zzymzzy Quartet performs at Ocean Beach People's Organic Foods Co-Op Deli, 4765 Voltaire St., on Friday, Feb. 20 at 5:30 p.m. The concert is free. For more information, visit [www.obpeoplesfood.coop](http://www.obpeoplesfood.coop).

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February  
A Look Ahead

COMMUNITY/CIVIC

Today, Feb. 19, 6:30 p.m., regular meeting of the Peninsula Community Planning Board (PCPB) at the Hervey/Point Loma Branch Library, 3701 Voltaire St. Agendas are posted at the library or online at [www.pcpb.net](http://www.pcpb.net). For more information, call (619) 222-2240.

Today, Feb. 19, 7 p.m., regular meeting of the Ocean Beach Historical Society featuring Ron May, a historian who grew up in Point Loma and who has an extensive background in local and Ballast Point histories, as well as historical preservation. The meeting takes place at the United Methodist Church, 1984 Sunset Cliffs Blvd. For more information, call (619) 222-6066, or visit [obhistory.wordpress.com](http://obhistory.wordpress.com).

Sunday, Feb. 22, 4 p.m., the Point Loma Democratic Club meets, featuring San Diego Union-Tribune

business writer Dean Calbreath on “Effect of the Economy on San Diego,” specifically on the Peninsula. The meeting takes place at the Point Loma Assembly, 3035 Talbot St., and is open to the public. For more information, call (619) 222-7230.

Friday, Feb. 27, noon to 2 p.m., regular meeting of the Peninsula Community Planning Board (PCPB) Airport Committee. The meeting takes place at the Sail Ho Golf Club at Liberty Station, 2960 Truxtun Road. To see the agenda, visit [www.pcpb.net](http://www.pcpb.net). For more information, call (619) 224-1527.

Sunday, March 1, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., inaugural Doggie Street Festival to promote pet adoption, featuring pet demonstrations, contests, vendors and services, live music and food. The free event takes place at NTC Park on Cushing Road at Liberty Station. For more information, visit

[www.doggiestreetfestival.org](http://www.doggiestreetfestival.org).

Wednesday, March 11, 10 a.m., the Point Loma Garden Club hosts its monthly meeting with Emmy Award-winning TV personality, garden writer and horticultural consultant Pat Welsh. The meeting takes place at the Portuguese Hall, 2818 Avenida de Portugal. For more information, visit [www.plgc.org](http://www.plgc.org).

Mondays, 3 to 3:45 p.m., baby signing storytime for infants and caregivers at the Ocean Beach Library, 4801 Santa Monica Ave. For more information, call (619) 531-1532.

Tuesdays, 10 to 10:45 a.m., Preschool Storytime at the Ocean Beach Library, 4801 Santa Monica Ave. For more information, call (619) 531-1532.

SCHOOLS  
CORREIA

• Saturday, Feb. 21, 7 p.m., the popular Dallas Brass performs in a fundraiser after a music clinic for students during the day. The event takes place in the auditorium, 4302 Valeta St. Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$10 for students and may be purchased by visiting [www.correiamusic.org](http://www.correiamusic.org). For information, e-mail [kerrierosier@gmail.com](mailto:kerrierosier@gmail.com).  
• Tuesday, Feb. 24, GEAR UP kickoff assembly.

DANA

• Today, Feb. 19, 6 to 7:15 p.m., mandatory meeting for parents of 6th-graders who have signed up for the San Jose/San Francisco trip.  
• Friday, Feb. 20, 9 to 11 a.m., 4th-graders from Dewey Elemen-

tary tour Dana.

LOMA PORTAL

• Today, Feb. 19, 9:30 to 10:15 a.m., kindergarten tours. To schedule a tour, call (619) 223-1683.  
• Thursday, Feb. 19, 1:15 to 1:30 p.m., pizza and bake sales after school.  
• Friday, Feb. 20, 5 to 8 p.m., Family Movie Night in auditorium.  
• Tuesday, Feb. 24, 3:35 to 4 p.m., popcorn sales after school.  
• Thursday, Feb. 26, 1:15 to 1:30 p.m., pizza and bake sales after school.

OB ELEMENTARY

• Today, Feb. 19, Bank Day; art, dance, Spanish after-school clubs.  
• Friday, Feb. 20, 1:15 p.m., stu-

SEE SCHOOLS, Page 12



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5. Breakfast _____	40. Steak _____
6. Lunch _____	41. Sushi _____
7. Dinner _____	42. Seafood _____
8. Take-out _____	43. American _____
9. Sunday Brunch _____	44. BBQ _____
10. Family restaurant _____	45. Asian Fusion _____
11. Restaurant with Wine selection _____	46. Vietnamese _____
12. Wine Bar _____	47. Thai _____
13. Wine Shop _____	48. Chinese Restaurant _____
14. Beer Selection _____	49. Chinese Take-out _____
15. Sports Bar _____	50. French _____
16. Place to People Watch _____	51. German _____
17. Pet Friendly Restaurant _____	52. Greek _____
18. Best Place to Dance _____	53. Indian _____
19. Live music _____	54. Irish _____
20. Happy Hour _____	55. Italian _____
21. Best Comfort Food _____	56. Mexican Restaurant _____
22. Late Night Eatery _____	57. Mexican Take-out (fast food) _____
23. Place to go on a Budget _____	58. Bakery _____
24. Place for a Birthday Party _____	59. Bar _____
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32. Fish & Chips _____	67. Ice cream / frozen yogurt _____
33. Desserts _____	68. Vegetarian/Vegan _____
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SCHOOLS

CONTINUED FROM Page 11

dent standout assembly.

