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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2018

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THIS WEEK



Insomnia Cookies brings late night sweetness to PB

SEE PAGE 7



Hot or Not Thai offers authentic flavors in PB

SEE PAGE 7



Pacific Beach SantaCon participants walk south down Mission Boulevard to their next stop, The Local PB.

THOMAS MELVILLE / BEACH & BAY PRESS

SANTACON RAISES SPIRITS & FUNDS

By THOMAS MELVILLE

Hundreds of Santas, elves, reindeer – and a few trees – pub-crawled through Pacific Beach on Saturday, Dec. 8 to spread holiday cheer and spirits while donating gifts and raising funds for Toys for Tots.

SEE STORY ON PAGE 11

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How will Community Choice Energy work in San Diego?

By DAVE SCHWAB | BEACH & BAY PRESS

Now that Mayor Kevin Faulconer has sanctioned forming a new joint-powers entity to purchase electrical power to achieve 100 percent renewable energy citywide by 2035, the question becomes: How will that be implemented, and what are the risks?

After three years of research and analysis, Faulconer selected Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) as the preferred pathway to reach the 100 percent renewable energy goal in the City's landmark Climate Action Plan. The proposed new CCA entity, which must first be approved by the City Council, is expected to create healthy competition benefiting San Diegans. Forming a new CCA entity is expected to lower energy costs by 5 percent or more for ratepayers, plus help the City reach its renewable energy goal by 2035 – a decade ahead of the state's goal.

"I want San Diego to lead this region into a cleaner future," Faulconer said. "This gives consumers a real choice, lowers energy costs for all San Diegans, and keeps our city on the cutting edge of environmental protection."

"We are a city where our environment is central to our quality of life and Community Choice will ensure we leave behind a better and

COMMUNITY CHOICE TIMELINE

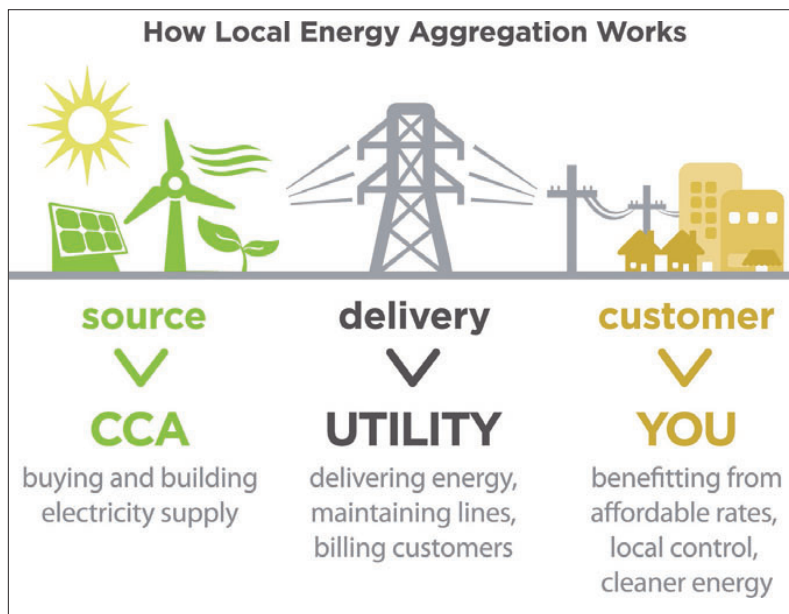
- December 2018: Resolution of intent available for docketing at City Council.
- Spring 2019: Begin formal meetings with potential JPA partners to negotiate structure and guiding principles.
- Summer 2019: City Council action to officially form new JPA.
- Fall 2019: JPA begins hiring staff, including CEO and CFO. Staff develops implementation plan for submittal to CPUC.
- 2020: JPA continues to establish operations. CPUC approval expected.
- 2021: CCA begins service to customers with phased-in approach throughout the year.

cleaner San Diego than the one we inherited."

What is Community Choice Energy?

Community Choice Energy or Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) envisions bringing local control and freedom of choice and competition into the electricity marketplace. Currently, San Diego has only one electricity provider, San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E).

Community Choice allows cities and counties to purchase power on behalf of their residents and businesses to provide cleaner power options at a competitive price. Under



community choice, SDG&E would continue to deliver the power over their power lines, provide customer service and handle the billing.

