



THE PENINSULA BEACON

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NATURE'S OWN NEW YEAR'S SPECTACULAR: OUT WITH THE OLD, IN WITH THE NEW



The legendary Dick Clark is closely associated with the massive, colorful and masterful New Year's Eve celebration party in Times Square in New York. But even Clark can't orchestrate the kind of majesty or inspire the kind of awe that Mother Nature can as the calendar turns over to a new year. **Above**, brilliant early-morning rays bathe the Cabrillo National Monument as a thin veil of fog hugs the Peninsula at the dawn of 2012. **Bottom right**, Mother Nature puts on a show with a phenomenon sometimes referred to as a "fogbow." **Bottom left**, the final sunset of 2011 made for a breathtaking sight as the sun descended into the sea. **Left, middle**, the blue hue of the ocean resonates against the Peninsula as more fog rolls in.

Photos by Jim Grant | The Beacon



California laws cut new teeth for 2012

Changes abound for smokers, bullies, gun fans, workers

By PATRICIA WALSH | THE BEACON

Fasten your seats belts (properly) and leave those unloaded handguns at home. A slew of new state laws that took effect Jan. 1 are sure to make life's ride a little more interesting in 2012.

What's in: recycling for renters and revised standards for use of car seats for children.

What's out: smoking for renters, open carry of unloaded handguns and self-service check out of alcohol at retail stores.

In the realm of technology, out-of-state online businesses will be subject to a California use tax, and digital readers won't have to worry about Big Brother watching.

California will also become more equal for all with a gay-bullying law and a gay history law — the first state law of its kind in the nation.

Animals are also the source of greater protection, with laws shielding sharks and cracking down on abusive pet owners.

Every employer and employee will want to read the fine print of a compendium of new workplace-related

laws that will help the world's eighth-largest economy going for another year.

Here's a look at just some of the new laws for 2012 that took hold Jan. 1.



CAR SAFETY

• California has a new booster-seat law that requires children younger than 8 — or who are not yet 4 feet, 9 inches tall — to use a booster seat securely fastened in the back seat of the car.

The revised California Child Restraint Law, twice vetoed by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, was signed by Gov. Jerry Brown in October. It replaces the old law that required children who were 6 years old or younger — or who weighed at least 60 pounds — to be secured in an appropriate child safety seat or booster seat.

The fine for violating the new law (California Vehicle Code section 27360) is \$100, plus penalty assessments, which could add up to more than \$400.

A first offense may be reduced or waived if economic disadvantage is demonstrated. If the fine is reduced, the court will require the violator to attend an education program. The fine for a second or subsequent offense is \$250, plus penalties.

According the California Highway Patrol, thousands of children are injured or killed every year by safety seats that are improperly fastened by



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Cabrillo monument to host annual whalewatching festival

The Cabrillo National Monument in Point Loma is poised to host its 25th annual Whale Watch and Intertidal Life Festival on Jan. 7-8 in a family-oriented event designed to celebrate the return of the Pacific gray whales in their yearly, round-trip migration from Baja California to Alaska.

The festival, which runs from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. both days, will also cast a spotlight on the intertidal life found in the tidepool area of the monument's western shore.

Each year, an estimated 20,000 gray whales in the Eastern Pacific herd return from Alaskan feeding waters to the warm, shallow lagoons in Baja California to give birth and find mates, making their 12,000-mile roundtrip migration the longest of any mammal in the world.

The tidepools of Cabrillo National

"This is a fantastic opportunity for families and visitors of all ages to see and learn about gray whales and other marine mammals, as well as the fascinating and sensitive intertidal area."

TOM WORKMAN
Superintendent, Cabrillo National Monument

Monument are also among the best examples of intertidal habitat on the Southern California coast, said park officials.

"This is a fantastic opportunity for families and visitors of all ages to see and learn about gray whales and other marine mammals, as well as the fascinating and sensitive intertidal area," said

Cabrillo National Monument superintendent Tom Workman.

The weekend will feature guest speakers — who will share their expertise on gray whales and other cetaceans and intertidal habitat and ecology — along with films for the family and activities for children.

Exhibitors will provide activities and information about whales, tidepools and their organizations, while park rangers, park volunteers and volunteers from the San Diego Natural History Museum will assist visitors in spotting whales and exploring the monument's tidepool area. Park officials said the best locations to watch for whales are on the bluffs overlooking the ocean, and visitors are encouraged to bring binoculars and

SEE WHALES, Page 6



The annual ritual of observing the migration of the California gray whale is hitting full tilt. As some nature lovers embark on ships, kayaks, planes or other means of transportation to witness the sea behemoths, others are preparing to descend on Cabrillo National Monument this weekend for the 25th installment of the Whale Watch and Intertidal Life Festival. Courtesy photo

Facing possible prison time, marijuana grower takes case public in OB

By **BIANCA KOCH** | THE BEACON

Benjamin Gasper, a local man who is facing up to six years in prison for the alleged possession of and illegal distribution of marijuana from 133 cannabis plants, made a public stand in Ocean Beach on Dec. 26 by flying picket signs and pleading for support in front of crowds and the news media at the corner of Abbott Street and Newport Avenue.

Gasper was flanked by fellow members of the Americans for Safe Access Group (ASA), an Oakland-based, pro-marijuana legalization organization made up of patients, medical professionals and citizens who say they are working to ensure safe and legal access to cannabis for therapeutic uses and research.

A couple of years ago, according to Gasper, he and two handicapped partners had been growing 133 marijuana plants for personal use at a warehouse and storage unit in the commercial area of Point Loma near Sports Arena Boulevard. He said the marijuana was to be used as a means of medical relief for the trio's chronic pains.

Gasper said in his case, he needs the marijuana for chronic nerve pain that he deals with on a daily basis. He said he refuses to take the pain medication Vicodin that he was prescribed because of the strong painkiller's addictive qualities.

Gasper said he educated himself about the use of medical cannabis at Oakland University, a cannabis college with campuses in Oakland, Los Angeles, Michigan and in North Bay. As a result, he involved lawyers to draw up partnership contracts to grow the plants in San Diego for medical purposes.

According to Gasper, San Diego police officers gained unannounced access about two years ago to the trio's storage unit to perform a required safety check, conducting a 45-minute raid. The discovery triggered the involvement of the San Diego County Narcotics Task Force.

Gasper, who said he was absent at the time of the raid, believes no official search warrant had been issued.

He said that even though he and his partners had been open about their diagnosis and medical records, officers ordered Gasper to the storage unit, where he was questioned and later arrested on three counts and taken to a detention facility near San Ysidro, where he spent



Gasper, far right in black hat, is scheduled to appear in court on Jan. 11 downtown.

Photo by Bianca Koch | The Beacon

two weeks before being seen by a judge.

"The cop came to me [at the scene] and said, 'Looks like you did a nice job here. Unfortunately, yours and my definition of the legality of this particular law are totally different, so we are going to leave that up to the courts to decide,'" Gasper recalled. "Then they seized my entire crop. I felt totally railroaded."

Gasper said that while he was detained, the officers ransacked all of his belongings.

Police Lt. Andra Brown confirmed Gasper's arrest and presented the SDPD's case as detailed by the officers in their paperwork.

"Derivable from repeated burglaries, the officers were patrolling the area where Mr. Gasper had his storage space, solely for a random security check. Passing by Mr. Gasper's unit, they noticed open doors and people inside it. Aware of a possible ongoing break-in, the officers approached the people, informing them of the security check in the area."

After obtaining the identities of the people, Brown said the officers learned that none of them was the owner of the storage unit and that they were apparently only sleeping there.

Brown said that, according to the officers' report, they detected the characteristic odor of marijuana.

"After our officers determined an illegal grow operation, they immediately contacted the detectives from drug enforcement, who then arrived at the scene with a search warrant and, in conjunction, contacted Mr. Gasper, who upon arrival was cooperative," Brown

said.

According to the police report, Gasper told officers he believed he was exempt as a "caregiver."

After detectives cleaned out the storage unit, the 133 adult marijuana plants were confiscated.

"He's been charged with cultivating, transportation and possession of an illegal substance," Brown said.

Gasper is expected to be arraigned on those counts and additional charges of illegal distribution on Jan. 11 in San Diego District Court downtown.