- Wednesday, Feb. 25, 4th-graders to San Juan Capistrano; 1 p.m., San Diego Opera Company performs "Rumpelstiltskin"; 2:30 p.m., Chess Club.
- Thursday, Feb. 28, Bank Day; art, dance, Spanish after-school clubs.

SACRED HEART ACADEMY

- Tuesday, Feb. 24, 1:30 p.m., Mardi Gras parade down Newport Avenue followed by Mardi Gras party at school.
- Wednesday, Feb. 25, 10 a.m., Ash Wednesday Mass at Sacred Heart Church.

SILVER GATE

- Friday, Feb. 20, 7:15 a.m., Dads and Donuts.
- Friday, Feb. 27, 7:45 a.m., principal's chat with parents of students in grades 2 and 3.

SUNSET VIEW

- Today, Feb. 19, 1:45 p.m., SSC meeting in library.
- Today, Feb. 19, 5:30 p.m., Family Art Night in cafeteria.
- Monday, Feb. 23, 9:45 a.m., kindergarten tour.
- Monday, Feb. 23, 7 p.m., Foundation meeting in library.
- Tuesday, Feb. 24, 4th-grade NAEP testing.

- Tuesday, Feb. 24, 6 to 7:30 p.m., Family Spanish Night.
- Friday, Feb. 27, student awards.

WARREN-WALKER

- Through Feb. 20, no classes for Presidents Week.
- Monday, Feb. 23, school back in session.
- Friday, Feb. 27, middle school dance.
- Saturday, Feb. 28, 9 to 11 a.m., registration for kindergarten evaluation.

SENIORS

Wednesday, Feb. 25, 9:30 to 11 a.m., Sharp Cabrillo Senior Resource Center hosts "Life Estate Gift Annuity vs. Reverse Mortgage" seminar. A free consultation is available. The event takes place at the Sharp Cabrillo Medical Staff Conference Room, 3475 Kenyon St. Registration is required by calling (800) 827-4277.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Friday, Feb. 20, 7 p.m., a traveling mission-youth group from 1st Presbyterian Church of Caldwell, N.J. will join local talent in a performance of "Jesus Christ Superstar." The free event takes place at the Westminster Presbyterian Church, 3598 Talbot St., and benefits local youth, mission and music ministries. For more information, call (619) 223-3193, or visit [www.westminstersd.org](http://www.westminstersd.org). Sunday, Feb. 22, 1:30 p.m., the

New Americans Museum at Liberty Station will host a lecture with music by noted violinist, klezmer music scholar, composer, filmmaker, writer and photographer Yale Strom. Strom will present "From Minsk to Manhattan: Jewish Music in the Jewish Immigrant Experience" at the Corky McMillin Cos. Events Center, 2875 Dewey Road. The event is free. For more information, call (619) 255-8908, or visit [www.newamericansmuseum.org](http://www.newamericansmuseum.org).

Friday, Feb. 27, 7 p.m., Westminster Presbyterian Church hosts "An Evening of Piano and Winds," performed by the San Diego Chamber Music Society. The concert takes place at the church, 3598 Talbot St., and will feature compositions of Beethoven and Mozart in both quintet pieces and solos. For more information, call (619) 223-3193, or visit [www.westminstersd.org](http://www.westminstersd.org).

Friday, Feb. 27, 7:30 p.m., the Point Loma Nazarene University's Concert Band performs in a spring concert. The free event takes place at the university's Crill Performance Hall, 3900 Lomaland Drive. For more information, call (619) 849-2325.

Saturday, Feb. 28, 7:30 p.m., Point Loma Nazarene University's Vocal Jazz Ensemble performs with special guests Epicenter, an award-winning vocal jazz group from Cal State Northridge. Tickets are \$12 for students, faculty, seniors and military; adults are \$15. For tickets and information, call (619) 849-

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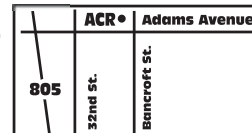
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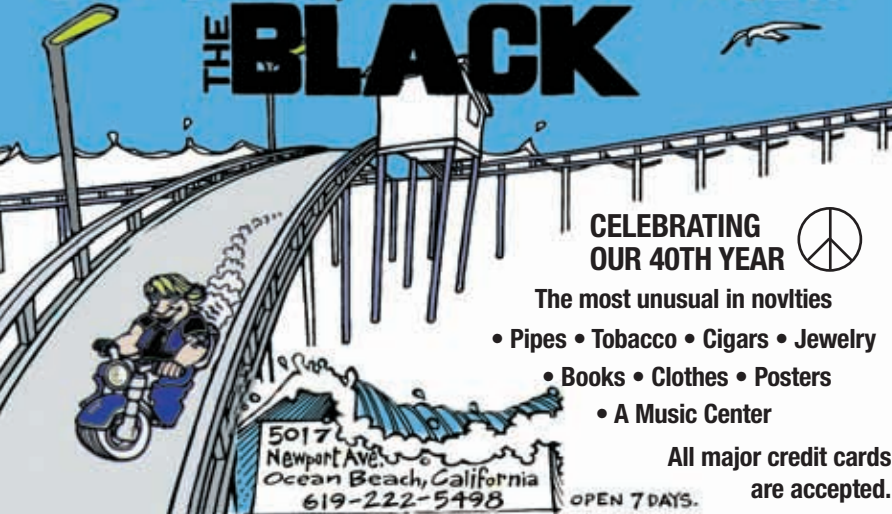
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