A local community choice program is designed to offer a choice of providers to create competition encouraging innovation and improved pricing.

But not everyone is sold on CCAs, like the Clear the Air Coalition, a group of business, environmental and taxpayer leaders, who advocate a cautious approach to changing San Diego's existing electrical power distribution system.

Contacted by Beach & Bay Press,

SDG&E spokesperson Tony Manolatos referenced the following story "San Diego Should Carefully Weigh the Costs and Benefits of Government-Controlled Energy" published at clearair.us, which he said "covers all the main points."

"The City of San Diego should carefully weigh the costs and benefits of government-controlled energy before flipping the switch and moving residents and businesses into such a program," states the story. "If the city decides to form a CCA, would it actually help San Diego reach its clean air goals faster and cheaper than current state laws require? ... To date, CCAs

have been reluctant to purchase long-term contracts for renewable energy, or build new facilities. As a result, CCAs mostly buy and sell existing green energy, a practice that does not create new local jobs or clean our air any faster. ... The evidence indicates a San Diego CCA would not meet the city's goal of 100 percent clean energy by 2035, or create many new jobs, but it would create risk for taxpayers, who are ultimately the backstop of any government-controlled energy program."

Community choice proponent Tyson Siegle represents But It Just Might work.com, a clean energy advocacy group. Noting SDG&E under law is, "not allowed to oppose community choice energy," Siegle pointed out SDG&E's parent company, Sempra, "is not a regulated utility" and therefore is allowed to oppose community choice.

Nonetheless, Siegle noted that, "In theory, SDG&E shouldn't lose any money if community choice happens, or doesn't."

But Siegle was quick to point out San Diego pays some of the highest per-kilowatt per-unit rates for electricity in the state adding, "Californians have, on average, a 50 percent higher electricity cost than the nationwide average."

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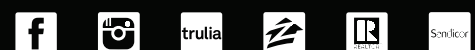
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Granny flats, or companion units, increasing in San Diego

By DAVE SCHWAB | BEACH & BAY PRESS

State laws making it easier to build granny flats to alleviate the housing crisis have some beach residents complaining of loopholes and over densification.

And so-called granny flats, otherwise known as accessory dwelling units (ADUs) or companion units, are increasingly coming before, and under fire during, neighborhood planning review.

The City has made it easier — and less expensive — to create companion units. The City Council unanimously voted to waive development impact fees, facility benefit assessment fees and general plan maintenance fees for the construction of companion units. This has impacted their development. A recent study found granny flat permits in San Diego increased by 71 percent between 2016 and 2017.

Mayor Kevin Faulconer and District 7 Councilmember Scott Sherman are spearheading granny-flat streamlining and cost-cutting.

"One of the fastest and least expensive ways we can increase affordable housing in San Diego is to make it easier to build granny flats, build more housing that people can actually afford," Faulconer said. "With these new incentives, we're removing barriers to encourage the construction of new units that San Diegans can actually afford."

Sherman concurred contending housing shortages are "literally forcing the next generation of San Diegans to move outside the region."

District 2 community planners, like Henish Pulickal and Karl Rand of Pacific Beach Planning Group, and architect Mark Krencik of Peninsula Community Planning Board, noted more granny flats are being reviewed — with more on the way.

PCPB president Pulickal, speaking on his own behalf, believes that's

'ADUs are a great step in the right direction to ameliorate the housing crisis.'

HENISH PULICKAL
PB PLANNING GROUP PRESIDENT

mostly good.

"ADUs are a great step in the right direction to ameliorate the housing crisis facing San Diego and all of California," Pulickal said. "Rent control doesn't make sense. Building more units does."

Added Pulickal: "ADUs are a solution that we need to get behind because housing prices are basically a result of supply and demand. When we have more units available for people to live in, that will slow down the rate of rent increases, making California a more affordable state for more people."

Pulickal noted a granny-flat project came through PB planning review recently wherein neighbors "didn't want the granny flat because the primary house is used as a vacation rental by an investor owner."

PB board member Rand concurred that such situations are becoming commonplace — and more problematic.