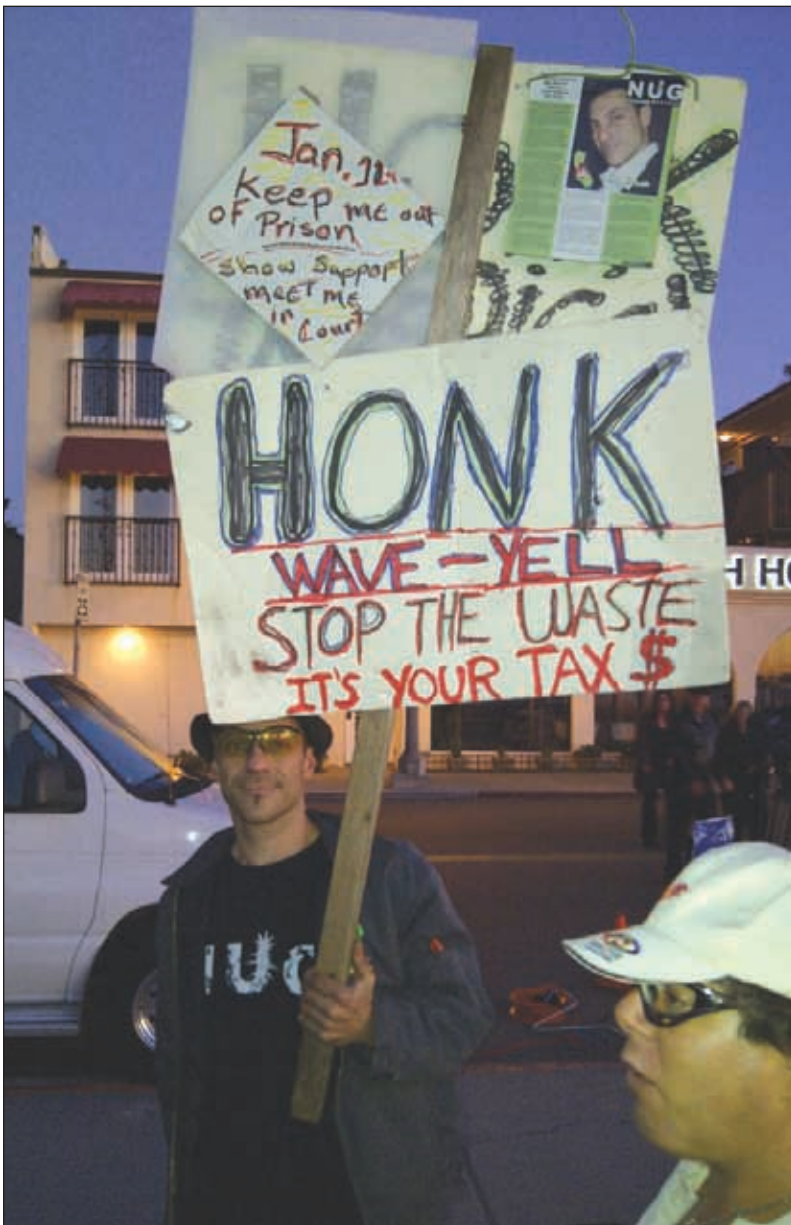
Meanwhile, Gasper maintains he is wrongly accused and insists on his right to use the medication he feels is best for him.

"I'm in daily need of strong pain medication," he said. "I don't like to take all that prescription stuff. It makes me loopy and I can't work like that. I got to be able to use my brain."

Gasper is an electrician for Target Electric. He said he was lucky the electrical company gave him a job after all the legal tumult.

"You Google my name and you will find all kinds of accusations and opinions about me," Gasper said. "I am very grateful that my company hired me under the ongoing circumstances. I've been fighting against the city and the district attorney for what I think is my actual god-given right. I definitely do not deserve six years in prison for that."

As his case unfolds, he said the ASA has supplied him with a specialized team of attorneys, who will handle his case on a pro-bono basis.



Benjamin Gasper (in black, holding sign), demonstrates for the TV news cameras and media in Ocean Beach on Dec. 26 to protest his arrest and pending court case involving the cultivation and possession of 133 marijuana plants at a Point Loma storage unit. Gasper claims the marijuana is his means of medical relief for chronic nerve pain.

Photo by Bianca Koch | The Beacon

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French Gourmet socked with \$387,000 penalty for hiring undocumented workers

By **NEAL PUTNAM** | THE BEACON

While the owner and manager of The French Gourmet Restaurant were placed on probation for hiring undocumented workers on multiple occasions, the Pacific Beach restaurant was fined nearly \$387,000 on Dec. 22 by a federal judge.

Owner Michel Francois Malecot and manager Richard Kauffmann, both 59, dodged jail time from U.S. District Court Judge Thomas Whelan, even though Assistant U.S. Attorney Rebecca Kanter had asked that Malecot and Kauffmann get six and four months in prison, respectively.

Kauffmann and the Turquoise Street restaurant pleaded guilty Oct. 13 to hiring 10 illegal immigrants. Malecot pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor charge of continuing to employ undocumented workers since first being raided by authorities in the 1990s.

The families and friends of both defendants filled the courtroom. After the court hearing, Malecot, flanked by his supporters, was asked by a television reporter if he was satisfied with the sen-

tence.

"Well, yes, I don't really have the choice. I wish it would have never happened," said Malecot.

His lawyer, Eugene Iredale, said Malecot was "too generous, too compassionate to pull the trigger on people who had been working for him for five, for six or eight years."

"I think the judge did an excellent job ... and came to a decision that was fair and just," said Iredale, who noted the restaurant now employs "100 U.S. citizens," including part timers.

The restaurant never closed following a 2008 raid, in which dozens of illegal aliens were arrested. The restaurant was also fined in the 1990s for employing illegal aliens.

"We have lost some catering business ... because people don't realize most businesses in San Diego have a certain percentage of illegal aliens," said Malecot.

The owner said he urged owners of other businesses to try to determine whether a potential employee is illegal

Math guru, musical magician enraptures students

By SCOTT HOPKINS | THE BEACON

For 179 school days each year, Ian Law is a mild-mannered teacher of mathematics in Room 154 at Point Loma High School (PLHS).

But on the last day of classes before winter break, the popular math guru transforms himself — to the delight of his students — into a musical magician, bringing part of his enormous personal collection of instruments from diverse cultures to his classroom.

Adding to the students' fascination — Law is able to play every single instrument.

Law and his wife, Wanda, are Point Loma residents and have two daughters; Amy is an eighth-grader at Correia Middle School, while Julia is a PLHS junior.

Wanda plays viola in the San Diego Symphony and coaches string players at Correia Middle School.

Inquisitive teen faces broke into smiles recently as Law played a mixture of flutes, an array of stringed instruments and even strapped on an accordion before hoisting several models of bagpipes from different countries, including Italy, Spain and Sweden.

They had unusual names like Bourbonnaise comemuse bagpipes from central France, ocarinas of several sizes, double-reed instruments called piffaros and many more.

And how many months or years of intense music lessons did Law undergo to achieve his jaw-dropping ability?

"I've never had a single music lesson," Law told his stunned class last month.

"My first instrument was a banjo that we found in my grandmother's attic when I was 10 years old," Law said. "My grandmother said I could have it since nobody else wanted it. I took it home and taught myself how to play it."

After teaching himself to play the banjo, he began to branch out.



Point Loma High School student Brett Stinson struggles to play the gaita, a bagpipe from northern Spain, as teacher Ian Law offers help. Law brought an array of his personal instrument collection to his math class.
Photo by Scott Hopkins | The Beacon

"I started playing a fiddle for square dances in college," Law said.

Soon after, Dave Page, a 75-year-old friend, gathered Law and his friends and introduced them to Irish music.

"I ended up on flute and penny whistle," Law said.

PLHS Principal Bobbie Samilson and Vice Principal Hans Becker, himself an accomplished musician, dropped in to enjoy not only Law's performance but join in the inevitable laughter that filled the room when several brave students took turns trying to play unfamiliar instruments.

"It's quite a sensation to play an instrument that fights back," Law said when two boys stepped forward to give the bagpipes a try.

Becker took a turn on the five-row Continental accordion and "was doing quite well until he was called away for lunch

supervision," Law said.

A few students from previous years also dropped by for another opportunity to appreciate Law's talents, while several other teachers peeked in to see the source of the music filling the hallways and normally quiet math classrooms.

Law uses photos of his students to decorate his classroom. He has inserted cartoon bubbles next to each face with quotes from them about key math concepts and some of the errors they have learned from.

In another area, Law shares several photos of himself in earlier days — with long, flowing hair — when he played in a number of different bands.

When does Law find time to practice on and play all his instruments?

"I play in our garage," Law said. "I don't watch any television."

For Law, the music provides its own reward with relaxation and joy.

RESTAURANT

CONTINUED FROM Page 2

and use a government verification program.

"Cover yourself," Malecot said. "Don't just believe (immigration) papers, because they look very real."

Whelan imposed a fine of more than \$277,000 on the business, and ordered that more than \$109,000 be forfeited to the U.S. government. He also ordered the restaurant to pay \$10,000 to a man who suffered a serious burn injury and didn't seek medical attention initially because he was not in the country lawfully.

"I think it is a sufficient sentence to demonstrate that this can't just be a cost of doing business," said Kanter after the hearing. "There will be financial consequences for those companies

(who hire illegal aliens).

"Just because the defendants in this case wore collared shirts to work and live in La Jolla does not mean they should be treated differently for their violations of the immigration laws."

Iredale filed court papers that showed Malecot was generous with donations to causes like the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, San Diego Opera and local schools. During the 2003 and 2007 wildfires, Malecot also donated food to emergency workers and shelters.

He has owned the restaurant for 32 years. Kauffmann has worked there for 28 years.

Charges of conspiracy and harboring illegal aliens were dismissed. Charges were first filed in April. The restaurant received letters in 2005 and 2006 from the Social Security Administration that several employees' names did not match Social Security numbers.

How to Sell Your House Without an Agent

SAN DIEGO, If you've tried to sell your home yourself, you know that the minute you put the "For Sale by Owner" sign up, the phone will start to ring off the hook. Unfortunately, most calls aren't from prospective buyers, but rather from every real estate agent in town who will start to hound you for your listing.

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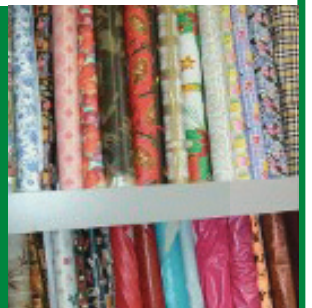
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Going native: planting the seeds of preservation, restoration

By MARSHA KAY SEFF | THE BEACON

Welcome to San Diego's "secret garden."

The Point Loma Native Plant Garden is a 2½-acre refuge at Mendocino and Greene streets in Ocean Beach.

The garden is home to more than 100 rare and endangered plant species that were prevalent in San Diego County a century ago. That was well before palm trees and grass lawns became the norm, said Richard Dhu, program manager for the San Diego River Park Foundation. The foundation oversees the garden, which is part of the city's Collier Park West.

Some species in the collection are not found naturally anywhere else in the world, Dhu said, as he walked along the serene, 1½-mile meandering path that overlooks the bustle of Nimitz Boulevard.

The garden, on a parcel of land left to the children of San Diego by early developer D.C. Collier, is open to the public 24/7. Volunteers meet for work parties the first Saturday and third Sunday of each month from 9 a.m. to noon. Visitors also can buy plants. The proceeds go toward upkeep of the garden.

Volunteers, who do the planting, mulching, watering and weeding, logged more than 1,000 hours last year. Boy Scout Troop 500 built and outfitted the nursery, which volunteers maintain.

Point Loma resident Joel Kalmonson has headed the volunteer team for the last six years. He got involved in the project, he said, when he ran out of front-yard real estate for his cactus and succulents.

"They gave me a key to the shed and I was in," Kalmonson said.

The property wasn't always so tranquil, according to Dhu. In the middle of the hippie movement in 1971, he said, locals held a protest against the city's plan to allow development on the parcel. The



A Shaw's agave at the Point Loma Native Plant Garden. Photo by James Steinberg | The Beacon

demonstration started at the beach in protest against the Vietnam War and ended up at what eventually became the garden. Although police answered with riot gear, locals prevailed, Dhu said.

The garden project began in 1982 with native plants representing Central and Southern California, the Channel Islands and Northern Baja. The foundation took over the project about seven years ago.

At first glance, the place looks like any other wild hillside in San Diego. Look a little closer, though, and you start to distinguish exotic specimens. These are plants you won't find amid the iceplant lining the freeways or in many garden centers, Dhu said.

"The thing about San Diego is that we have more biodiversity than any county in the United States," said Dhu.

Winter is one of the best times to visit

the reserve, Dhu said, because many of the flowers bloom in the rainy months.

On a walk through the garden, Dhu pointed to a torrey pine, "the rarest pines in the country." There's also the rare and endangered Tecate cypress.

The path wanders by memorial trees and foliage dedicated to locals. There's a Tecate cypress that began as a one-gallon plant and now, five years later, tops six feet.

There's also a coast live oak, recently planted in memory of an organ donor by another San Diegan who received the donor's heart.

All told, there are about a dozen memorials.

"They're not grouped in one area, because we don't want it to look like a cemetery," Dhu said.

The variety of native specimens includes Shaw's agave, which is rare in Southern California but more abundant in coastal Northern Baja; island tree mallow that, Dhu said, doesn't need watering; bladderpod, the favorite habitat of the Harlequin beetle that can spend its entire life on the plant; and lemonade berry, which Native Americans used to make tea. They also used flat-top buckwheat for tea and porridge, Dhu said, adding that the Hermes copper butterfly, which is endangered, dines primarily on this plant. Willow also was a favorite with Native Americans, who used it not only to make hunting tools and shelters, but for pain and fever control.

Though the refuge remains largely a secret to San Diegans west of Interstate 5, Dhu said, residents who call Ocean Beach and Point Loma home are discovering that it's a good place to walk, picnic or hold a casual corporate event.

To volunteer or learn more about the Point Loma Native Plant Garden, go to sandiegoriver.org/plnpg.php or call (619) 297-7380.



From left, Richard Dhu, program manager for the San Diego River Park Foundation and volunteer Joel Kalmonson stand inside the Point Loma Native Plant Garden.

Photo by James Steinberg | The Beacon

NEWSBRIEFS

Robber hits Chase bank on Midway

Police officials are hunting for a suspect who robbed the Chase bank at 3609 Midway Drive on Dec. 31, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation is now asking for the public's help in identifying the robber.

Investigators said the man walked up to a teller around 3:20 p.m. and produced a demand note.

The suspect was given an undisclosed amount of money before the man fled the bank southbound through the parking lot, then eastbound on Kemper Street.

The suspect is described as a white male about 30 years old with a medium build, about 5 foot 8 inches to 5 foot 10 inches tall, weighing about 170 pounds with salt-and-pepper eyebrows.

Investigators said the man had a pony tail and sported a light beard with stubble.

The man was last seen wearing a surgical mask and a construction hat, a light-colored shirt and blue jeans. No injuries were reported.

Anyone with information is urged to call (858) 565 1255.

'Mr. Magoo Bandit' fesses up to crimes

Scott James Larson, 43, pleaded guilty Dec. 20 to 12 bank robberies in the "Mr. Magoo Bandit" series that included two holdups at the US Bank site on Rosecrans Street.

U.S. Magistrate Louisa Porter set Larson's sentencing for Feb. 21 at the downtown federal courthouse. Larson, of San Diego, remains in custody on

\$75,000 bail.

He faces a maximum sentence of 20 years for each bank robbery, but his attorney, Jason Ser, said Larson won't get the maximum because he surrendered to the Federal Bureau of Investigation on Oct. 18 and was cooperative with authorities.

Larson also pleaded guilty to bank robberies in Northern California, the Los Angeles area and one in Henderson, Nev. Larson waived having to appear before judges in those other areas, so the sentence he gets will include all the holdups in the series.

"He saved them considerable time and effort," said Ser.

The total amount taken was nearly \$21,400, according to court records. The Point Loma bank lost more than \$6,000 in the two robberies on July 12 and Aug. 10. It's not yet known if any of the money was recovered. The prosecutor declined comment.

Larson may have surrendered because the FBI released 18 photographs of the so-called "Mr. Magoo Bandit" on Aug. 11 to seek the public's assistance in identifying the robber.

Larson surprised FBI agents on Oct. 18 when he showed up at their offices and acknowledged he was the bandit they were looking for.

— Neal Putnam

OB Branch Library closes through Feb. 13

The Ocean Beach Branch Library was closed for refurbishment Dec. 24 and is expected to remain so through Feb. 13, according to the Friends of the Ocean Beach Library.

The library is undergoing re-roofing, repainting and re-carpeting, and should be open in mid-February, barring delays or inclement weather.

In the interim, already checked-out library materials can be returned to

any San Diego public library branch. Reserved items will be sent to the Hervey/Point Loma Branch Library, located at 3701 Voltaire St.

For more information, call Robert Cronk at (619) 531-1532.

Dining deals bountiful with restaurant week

San Diegans might want to put that New Year's resolution to diet on hold just for another week or two.

San Diego Restaurant Week returns to ring in the new year with great deals on two-course, prix-fixe lunch options for \$10, \$15 or \$20 and three-course, prix-fixe dinner deals for \$20, \$30 or \$40 between Jan. 15 and Jan. 20 at participating restaurants.

The biannual weeklong event offers discounted prices on cuisine options from around the world without having to leave the comfort of your own backyard — whether that be the beach communities or downtown. San Diego Restaurant Week offers culinary delights to cater to any palate.