"We really do have a split between the old school who don't want greater density, and the more forward-looking who say, 'We need to have density, work with the flow and control things.'"

Rand noted a community planner's purview is limited. "Our primary function is to provide a public forum where applicants have to walk through the process and face the public," he said.

Added Rand: "We've had a number of situations where either a board member, or the public, spoke out against [granny-flats]. We've even had developers go back and

redraw and redesign the things."

Architect Mark Krencik, a Peninsula Community Planning Board member, has chaired the group's subcommittee reviewing new development projects for four years. He agreed new state laws relaxing requirements for granny flats are causing more and more of them to be proposed and built.

"In the last year or two we've reviewed about 12 companion units, but about 50 percent of those have been in the last six months," Krencik said. "There have been some that have had questionable types of parking arrangements."

Speaking as an architect, Krencik pointed out new state laws regarding granny flats are fundamentally changing the rules governing their size, cost and whether parking is required for them.

"What's come down in the new laws is that granny flats are now allowed to be up to 50 percent the size of the primary dwelling," Krencik said. "So if you have a 2,400-square-foot house, you can have a 1,200-square-foot companion unit. That's a nice-sized, two-bedroom condo."

Added Krencik: "There used to be a one-space-per-bedroom parking requirement. But with the new rules, parking is exempt if the companion unit is 500 square feet or less, or if it's in Transit Priority Area (trolley and bus corridors)."

The upshot is granny flats are here to stay, and rules governing them will have to be tweaked to address problems arising from them moving forward.

"The reality is the mayor's behind it, the City Council seems to be behind it, and the state is asking us to do it," Krencik said. "Our planning board will be taking this on next year. And the topics will be what we want and don't want about [granny flat regulations], and what we can do about it."

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City creates mobility board to focus on safer and cleaner transportation goals

By DAVE SCHWAB | BEACH & BAY PRESS

A new mobility board has been created by the City of San Diego combining two previously existing bicycle advisory and parking advisory boards under the same roof.

It's a development bicycle advocates Nicole Burgess, District 2's rep on the previous bicycle advisory board covering the beachfront, and Andy Hanshaw, executive director of San Diego County Bicycle Coalition, are cautiously supporting.

"Innovation in transit and increasing competition for the public right-of-way has fundamentally shifted the way we move ourselves around, meaning the decisions we make will have greater impacts on the quality of life of all San Diegans," said District 3 Councilmember Chris Ward, who spearheaded creation of the new mobility board. "This will build on past successes, while informing future transportation decisions in a holistic, comprehensive manner."

Ward said the new mobility board will aim to provide "safe choices to move around San Diego that facilitate our goals in the Climate Action Plan (CAP) and Vision Zero."

Vision Zero is a strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, particularly those involving pedestrians and bicyclists, while



increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all.

San Diego's legally binding CAP enacted in 2015 calls for eliminating half of all greenhouse-gas emissions, and for all electricity used in the city, to be from renewable

sources by 2035.

Ward said the new mobility board will incorporate the work of its predecessors. "I want to reassure parking and bicycle board members that their work will be capitalized on through the guise of the mobility

Santa rides an e-scooter up Mission Boulevard. THOMAS MELVILLE / BEACH & BAY PRESS

board," he said adding the process was not "a last-minute thing."

"For more than six months, we have met with stakeholder groups, both private and public," Ward said. "The challenge is, if you are asking your advisors to help advise decision makers, you need them to answer the same questions, with the same wider perspective, we have to operate under."

Ward added the mayor's administration has promised to have a city staffer with "the proper skill sets and expertise," to respond to the new mobility board and address a lot of its goals.

"That's a huge step forward," Ward concluded.

While supporting the new mobility board in concept, both Burgess and Hanshaw are keeping a watchful eye on its implementation.

Burgess has some reservations. "Although I am supportive of Mayor Faulconer's and Chis Ward's office for good intentions to create a holistic mobility board, I am disappointed with the process and the ordinance that was approved," she said. "I believe we should have done better, and would have appreciated a more collaborative and inclusive proposal."

Burgess noted she was "proud" of the work the Bicycle Advisory Board accomplished during the past four years noting, "It was the only City board dedicated to creating safer streets for everyone. As streets have been resurfaced, we have collaborated with City staff to repurpose them with paint to slow traffic, dedicate space, and prioritize active and healthy modes of transportation."