Here's a taste of some of the options locally:

- BO-beau kitchen+bar, 4996 W. Point Loma Blvd., (619) 224-2884, www.cohnrestaurants.com, \$30 dinner

- Devine Pastabilities, 3545 Midway Drive, (619) 523-5441, www.torpastata.com, \$10 lunch

- Island Prime, 880 Harbor Island Drive, (619) 298-6802, www.cohnrestaurants.com, \$40 dinner

No tickets or passes are required to take advantage of the deals. Simply show up at a participating restaurant location or call ahead to make a reservation.

For a complete list of participating restaurants, visit www.sandiego-restaurantweek.com.

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The Estate Sale: a treasure trove of value and selection

By MARSHA KAY SEFF | THE BEACON

It takes courage to open a store and commit to a monthly rent of \$6,000 in this sluggish economy. But that's just what the owners of The Estate Sale in Pacific Beach did in June — and they're not a bit sorry.

Already, according to owners Laura and Mike Pietrczak, the resale store has moved into the black — just barely. According to the couple, reasonably priced antiques, used furniture and “other curiosities” are just what today's bargain hunters are searching for.

And search they must. For it's easy to miss this storefront tucked away on Garnet Avenue across the street from World Gym, just west of Interstate 5.

The Pietrczaks started out by selling used furniture at a North Park consignment shop. Doing well with that, they opened a small place in Oceanside before taking the leap to their current 4,400-square-foot space in Pacific Beach.

Now, they work 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., 365 days a year — including Christmas and New Year's.

“We have a strong work ethic,” said 49-year-old Laura, a writer and former real estate agent. In fact, the couple put in even more time buying and transporting furniture before and after work.

The bottom line is they said they don't consider it work because they enjoy it so much.

Mike, who at 39 has worked as a handyman and fisherman, said, “We make people happy. We can find a piece of furniture, repair it and sell it for five times what we paid, and it's still cheap.”

Laura agrees. “We laugh about earning 30 cents an hour — and we're grateful,” she said.

Technically, Mike is the shop owner and Laura is his “helper.”

“Mike can fix anything,” Laura said.

Mike has a workshop in the back of the store, where he refurbishes and repurposes many pieces.

“He's the one who ruined the curve on the IQ test,” Laura said. “He can get a 16-foot rental truck and figure out how to pack an entire estate into it.”

Because Laura has a good eye for bargains, she's the primary shopper. It's tough having to shop for a living, she jokes.

The couple has been so busy building the second-hand business “on a shoestring,” Laura said, that she hasn't even had time for a manicure. “Every day with Mike is like three days. We're living in doggie years.”

Owning the business has its perks, though.

“If I feel like sitting down, I can do it. If it's nap time, I can have at it, and if I feel like eating, I eat,” Mike said.

Not only are they running a “green” business by saving treasures from the landfill, Laura said, but the near-newlyweds get to spend most of their time together.

“That's good and it always will be,” Laura said, adding that the couple has been married just two years.

The story of their romance is classic: they met when she was walking by the ocean in Pacific Beach.

“Mike waved and threw a Frisbee at me,” Laura said.

The couple married two weeks later.

Their business works, they said, because they haven't overextended themselves. Their initial investment was minimal, Mike said.

“We found out we could get a lot of stuff cheap,” he said.

They started by selling a single dining-room table on consignment, bought more furniture with the proceeds and



Just seven months into their ambitious business venture in Pacific Beach, store owners Mike and Laura Pietrczak are making great gains in growing The Estate Sale on Garnet Avenue. The hardworking couple prides itself on reasonably-priced antiques, used furniture and “other curiosities” that are a treasure trove for bargain hunters. Photo by James Steinberg | The Beacon

sold that.

After filling up someone else's shop, they decided to open their own.

“I knew it would work out just fine, as long as we keep doing the next right

thing,” Mike said.

The couple buys at swap meets, auctions and garage sales. They've also bought whole estates and cleaned out houses for owners who didn't have the

time. Lately, sellers have been walking into the shop with their discards.

The space is packed to the rafters. Dining-room chairs hang from the ceiling. The Pietrczaks specialize in solid-wood and wrought-iron furniture, which stands the test of time, according to Mike.

Furnishings sell for anywhere between \$25 for dining-room chairs to \$350 for a hand-carved bed from India and \$1,700 for a 1907 Limbert sideboard. In addition to the big pieces, The Estate Sale offers books starting at \$1, CDs for \$2, fashion earrings for \$2.50 and lots of knick-knacks.

“We buy low and sell low to keep a good flow,” Mike said.

The Estate Sale also takes trade-ins. When there's a lull in business, the couple enjoys its own inventory.

“We sit on for-sale chairs at a for-sale table, eat pizza on for-sale china and drink from for-sale crystal glasses,” Laura said.

Customers come from all over the county, many with their kids and dogs in tow. Buyers include store owners and designers, as well as bargain hunters planning to furnish one room or a whole house. One inveterate shopper spent \$1,600 on two truckloads of furnishings for her young daughter's future home. The girl is just 3 years old.

The Pietrczaks become friends with many of their customers, especially the regulars.

Smiling as her husband chatted with a regular and carried a china cabinet to his truck, Laura said that although they live in a condo a few miles from the shop, “We're here most of the time. This is our home.”

For more information, call (760) 696-7982, or visit www.theestatesale.wordpress.com.

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Ask The Lawyer SM

Question: What is the proper way to list the beneficiaries on my IRAs?

Answer: When you open an IRA you fill out a form and you list one or more Beneficiaries. If you have not reviewed these Beneficiary Designations Forms lately, you should do so now. If you fail to list a beneficiary or if they have died, the asset is part or your estate and may be subject to probate. You want to avoid this court procedure.

The best way to list the beneficiaries is to name an individual or list of individuals. If the spouse is the appropriate beneficiary, it is best to list them as the beneficiary. The spouse can rollover the IRA into their own IRA. Other individuals can rollover the IRA into an inherited IRA, but they will be required to take a yearly minimum distribution. This amount is based on the beneficiaries' life expectancy and the financial institution will figure it out for you. In certain circumstances you can name a trust as a beneficiary and it can get the same rollover treatment. Check with your financial institution and your estate planning attorney. The benefit of a rollover IRA is that the funds can continue to have tax deferred treatment. The interest income and dividends will not be taxed until the money is taken out of the IRA. Now I have a question for you— Have you funded your Roth IRA yet?

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LAWS

CONTINUED FROM Page 1

parents or caretakers. The CHP cautions parents that most collisions occur within a mile of the home.

• There is also a change to the standard seat belt law, which defines proper use of seat belts. CVC section 27315 states a driver must be properly clicked in as well. The lap portion of a seat belt must cross the hips and upper thighs of an adult and the shoulder section of a seat belt must cross the chest in front of the occupant. The shoulder portion of the seat belt can't be tucked under an arm or behind a back.

Somewhere consumer crusader Ralph Nader must be celebrating. It's been a long road since he single-handedly got federal legislation passed in 1966 that required seat belts as a standard feature in cars.



CHECKPOINT IMPOUNDMENT

AB 353 now prohibits police from immediately impounding a car during sobriety checkpoints solely because the driver is unlicensed. Unlicensed drivers now have time to contact a vehicle's legal driver to avoid impound.

OPEN CARRY OF HANDGUNS

Assembly Bill (AB) 144 now makes the open carry of unloaded handguns illegal in most of California. The law, signed by Brown and supported by law enforcement officials, does not affect unloaded open carry for long guns — as in rifles and shotguns — except where banned. Locations include schools, school zones, state and national parks, post offices and federal buildings.

Among those exempt from the law are law enforcement, individuals authorized to carry loaded weapons in public and people selling unloaded weapons at guns shows. The penalty for violating the law includes up to \$1,000 in fines and up to six months in jail.

ALCOHOL AND SELF-SERVICE

This was a marriage that wasn't meant to last. AB 183 bans the sale of alcoholic beverages at self-service checkout stands in California's retail stores. Also known as the Fresh & Easy law because it stemmed from the chain's self-service format, the legislation requires retailers to sell adult beverages at full-service checkouts.

There must be a face-to-face transaction between customers and store employees. Supporters of the law included religious leaders throughout the state and many organizations, including Mothers Against Drunk Drivers, Consumer Federation of California, California Council on Alcohol Problems (CalCap), Lutheran Office of Public Policy of California, California Police Chiefs, Alcohol Justice, California Narcotic Officers Association, Metro United Methodist Urban Ministry, California's Police Officers (PORAC) and California Professional Firefighters.

BEER AND CAFFEINE

SB 39 bans the importation, production and sale of caffeinated beer beverages at retail locations throughout California.

INTERNET SALES TAX

AB 28 requires some online retailers located in states outside California to collect tax and pay it to the state beginning this summer. Online giant Amazon, which kicked and screamed about the legislation and even threatened to pull its business out of California, quieted down when it figured out how to make its own profit on the new law. It is offering to calculate and collect any local and state sales taxes for its third party vendors for 2.9 percent of the taxes collected. The California Board of Equalization has estimated that the state loses more than \$1.1 billion each year in unpaid use-tax revenue.

READER PRIVACY ACT

Go ahead and get that new digital reader you've been wanting — or download a copy of "Catch 22" from the Internet. Senate Bill (SB) 602 stops the government and third parties from snooping into previously easy-to-tap private reading records. We can now

remember Joseph Heller for something other than his famous quote: "Just because you're paranoid doesn't mean they aren't after you."



NO SMOKING HERE, THERE, ANYWHERE

California has gotten even tougher on smoking with SB 332. The law means landlords may prohibit smoking in apartment buildings and other rental properties. The purpose of the bill is to ensure apartment dwellers aren't exposed to second-hand smoke from other residents who live above or below them. According to Sen. Alex Padilla (D-Pacoima) who authored the bill, more than 30 percent of California housing is made up of multi-family residences.



RENTERS' RIGHT TO RECYCLING

Owners of multi-family housing with five or more units must now provide paper, plastic, bottle and can recycling services for California tenants beginning in 2012.

GAY HISTORY

California is the first state in the nation to require lessons about gays and lesbians in public schools. SB 48 requires that school textbooks and social studies include the historic accomplishments of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender individuals and groups, beginning July 1. A coalition of pro-family groups, which was unsuccessful

in stopping the legislation before it was signed by Brown in 2011, vows to reverse the law. The group says it will collect signatures for its initiative early in the year.

GAY-BULLYING

AB 9, or Seth's Law, is set to take effect on July 1. The law combats bullying of gay and lesbian students in public schools by requiring school districts to have a uniform process for dealing with gay-bullying complaints. It also mandates that school personnel intervene if they witness gay bullying. The law is named for Seth Walsh who, in 2010 at age 13, hanged himself in his backyard. Walsh reportedly suffered relentless bullying at school after he came out as openly gay in the sixth grade.

LGBT EQUALITY, EQUAL ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

State universities and colleges and community colleges must create and enforce campus policies protecting lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) individuals from harassment and appoint employee contact persons to address on-campus LGBT matters.

LGBT EQUAL BENEFITS

Requires an employer with a state contract worth more than \$100,000 to have non-discrimination policies in place for LGBT workers and their partners.

MEDICAL RADIATION SAFETY

Radiologists in California will be required to add radiation dose levels to their printed and digital reports under SB 1237. Signed by Schwarzenegger in 2010, the law goes into effect on July 1.

HUMAN TRAFFIC/SLAVERY

Companies doing business in California that have annual gross global receipts in excess of \$100 million will be required to publicly disclose efforts to ensure their supply chains do not support human trafficking or slavery. SB 657 was signed into law by Schwarzenegger in 2010.

NO MORE SHARK SOUP

AB 376 bans the sale, trade and possession of shark fins in California. Shark fin soup is a delicacy at some restaurants.

PET PROTECTION

Anyone with a misdemeanor or felony animal-abuse conviction is prohibited from possessing animals for five to 10 years after the crime under AB 1117.

hibited from possessing animals for five to 10 years after the crime under AB 1117.

EMPLOYMENT

If you're lucky enough to have work in this economy — or if you are being considered for a job — you could be affected by a slew of new employment laws in 2012. Here's a snapshot from the California Chamber of Commerce on new rules that have taken effect:

• Credit reports: Employers and prospective employers won't be able to obtain and use consumer credit reports to review job applications beginning this year. AB 22 does not apply to some financial institutions or managerial employees. California is now in a club with Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Oregon and Maryland — the states that have already restricted credit checks by most employers from employment decisions.

• Pregnancy disability leave: SB 299 requires all employers with five or more employees to continue to maintain and pay for health coverage under a group health plan for an eligible female employee who takes pregnancy disability leave (PDL) up to a maximum of four months in a 12-month period. The benefits are at the same level and under the same conditions as if the employee had continued working during the leave period.

• "Gender expression:" AB 887 amends the Fair Employment and Housing Act to further define "gender" to include both actual gender and "gender expression," as defined by the new law, and to make clear that discrimination on either basis is prohibited.

• Genetic information: SB 559 amends the Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA) to state that employers are prohibited from discriminating against employees on the basis of genetic information.

• Insurance non-discrimination: SB 757 prevents employers that operate in multiple states from discriminating against same-sex couples by not providing the same insurance coverage for domestic partners as they do for spouses.

• Independent contractors: The "willful misclassification" of independent contractors by employers carries penalties ranging from \$5,000 to \$25,000 under SB 459.

For a complete list of the new California employment laws, visit www.calchamber.com.

WHALES

CONTINUED FROM Page 1

dress warmly.

All of the weekend's events are included

with the regular park entrance fee of \$5 per vehicle and \$3 for motorcyclist, bicyclist and walk-in. Passes may be purchased at the monument.

Funding for the 2012 Whale Watch and Intertidal Life Festival is provided by

the Cabrillo National Monument Foundation. Created in 1913, Cabrillo National Monument has served visitors and preserved nature and history for nearly 100 years.

The monument, located at the south

end of Catalina Boulevard, is open daily from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. For more information, call (619) 557-5450, or visit www.nps.gov/cabr/.

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SUBMISSIONS

Announcements, photos and story ideas are welcomed. We ask that content be sent at least one week prior to publication and include valid contact information.

OPINIONS

The opinions expressed on the Opinion Page do not necessarily reflect those of this paper or the San Diego Community Newspaper Group. To submit a signed letter or guest column, please e-mail the respective publication's editor (at right) or send to 4645 Cass Street, San Diego, CA, 92109. We reserve the right to edit for clarity, accuracy, brevity and liability.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Urges USPS to move on with Midway PO site

An open letter to Eva Jackson of the United States Postal Service, senators and congressmen:

In a followup of the article in the *Peninsula Beacon* ("USPS again eyes Midway Post Office for closure," Dec. 15, Page 1) in regard to the Midway Post Office on Midway Drive, we request your attention.

With the USPS acknowledgment of "underutilization" of this site and the "need to reduce its operating costs," the Peninsula Woman's Club strongly urges your interceding in achieving the USPS goal [of fiscal solvency].

Yes, we do wish to maintain the "retail operation" of the post office at this site, including the existing amenities, but no processing or storage functions. We encourage the cutback in days and hours, if necessary, for this to happen.

Ruth Sewell
Project coordinator, Peninsula Woman's Club
Point Loma

The political, economic aspect of animal rights

Animal-rights activism is a unique social movement. It is a humble movement that gives a voice to those who cannot speak. But why do many animal-rights organizations thrive on advertising mutilated [animals] and [showing] partial nudity of women?

Many authors have suggested that animal rights in this modern-day era have turned into a political economy affecting both sides; both sides being animal-rights group and people who profit off the exploitation of animals by treating them as commodities.

Animals are exploited by the food industry, as well by the cosmetic industry, but people also do not see that ani-

mals are exploited by organizations that are dedicated to protect animals as well.

Animal-rights organizations use pictures of tortured animals to make people feel guilty and [get them to] possibly donate to their cause so their organization can thrive. That can be good and bad, because on one hand animals are possibly being helped from donations; on the other, activism is made into an act of commerce because on websites of animal-rights groups, there is a link that says if you donate now an animal will be saved.

If people become accustomed to that kind of activism, a capitalist economy has granted that the donations are 100 percent profit for whatever use that organization wants to use hard-earned money for.

Those are some key points Bob Torres' "Making a Killing" has shed light upon, such as many authors have shed light upon the U.S. economic system. Other include Upton Sinclair's "The Jungle" and George Orwell's "Animal Farm."

In all of these books, there have been suggestions of socialism, government reform and ulterior motives from government, and they all ultimately suggest the reformation of the economic system of capitalism.

The reality is that the U.S. government would not reform an economic system that has benefited the country so well and, after all, if people in the U.S. contemplate our economy, capitalism is natural, profit is only natural.

It is an economic system that exploits the weaknesses of consumers and suppliers alike. It reflects the way of might makes right, it is a gamble that is tantamounting for both sides.

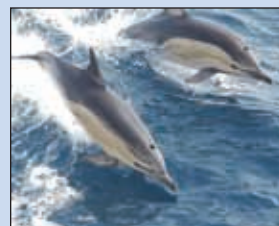
So where could people find the equilibrium in that, and even more so, animals?