There is a lot to gain — and lose — said Burgess, with the outcome of the newly created mobility board.

"There is great potential for San Diego to become a world-class, bicycle-friendly city," she said while pointing out, "I believe dissolving the Bicycle Advisory Board is a step backward. Nonetheless, I will stay optimistic, and roll with the changes and continue to enjoy my commutes near and far and advocate for a healthy future."

Hanshaw has taken a wait-and-see attitude toward the new mobility board. He pointed out there's a lot of work to be done to make San Diego more bike-friendly.

"The City is facing challenges on a daily basis for implementing its CAP," said Hanshaw. "I want to believe that, moving forward, the mobility board is going to make things better."

READ MORE ONLINE AT sdnews.com

Holiday Lane to close Garnet Ave. to cars on Dec. 14

On Friday, Dec. 14, the Pacific Beach community will have an evening of neighborhood fun at the inaugural PB EcoDistrict Holiday Lane. Garnet Avenue will transform into an outdoor holiday village (between Ingraham Street and Mission Boulevard) from 4 to 8 p.m. to highlight local artists, music and street performances, holiday shopping, children's activities and community revelry.

The EcoDistrict Holiday Lane is presented by beautifulpb in collaboration with the PB EcoDistrict Partners, and is made possible by the involvement of various local businesses and organizations. The event will feature a 20-foot mobility lane created by Mission Bay High School students and BikeSD, allowing skaters, scooters and bicycles to ride down the center of Garnet Avenue.

According to Kristen Victor, co-founder and past president of beautifulpb, the mobility lane will provide a safe opportunity to experience the future vision of Garnet Avenue. Additionally, attendees may visit multiple art exhibits curated by local artists, opportunities to shop and dine at local businesses, and more.

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When Tatum Merrill, a seventh-grader at Pacific Beach Middle, experienced her dog Dezzi dying last year, she decided to turn it into a positive experience by trying to help other animals in need. Merrill and her classmate Mackenzie Brooks organized a pet toy drive for animals in need at the San Diego Humane Society as a community service project.

The students set up a box for people to donate treats, toys, clothes and pet accessories at Yogurt on the Rocks, 1886 Garnet Ave. The box will be set up through Dec. 20 and then Merrill and Brooks will donate the items to the San Diego Humane Society.

DONATE BLOOD AT TOURMALINE SURF PARK IN PACIFIC BEACH

Pacific Beach Surf Club is partnering with the Tailgaters of Tourmaline and the San Diego Blood Bank to have the Blood Mobile parked and established in the car park of the Tourmaline Surf Park from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 6. There will also be a pancake breakfast.

More than 4.5 million people require blood each year in the U.S and Canada. One pint can save up to three lives. Only 37 percent of U.S. population is eligible to donate blood and fewer than 10 percent do annually.

NYE BEACHFRONT BASH IN MISSION BEACH

Feast, drink and dance from beachfront to rooftop at the inaugural NYE Beachfront Bash from 8 p.m. to 1:30 a.m. at South Draft Mission, Cannonball and Beach House, 3105 Ocean Front Walk. The New Year's Eve celebration offers a unique mix of unique vibes, live music and multiple DJs; plus, handcrafted eats and cocktails to satisfy partygoers in Mission Beach.

Sparkle on the rooftop with an upscale lounge vibe at Cannonball featuring multiple DJs rotating dance and house beats all night. Drop down to Draft for live music and DJs playing kick-back, old school

grooves. Or hype it up with a beachfront party at Beach House featuring multiple DJs spinning Top 40 and hip-hop tracks.

From 8 to 10 p.m., free tastings of premium spirits, liquors and wine will be provided, along with giveaways and buffet stations and tray pass will be featured at Draft and Cannonball where platinum and gold passholders can move between locations to feast. Visit nyebeachfrontbash.com to purchase tickets and for more details.

NEW YEAR'S POLAR PLUNGE

Are you brrrrrave enough to take the plunge? Saska's annual Polar Plunge on New Year's Day begins at 9 a.m. After a chilly jump in the Pacific Ocean, enjoy complimentary Swell Coffee, a costume contest, raffle prizes including a Saska's gift card, and a special New Year's Day brunch buffet at 3768 Mission Blvd.