Tim Zaragoza
High Tech High School
Point Loma

Whale (or dolphin) of a controversy—readers respond



Not everyone is quick to agree this shot taken by staff photographer Jim Grant (published in the Dec. 22 *Peninsula Beacon*, Page 7) is really a killer whale off the coast of the Peninsula. It appears from a layman's standpoint that it could be an orca but, of course, *The Beacon* can't independently or scientifically verify the belief one way or another. On the surface (no pun intended), if the species was misidentified in the course of publishing what seemed like simply a fun and highly unusual sighting, it was not intentional. In any case, some of our readers below weighed in and gave their take on the photo so you may judge for yourself.



Common dolphins



Orca (killer whale)

San Diego Community Newspaper Group columnist Judith Garfield submits the above photos for comparison. *Courtesy photos*

Photo caption appears to be off mark

"Who let Shamu out??" (Dec. 22 *Peninsula Beacon*, Page 7.) Good news if he really made the break, but I don't see what the caption's title has to do with Jim Grant's photo. The marine mammal pictured looks to be a common dolphin (*Delphinus sp.*). For comparison, I've attached two photos and list here links to two pages from the American Cetacean Society's website: www.acsonline.org/fact-pack/common.htm and www.acsonline.org/fact-pack/-KillerWhale.htm (note, for example, where the white patch lies on each in relation to the dorsal fin).

Also, please help us readers with the [photo caption]

statement, "Fortunately, no incidents have been reported involving the orca." Be it orca or common dolphin, what can this mean? Were some boaters chasing the animal and, therefore, breaching (no pun intended) the Marine Mammal Protection Act? Did someone try to jump overboard for a closer look?

Thanks for any light you can shed on this troublesome mystery.

Judith Garfield
La Jolla

Photo seems that of common dolphin

On Page 7 of the Dec. 22 *Beacon*, you have a photo that is not a killer whale, as speculated. It is a common dolphin. The dorsal fin is not the right size and shape of the killer whale.

The white spot is also not in the correct location for a whale. Nice photo, though!

Lynn Wade, and Michael BuFalry
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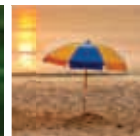
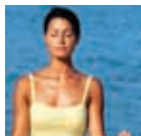
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MIND, BODY & SOUL

Recognizing the need for outside help in caregiving

Caregivers often don't recognize when they are in over their heads, and often get to a breaking point. After a prolonged period of time, caregiving can become too difficult to endure any longer. Short-term, the caregiver can handle it. Long-term, support is needed. Outside help at this point is often necessary.

A typical pattern with an overloaded caregiver may unfold as follows:

- 1 to 18 months--the caregiver is confident, has everything under control and is coping well. Other friends and family are lending support.
- 20 to 36 months--the caregiver may be taking medication to sleep and control mood swings. Outside help dwindles away and except for trips to the store or doctor, the caregiver has severed most social contacts. The caregiver feels alone and helpless.
- 38 to 50 months--Besides needing tranquilizers or antidepressants, the caregiver's physical health is beginning to deteriorate. Lack of focus and sheer fatigue cloud judgment and the caregiver

is often unable to make rational decisions or ask for help.

It is often at this stage that family or friends intercede and find other solutions for care. This may include respite care, hiring home health aides or putting the disabled loved one in a facility. Without intervention, the caregiver may become a candidate for long term care as well...read this entire article by going to www.planforcare.org. The RN Care Managers at Innovative Healthcare Consultants can also help guide you in the ways to get help. Call (877) 731-1442 toll free or visit our website at www.innovativehc.com.

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Make a "Good Health" Resolution at OB People's

A natural, organic diet can make a world of difference when it comes to keeping yourself and your planet healthy. Ocean Beach People's Organic Food Co-op is the perfect place to explore all the elements of a healthy lifestyle.

Many of us make New Years resolutions that are abandoned by the end of the first month. When you make the resolution for good health and eat more nutritiously, you feel the benefits immediately and are more inclined to keep your "good health" resolution. Take simple steps to nutrition by adding whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables to your New Year's diet.

Quick and wholesome snacks include: crisp and crunchy apple slices dipped in almond butter; mixed salad greens wrapped in a whole grain tortilla with humus dip; diced avocado mixed with chopped roma tomatoes and a drizzle of olive oil—spread on a rice cracker or eaten with blue corn chips. Keep your snacks simple and you're more apt to make them, thus keeping you safe from the fast food calorie-choking burger.

Established in 1972, Ocean Beach People's is a member-owned California cooperative that offers organic produce, grocery and bulk items, vitamins, herbs, aromatherapy products, cruelty-free body care items, and an award winning sit-down Deli. Our educated staff and outstanding customer service can provide you with all the support and information that you need on your path to total wellness.

This year make a resolution to check out Ocean Beach People's Organic Food Co-op, where "everyone is welcome and anyone can join." People's Co-op is open daily from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. at 4765 Voltaire Street. Please call (619) 224-1387 or visit us online at www.obpeoplesfood.coop for more information.

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Nearby planners kick around oceanfront changes, tourist lures

By KEITH ANTIGIOVANNI | THE BEACON

The Pacific Beach Planning Group (PBPG) conducted a “design charrette” — or open workshop meeting — at the Discover PB offices on Garnet Avenue in December to gather community input on a proposed redesign of the South Pacific Beach oceanfront area.

The proposed oceanfront includes the area between Grand Avenue south of the lifeguard tower and Pacific Beach Drive on the south end of the Promenade shopping center and the area between Mission Boulevard and the boardwalk along Ocean Boulevard.

“The Pacific Beach Planning Group is coordinating an effort to create something really special for the Pacific Beach oceanfront,” said PBPG member Chris Olson.

Among the proposed changes being considered:

- increasing value to real estate
- serving visitors, local residential community and commercial/business
- public safety
- increasing accessibility by making the area more compliant with the American Disabilities Act, and making the area more bike, skate and pedestrian friendly
- expanding the boardwalk in congested areas
- relocating on-street parking
- improving use of off-street parking
- creating/incorporating the “beach experience” into designs
- advocating and creating a public space/pedestrian area
- providing space for vendors and advertising for local businesses
- creating a unique style of landscaping to enhance the boardwalk
- promoting alternative transportation by closing streets for non-vehicular use
- advocating and creating “sustainability”
- create a destination
- improving view corridors
- replacing/relocating the bathrooms at Pacific Beach Drive
- undergrounding utilities
- advocating and creating public art
- promoting local community involvement
- improving the continuity between the south and north sides of Crystal Pier

The meeting was used by members to mark up an aerial map of the project area to give a visual representation of the proposed improvements and to get as much input as possible from the community.

“There are a lot of talented people in our community who are volunteering their time to develop a vision for the future of Pacific Beach south of the main lifeguard tower,” Olson said. “This process will create a place that embraces the historical and current culture of Pacific Beach.”

The next step in the process takes place with a 5:30 p.m. meeting on Jan. 23 at the Discover PB Office, located at 1503 Garnet Ave., as the planners present options that are being drafted, based upon community input.

For more information, email surferoly@att.net.



Members of the Pacific Beach Planning Group held an open workshop in December to gather public input on proposed changes to the South Pacific Beach oceanfront area. Planners used an aerial shot of the targeted area to mark up potential goals and challenges. Courtesy photo

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PLHS basketball squad stirs excitement, CIF hopes

By SCOTT HOPKINS | THE BEACON

There's a new style of basketball being played by the boys at Point Loma High School (PLHS) this year. And if early results are any indication, it's going to be a really fun team to watch.

In fact, students who turned out in larger numbers last year are likely to love the new, frantic pace maintained by this year's group.

Last week, the 2011-12 squad did something no Pointer team has done, reaching the championship game of the 10-team annual Chula Vista (High School) Spartan Holiday Classic tournament. And while they dropped a hard-fought 58-49 decision to county power Vista, the Dogs left plenty of bite marks on the Panthers, who improved their record to 14-2.

In that championship showdown, the Pointers found themselves trailing 38-15 at halftime, but came out snarling in the second half to outscore the Panthers 34-20. Only the final buzzer ended a possible major upset by the determined Pointers, whose record fell to 4-4.

With a current long on speed, quickness and athleticism, but literally short in height, PLHS is relying on a hard-working, swarming, in-your-face defensive style that has visibly shaken some preseason opponents. The starting five and several super subs allow the Pointers to maintain a sweat-soaked intensity.

San Diego Southwest High, in particular, was thrown for a loop by the pressure, falling behind 44-12 at the break before the Pointers coasted to a 69-30 tournament win. The day before, the Dogs dropped host Chula Vista 55-36 after edging Helix 65-63 to earn a spot in the title game.

Two Pointer starters were selected to the All-Tournament Team. Senior guard



Chris Brisco, the Pointer boys' basketball coach, diagrams plays during a timeout of the recent Chula Vista Spartan Holiday Classic Tournament championship game.

Photo by Scott Hopkins | The Beacon

Kohl Meyer (6 feet 3 inches) averaged 16.8 points, distributing 21 assists and recording 15 steals during the four games.

Teammate Dillon Fitzmorris, a 6-foot junior guard, averaged 11.5 points and aided tournament officials with 11 three-point baskets, including six against Helix.

Vista's Sedrick Childress was named tournament most valuable player.

Pointer head coach Chris Brisco (fourth year, 39-37 record) explained the reason for his team's new pressure-defense strategy.

"Last year, we had big guys like Nate George (6 feet 5 inches, now at Cal State Stanislaus) and Christian Heyward (6 feet 4 inches, now on football scholarship at USC), so we played a slowed-down game to get the ball in to them," Brisco said. "This year, we have a bunch of fast guys like (football players) Jaivon Griffin and Jamal Agnew, who are smaller. I took a look at the team and knew we were going to have to do a lot of trapping and try to force turnovers."

The five players on the court at a given time — whoever they are — run continuously in the Pointer plan to disrupt their opponents' offense.

But in addition to those turnovers and steals, the Pointers need to score at their offensive end. That's where seniors Dan Enright (6 feet, point guard), Pietro Busalacchi and Mohsen Gharraam (both 6 feet 4 inch forwards) join tournament stars Meyer and Fitzmorris in the mix. Football player Grant Wilburn (5 feet 6 inches junior guard) also sees lots of action.

"It's a different pace and a lot quicker this year," Brisco said. "And it's a lot more fun. Last year, Kohl (Meyer) and Dan (Enright) had to pass the ball in and hope they got it back. Now, those two and Dillon (Fitzmorris) are focal points."

Rounding out the varsity roster are juniors Bennett Reeber, Warren Green, Chad Ahumada, Deontay Walker and senior Jameel Pratt.

The Pointers will again compete in the Central League, where Coronado and Kearny already sport 10-4 preseason records and should challenge the Pointers for a league title. Christian, Madison, Crawford and Clairemont may struggle.

"I think the league teams are in for a surprise, because since I've been here,

SEE HOOPS, Page 11



Senior guard Kohl Meyer (No. 3) splits the Vista defense for two points during last week's championship match in the Chula Vista Spartan Holiday Classic basketball tournament. Vista's Sedrick Childress (32) was named tournament most valuable player.

Photo by Scott Hopkins | The Beacon

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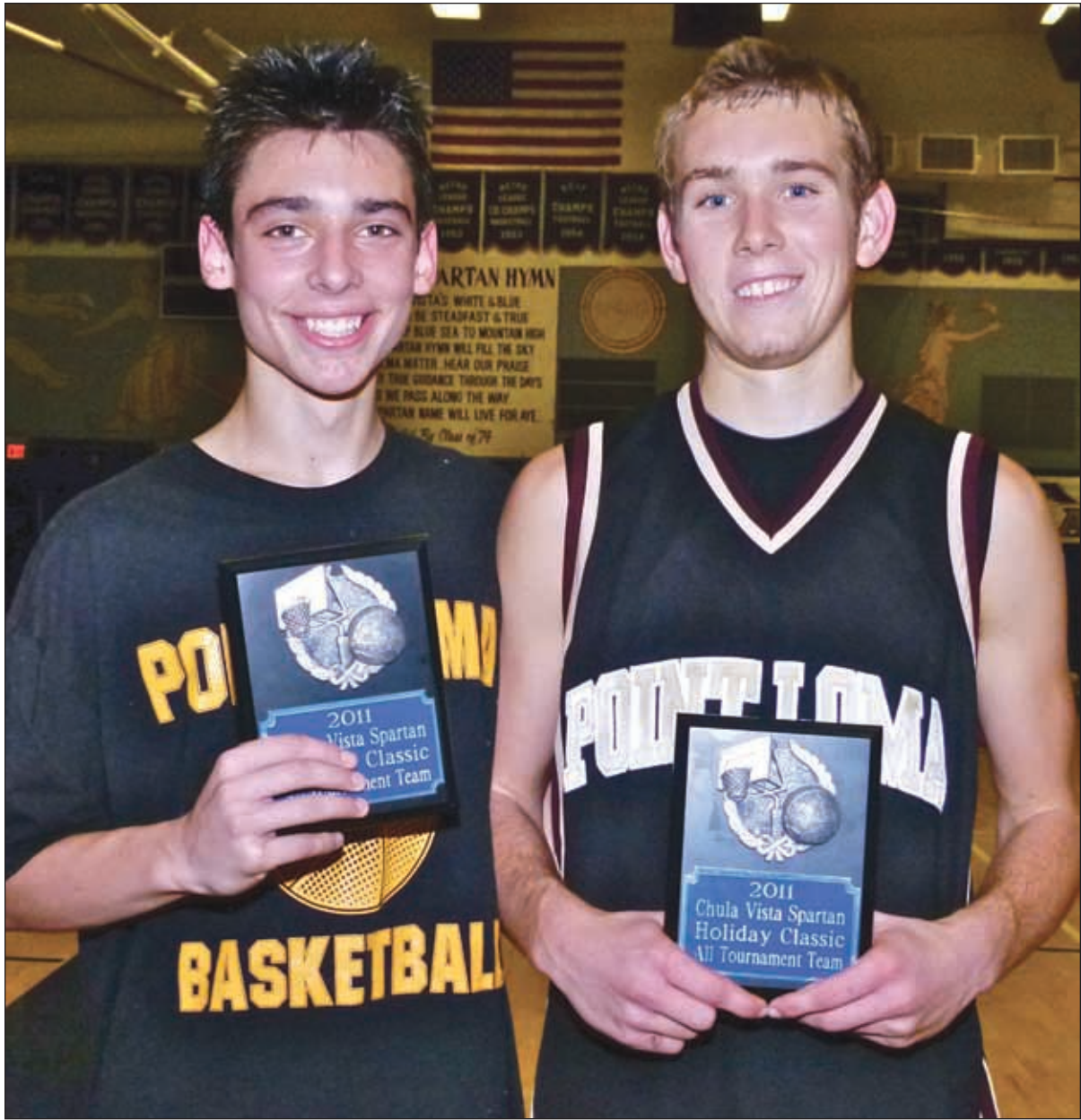
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Pointer basketball players Dillon Fitzmorris, left, and Kohl Meyer were named to the Chula Vista Spartan Holiday Classic All-Tournament Team. Photo by Scott Hopkins | The Beacon

HOOPS

CONTINUED FROM Page 10

I've never seen anyone use our style of play," Brisco predicted. "Teams we've played are tentative, always worried about guys coming from behind them when they're dribbling, and I think they're going to be shocked."

Is a league championship banner

headed to the Pointer gym?

"I think we'll be right there in the mix," Brisco said.

BITS 'N' BITES

• Dave Aros (now head girls' basketball coach) led the Pointers to the only boys' tournament championships that any Pointer fans could recall, those coming in the Hilltop (Chula Vista) tournaments in the 1980s.

• Aros' son, Josh, who was named to the Chula Vista Spartan Classic all-tournament team in 2005, is head coach of the Pointer boys' JV team.

• Brisco is an off-campus coach, working at a San Diego middle school as a physical education teacher.

• Admission to basketball and all other sports events at PLHS is free to seniors 60 and older. CIF charges for playoff events.

Looking ahead

Upcoming events in the Peninsula area, Jan. 6-Jan. 22

BEGINNING FRIDAY, Jan. 6

Westminster Presbyterian's Vanguard Theatre Company presents "Hamlet" by William Shakespeare. The production, directed by Tom Haine, begins at 7 p.m. on Jan. 6, 7, 8, 13, 14 and 15 at the theater, 3598 Talbot St. Tickets are \$10 for general admission; \$5 for students, seniors and military. For tickets or information, call the box office at (619) 224-6263, or visit www.vanguardsd.org.

WEDNESDAY, Jan. 11

The Point Loma Garden Club hosts its monthly meeting at 10 a.m. and features floral designer Diane Citrowske, who has 26 years of experience and is a former senior designer at Adelaide's in La Jolla. She has participated in Art Alive and is an instructor with both Cuyamaca College and UCSD Extension. The event is \$5 for guests. The meeting takes place at the United Portuguese S.E.S. Hall, 2818 Avenida de Portugal. For more information, visit www.plgc.org.

THURSDAY, Jan. 12

Point Loma High School will host an informational meeting for prospective students and their parents at 6 p.m. The event will offer an

opportunity for new students and parents to meet the school's administrators, coaches, counselors, current students and parents, and teachers at Point Loma High. The event takes place in the school's gymnasium, located at 2335 Chatsworth Blvd. The event includes an overview of the various programs, clubs and music opportunities at the school and the course-selection process and enrollment process for ninth-grade courses. For more information, call the PLHS counseling office at (619) 223-3121, ext. 1129.