Cost for adults is \$20 and children \$10 (children 5 and under are free with paying adult). Ticket includes Polar Plunge T-shirt, Swell Coffee, raffle tickets, happy hour pricing all day, brunch buffet, and choice of one mimosa or Bloody Mary.

TOY DRIVE AT WOODSTOCK'S PIZZA IN PACIFIC BEACH

'Tis the season for giving, and Woodstock's Pizza is stepping up to the plate. Passionate about giving back to the community they call home, Woodstock's is on track to raise more than \$200,000 in 2018 for worthy charities around San Diego.

This December, Woodstock's is celebrating the spirit of the holidays and benefiting with a month-long fundraiser and one-day toy drive event benefitting Rady's Children's Hospital.

From 4 to 8 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 14, Woodstock's Pizza, at 1221 Garnet Ave., will be accepting toy donations at their in-store "gift tree" to be given to Rady's Children's patients and the Ronald McDonald House, where many Rady's patient's siblings stay. While the greatest need is for new infant and toddler toys, the items must be able to be sterilized for sick children.



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The yellow chicken curry dish at Hot or Not Thai.

Hot or Not Thai offers authentic flavors in PB

By DAVE SCHWAB | BEACH & BAY PRESS

Hot or Not Thai's name implies what you'll get there: Food with unique blends of herbs and spices seasoned exactly to your taste.

Asked what sets his eight-month-old Thai restaurant at 4965 Cass St. apart, Jim Brewster, the eatery's owner, replied: "Better recipes. Very authentic taste. Traditional Thai."

And that's exactly what you'll find on Hot or Not's lunch and dinner menus, which feature an array of curries, noodle dishes, rice and rice sides, salads and entrees served with steamed rice like kra prao, ginger and cashew chicken, mixed vegetables and shrimp with asparagus.

Brewster proudly notes that his restaurant often draws comments like, "Best Thai food I've ever had," in online reviews. He added another secret to his success is freshening up his tasty Thai recipes by adding new and unusual menu options. He gave an example.

"One of my partners wanted to add seafood," said Brewster to which he suggested, "How about salmon?" But they don't have salmon, a freshwater fish, in Thailand," replied his business partner.

"So I said, 'How about kra prao salmon?' And his eyes lit up and he said, 'Yeah, that would work.'"

And that set a new standard for Hot or Not in "maybe putting some [menu items] in there, that would ordinarily not be in there," said Brewster.

That willingness to experiment blending traditional and non-traditional ingredients is reflected in such dishes as choo chee prawns, Thai baby back ribs and crying tiger steak.

Brewster previously owned a Thai restaurant for a decade in the Long Beach area, adding he came to San Diego because he liked the area and "wanted to do something more coastal. We really wanted something closer to the coast."

HOT OR NOT THAI

Where: 4965 Cass St.

Info: hotornotthai.com, 619-369-1688.

The retail space inhabited by Hot or Not was formerly a juice bar serving the gym next door, which is now PB Fitness.

There is only one dessert on the Hot or Not menu, and it's a crowd-pleaser: mango with homemade sweet sticky rice. Brewster said much of the food he serves is gluten-free. Beverages served, which include Thai iced tea and coffee, hibiscus and hot jasmine, ginger or green tea, also have a tropical flair.

Brewster said his cook, JJ Derngjabok, a Thai native, comes from a part of that country known for its flavorful food.

Hot or Not prides itself on customizing its dishes. "It's not coming out of warmer already made, we make it from scratch," said Brewster.

The eatery has seating inside and out. Customers may also order online at Hot or Not, and take out and deliveries are done through Grubhub.

"We do a surprisingly high volume of take out," noted Brewster. "Sometimes we'll fill up the dining room, but even when we do, there are take out deliveries on top of that."

Asked if he liked being a restaurateur, Brewster replied, "It's great, never a dull moment. I like very much interacting with the diners."

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Insomnia Cookies brings sweetness to PB

By DAVE SCHWAB | BEACH & BAY PRESS

Pacific Beach just got a whole lot sweeter.

Insomnia Cookies, known for its warm, delicious cookies, opened their second California location Dec. 6 at 1007 Garnet Ave. next to San Diego Athletics.