FRIDAY, Jan. 13

The Ocean Beach People's Co-Op hosts a free presentation called "Shifting into the Real World: Preparing You for Humanity's Shift out of the Substitute World and into the Real World." As the old, unevolved structures the world has been based on are crumbling around us, the world is quickly evolving into a new experience of reality. Learn how to be a part of this shift, rather than at the mercy of it, with intuitive and transformational counselor, teacher and author Jane Ilene Cohen. The free event takes place from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the co-op's community room, 4765 Voltaire St. The event is limited to 18 people. To RSVP, call (760) 753-0733 or visit www.JaneCohenCounseling.com.

SUNDAY, Jan. 15

The Music on the Point series features a concert by pianist Jacqueline Schwab at 4 p.m. The event takes

place at All Souls' Episcopal Church, located at 1474 Catalina Blvd. A donation of \$5 is requested. A reception follows. For more information, call (619) 223-6394, ext. 13, or visit www.all-souls.com.

THURSDAY, Jan. 19

The Ocean Beach Historical Society hosts local photographer Joe Ewing, whose topic will be "The Sequel."

Ewing returns for the second consecutive year as he showcases some of his spectacular shots of Ocean Beach beaches, pets and the community at large. The event takes place at the Point Loma United Methodist Church, 1984 Sunset Cliffs Blvd at 7 p.m. For more information, visit www.obhistory.wordpress.com



JOE EWING

SUNDAY, Jan. 22

Annual meeting of the United Portuguese S.E.S., Inc. The meeting will be held at the United Portuguese S.E.S. Hall, 2818 Avenida de Portugal at 7 p.m. All members and prospective members are welcome and encouraged to attend. For more information, call (619) 223-5880, or visit www.upses.com.

PLHS 2012 CENTRAL LEAGUE BASKETBALL SCHEDULE

- Jan. 6 — Crawford, 7:30 p.m.
- Jan. 10 — at Madison, 4:45 p.m.
- Jan. 13 — at Coronado 7:45 p.m.
- Jan. 17 — Clairemont, 4:45 p.m.
- Jan. 20 — Kearny, 7:30 p.m.
- Jan. 25 — at Christian, 4:45 p.m.
- Jan. 27 — at Crawford, 7:30 p.m.
- Feb. 3 — Coronado, 7:30 p.m.
- Feb. 7 — Madison, 4:45 p.m.
- Feb. 10 — at Kearny, 7:30 p.m.
- Feb. 14 — at Clairemont, 4:45 p.m.
- Feb. 16 — Christian, 7:30 p.m.
- Non-league games
- Feb. 1 — at Mira Mesa, 4:45 p.m.
- Feb. 8 — at Oceanside, 7:30 p.m.

— Compiled by Scott Hopkins



Photo by Scott Hopkins | The Beacon

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'Listen Local' event to rock Winston's each Thursday

By **BART MENDOZA** | THE BEACON

San Diego music fans have a lot of options when it comes to events, but one of the best-kept secrets is the free “Listen Local” event that takes place every Thursday at Winston’s Beach Club from 5 to 8 p.m.

Now in its third year, the show is emceed by promoter and musician Cathryn Beeks, host of KPRI-FM's "Homegrown Hour" and features an eclectic mix of acoustic artists and bands. Upcoming performers include The Mighty Sun and singer-songwriter Bianca Paras (today, Jan. 5), Two Worlds Connect (Jan. 12), Julian Temple (Jan. 19) and 90's Vow (Jan. 26).

Since her arrival in San Diego in 1999, Beeks has worked tirelessly to promote local music, with showcases at several venues around San Diego—including the House of Blues. However, she said this particular music series is her favorite.

"I think that Winston's is one of the great San Diego stages," Beeks said. "No matter what, there's always a handful of people in the bar just hanging out. It's a cool, comfortable place and one of the venues where a lot of my 'Listen Local' regulars come, the people that really support the area's music community."

Beeks said she recognizes 5 p.m. is an early start time for a club show and that listeners' post-work transit can certainly be an issue for local music lovers.

"We are booking a lot of Ocean Beach residents in the first two spots," Beeks said. "The traffic is pretty crazy at that time of day getting into OB, so it can be rough in the earlier part of the show."

While Beeks' radio show trends towards original singer-songwriter



Cathryn Beeks, host of KPRI-FM's "Homegrown Hour," is the emcee for a free "Listen Free" event at Winston's Beach Club each Thursday. Courtesy photo

and rock artists, the night is open to all genres.

“Winston’s is cool because we can have any kind of music,” Beeks said. “It ranges from thrash metal to softer music, though things are never quite that extreme.”

"It used to be just an acoustic showcase, but we've since welcomed all styles," she said. "Luckily, our soundman can handle all the different setups."

Anyone interested in performing can contact Beeks directly via the “Listen Local” website.

"It's easy to sign up," she said. "Just send me an email with a link to your music and you're in. It's that easy."

Beeks doesn't generally perform at

her own events, despite a wealth of material and a wonderful voice. To date, she's released three discs: "Songs for Sale" (2003), plus a pair of additional albums with her now-defunct backing group, The Ordeal; "Desert Music" (2008) and "Mood Swings" (2009).

Meanwhile, Beeks has been part of numerous groups, including JunkQueen (1998), The Joans (2000), 8-ball Rack (2001), The Ghandi Method (2003), The Downtown Money Wasters (2004), Not Your Mom (2007) and the Groove Kitties (2011).

With the disbanding of the Groove Kitties recently, Beeks is taking a breather from performing, though she

"Winston's is cool because we can have any kind of music. It ranges from thrash metal to softer music, though things are never quite that extreme. It used to be just an acoustic showcase, but we've since welcomed all styles. Luckily, our soundman can handle all the different setups."

CATHRYN BEEKS
 “Listen Local” emcee at Winston’s

plans to have a new band hitting area clubs next year.

"Matt Silvia, formerly of The Ordeal, and I are starting to write some songs again," Beeks said. "Whether it's The Ordeal or some other project involving San Diego all-stars, I just don't know yet."

In the meantime, she said she'll continue bringing live music to lucky San Diegans. Pressed for a favorite thing about the Winston's showcase series, Beeks is quick to mention the warm, friendly vibe.

"I've gotten to know so many people in that neighborhood," she said. "The bartender is my best friend."

She relates a recent incident she feels demonstrates what a special place Winston's is.

"At our Christmas show, the owner was in, and I guess he was taken with all of the Christmas songs everyone was performing," Beeks said. "He ended up buying the whole bar a round."

• **Listen Local Showcase:** 5 p.m. on Thursdays at **Winston's Beach Club**, 1921 Bacon St. No cover. 21 and up. www.listenlocalsd.com.

Tango del Rey to host internationally flavored classical concert

Tango del Rey will host an unusual concert on Friday, Jan. 13, featuring tenor Ivailo Giurov and soprano Aurica Avonaires.

Giurov was mentored by the great Luciano Pavarotti for three months in Italy in 2005 and Avonaires is a well-known singer in Bulgaria and a centerpiece of several Moscow orchestras, including Bolshoi Theatre's "Kapriz."

The two will unite for a duet to perform some of the most beautiful and timeless arias of the classical world.

Giurov performed at the San Diego Civic Theater in 2007 and 2008 as the lead soloist in the role of Camille de Rossillon in the "Merry Widow." With the same role Giurov gave more than 80 performances in more than 20 other opera houses in the U.S. and spectacles in every major Japanese opera hall.

Avonaires is a young opera actress who has been a singer at the Moscow Mayakovsky Theater and various orchestras like The Concert Brass Band, Moscow Folk Orchestra and Moscow Youth Chamber Orchestra. She participates as a singer in Moscow's dramatic theaters, where she performs solo arias by Weber, Verdi, Bellini, Tchaikovsky and others.

Tickets vary, but range from as low as \$20 per adult per act to \$25 for the entire show. Children 10 to 21 are \$10 or \$11 per act and free for those 10 and younger.

Tango del Rey is located at 3567 Del Rey St. For price breakdowns or information, call (858) 581-1114, or visit www.tangodelrey.com. For other information, call (858) 776-0060 or email www.vassya.info.

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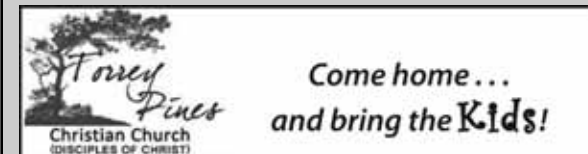
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