In honor of its Pacific Beach grand opening, Insomnia offered free cookies to all customers presenting a coupon in their new store its first five days of business through Dec. 11.

Insomnia's marketing manager, Megan Crosswell, said the firm's name is derived from its creator, Seth Berkowitz. Berkowitz was a University of Pennsylvania student in Philadelphia who, in 2003, began baking and delivering cookies from a dorm room to students on campus late nights. From there, the business concept of cookie delivery grew, and the first retail store opened in 2004 in Syracuse, NY.

"We're open till 3 a.m.," said Crosswell. "The cookies are served warm and the ice cream is served cold. That's what sets us apart. We make sure we have standards in place to make sure everything is delivered fresh, warm or cold."

Added Crosswell: "We also have other options. We have warm brownies, à la modes, cookiewiches



with ice cream in the middle, etc. We also do different limited-time options through the year for events and holidays."

"We are hoping to expand more in San Diego," said Insomnia's marketing development manager, Catharine Gatlin.

Insomnia Cookies sells 12 varieties of cookies, as well as cookie cakes and brownies with candy toppings. Milk is also available with every order with ice cream offered at most locations.

Insomnia Cookies delivers cookies warm out of the oven and straight to their customer's door all day. Whether a customer needs cookies for a meeting, a mid-day pick me up or to fulfill a late-night craving, Insomnia will deliver.

The San Diego bakery is open

INSOMNIA COOKIES

What: 1007 Garnet Ave.

Info: insomniacookies.com,
877-632-6654.

every day until 3 a.m., with delivery beginning at 10 a.m. on weekdays, noon on weekends.

San Diego locations serve popular cookie flavors including Chocolate Chunk, Snickerdoodle, Chocolate Peanut Butter Cup and the S'mores Deluxe. Cold milk can also be added to any order.

Insomnia Cookies also serves and delivers cookie cakes and brownies with toppings such as sprinkles and cookie dough.

With a nod toward the upcoming college and NFL playoffs, football "cakes" shaped as pigskins are available for a limited time for football watch and tailgate parties.

Based in New York City and headquartered in Philadelphia, Insomnia Cookies bakeries are typically located near college and university campuses to target students who wish to order cookies past the closing time of traditional bakeries.

As of 2017, the cookie company had more than 100 locations nationwide. For more information, visit insomniacookies.com.

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The Preservationists and Swing Choir performed for needy San Diego families at the "Feed the Souls" event at the House of Blues on Thanksgiving morning. Mission Bay High School music director, JP Balmat, said, 'It's a wonderful feeling to be able to perform music and give back to our community.'

STEVE ANDERSON / CONTRIBUTED



First-year violin students were excited to begin their first violin lessons this week at Crown Point Junior Music Academy.

EDUCATION NOTEBOOK>>

MISSION BAY HIGH

■ Get into the Holiday Spirit with everything from holiday classics to jazz standards at the Winter Concert, featuring the award-winning Preservationists, Swing Choir, Mambo Orchestra, String Orchestra, Concert Band, and Full Orchestra 7 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 19 in the MBHS auditorium. Tickets cost \$5 general admission, children and students are free.

PACIFIC BEACH MIDDLE

■ Enjoy the sounds of PBMS musicians at the PBMS Winter Band Concert 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 13. This free event is open to the public.

PACIFIC BEACH ELEMENTARY

■ FOPBE has begun planning their biggest fundraiser of the year: the spring online auction and gala. If your business would like to be a sponsor or support the school through a donation, contact PBEI at pacificbeachelementary@gmail.com.

CROWN POINT JR. MUSIC ACADEMY

■ First-year violin students in TK-second grade were excited to begin their first violin lessons this week. Their parents have been learning how to play the violin since September and now is the time to bring in the kids.

Crown Point Junior Music Academy's unique Suzuki method includes an early beginning of listening, loving encourage-

ment, parental support, constant repetition, learning with other children, and then learning to read sheet music.

■ December brings lots of music to CPJMA. On Friday, Dec. 14, PB Middle School Orchestra will visit CPJMA at 11 a.m., in the auditorium. Enjoy CPJMA in the PB Holiday Parade 1 to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 15, as they walk down Garnet Avenue. The Winter Concert is 9 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 20, and the Holiday Sing-along is 8 a.m. Friday, Dec. 21, in the auditorium.

KATE SESSIONS ELEMENTARY

■ Kate Sessions celebrated the season with an Art and Music Festival. The Center of World Music taught the TK/K-first graders folk dances from around the world led by Kin Ho, second-third grades with Ms. Nomsa performed South African Percussion, and fourth-fifth grades performed Brazilian Percussion led by Ms. Stefanie. The students were amazing.

■ Sessions would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to the Mission Bay Real Estate Association as they presented Sessions with a check for \$3,600. Every October, they organize the "Annual Don Brown Links for Learning Golf Tournament," raising money for Mission Bay Cluster schools.

BARNARD ELEMENTARY

■ Barnard Mandarin Magnet Elementary School's fifth annual Art Night was held on Nov. 30. More than 200 students and their families attended this award-winning event, which featured 20 different stations that gave participants the opportunity to explore art in various ways. The 2017-18 Barnard Elementary Art Night (affection-

ately known as B.E.A.N.) earned the Ruth Johnson Memorial Program Award from the San Diego Unified School District Council of PTAs in May.

This year's event built on this foundation of excellence as children learned about and created art in different media, such as woodworking, clay sculpting, stamp-making, paper-cutting and origami, still-life drawing and painting, spin art, and 3-D printing. Favorite activities included a sewing station created by Paint Box Art Studio, a wooden peg doll decorating station staffed and supplied by the Mingei Art Museum, and a Banksy-inspired exhibit where children were allowed to graffiti "buildings" in "Barnardsville."

"I really like Art Night; it was really fun," Barnard first-grader Riley W. said. "My favorite stand was the positive and negative space stand. I really liked cutting things out and pasting them to make art."

FOPBSS

■ Registration for the Friends of Pacific Beach Secondary Schools' 2019 Schoolyard Dash 5K and 1 Mile Kids Run is open. Sign up to take advantage of the early bird pricing at schoolyarddash.org. The sixth annual Schoolyard Dash 5K and 1 Mile Kids Fun Run is a great way to raise money for Pacific Beach Middle and Mission Bay High schools.

Join in on Sunday, Feb. 24, to run or walk with family and friends at De Anza Cove along the Mission Bay running path. Breakfast, snacks, coffee, and drinks will follow the race and top runners will be recognized. Come on out to enjoy the fun all while supporting Pacific Beach schools.



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Nifty 50 at Mission Bay Montessori Academy

Mission Bay Montessori Academy is turning 50. Located at the former Marcy School, at 2640 Soderblom Ave., MBMA has been educating children and serving this community since 1968.

Their first school site was the round Clairemont Emmanuel Baptist Church building at the top of Clairemont Drive, overlooking Mission Bay. Hence their name, Mission Bay Montessori Academy. MBMA then moved to the Martha Farnum Elementary School site on Cass Street, which is now the public library, and finally, to the old Marcy School site next to Marcy Park in 1985.

Dr. Foster founded this program as a small Montessori preschool in 1968. In 1974, Dr. Phelps acquired the small school and expanded it, allowing the students to grow and develop. The preschool flourished as the families stayed, and it expanded to a 6- to 9-year-old elementary school program. With the addition of older-age children, MBMA had to find space to add classrooms, so the Jack Lelaine building east on Clairemont Drive across from the Sunset Bowling Alley was the place to do so.

Finally, MBMA expanded to a full elementary school up to the sixth grade, which is the program today,

There is a special environment at MBMA, where the parents, the students and the teachers are all a close knit community.

and the round church building could not hold its population any longer. The Martha Farnum Elementary public school on Cass Street in Pacific Beach, was a temporary location as they looked for a better suited location for the growing school. After a short two-year stint, the city decided to turn the Martha Farnum Elementary site into a library. The school was torn down and rebuilt into the PB/Taylor Library where it stands today.

At the same time, Marcy School was closing in U.C., and the school district vacated the property. The Marcy School property became the perfect site for MBMA's growing school. In 2005, Appleseed San Diego, a small group of family related owners acquired the school as Phelps retired at the age of 95.

MBMA continues to thrive, as they currently have La Casita, a program for 2 year olds, the Children's House for 3- to 6-year olds,

and their elementary, which teaches kindergarten through the sixth grade.

Some MBMA teachers have been with MBMA for 10, 20, 30 and 40 years. A few of them have worked at all three of their locations. Some of the staff joined after their children had already been students at MBMA, and some of the staff were students themselves.

There is a special environment at MBMA, where the parents, the students and the teachers are all a close-knit community. It is quite unique that all of the teachers directly influence the curriculum to ensure that they provide the best learning opportunity for students.

Their Montessori curriculum is enhanced by special pull-out classes: art, Chinese, computer, music, P.E., science and Spanish, which helps the student-to-teacher ratios to stay as small as possible in each classroom. This way, they can challenge the students appropriately as they learn at their own pace.

MBMA alumni have gone on to do great things and to speak of how this Montessori school gave them the solid base and foundation that they needed for life, school, work and family.

READ MORE ONLINE AT sdnews.com



Pacific Beach SantaCon participants have fun celebrating the holidays while heading to, or at, Tavern at the Beach, Mavericks Beach Club, The Local PB, and Sandbox Pizza on Dec. 8.
THOMAS MELVILLE / BEACH & BAY PRESS

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PB SantaCon donates to Toys for Tots

By THOMAS MELVILLE | BEACH & BAY PRESS

SantaCon participants journeyed through Pacific Beach bars last Saturday wearing holiday-themed onesies, Christmas sweaters, and even antlers en route to raise a glass (and funds) for the holidays.

"It has been an amazing turnout," said Rachel Boles, who organized this year's SantaCon, after restarting the tradition in Pacific Beach in 2017. "Last year, we had about 100 people. This year, we had more than 400 come out."

All those somewhat-sauced Santas donated more than 200 toys and raised more than \$2,000 for the Toys for Tots program. "I'm going to be buying a lot of toys for children," Boles said. "I'm really happy about that."

They also filled restaurants and bars – Tavern at the Beach, Mavericks Beach Club, The Local PB, and Sandbox Pizza – spreading more green around for service workers during a normally slow Saturday.

"These places are packed on what is usually a dead Saturday, because people are busy with the holidays, and there are no college football games," said Boles, who works for US Foods and has many contacts in the service industry.

Boles, who's originally from south New Jersey, said she was surprised there wasn't an active SantaCon in Pacific Beach when she moved to San Diego. "It's huge on the East Coast and in other West Coast cities like San Francisco and LA. I know it gets a bad rap at times, but last year we had no incidents. Hopefully, this year everything goes well."

Boles said that most people she meets are also San Diego transplants with no family here, so they rely on friends during the holidays.

"This event is a big deal for me because I can't always go back east to visit family at Christmas. A lot of these people here can't either, which is why spending time with your friends is so important – we become family. And today, we're also helping out other families so they can have a wonderful Christmas," Boles said.



Rachel Boles (left), who organized the Pacific Beach SantaCon event, with her friend Molly at Mavericks Beach Club. THOMAS MELVILLE / BEACH & BAY PRESS



Pacific Beach SantaCon participants (top) walk down Mission Boulevard to their next stop, The Local PB; while another group (above) has fun at Mavericks Beach Club. THOMAS MELVILLE / BEACH & BAY PRESS



Pacific Beach SantaCon participants at the beach. THOMAS MELVILLE / BEACH & BAY PRESS



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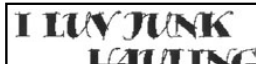
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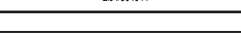
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Pacific Beach planners to hold special meeting on trolley station EIR concerns

By DAVE SCHWAB | BEACH & BAY PRESS

In November, Pacific Beach Planning Group opted to ask the city for more time to consider an environmental impact report for the new Balboa Avenue Trolley station, after failing to arrive at a group consensus on it.

Facing a Dec. 13 deadline, wherein the Balboa Avenue station EIR will be reviewed by the City Planning Commission, PBPG overwhelming voted to resend its existing letter outlining concerns about the trolley project.

The group also voted to host a special meeting between now and Dec. 13 to reconsider the EIR more fully outlining its merits/concerns about the project.

The 748-page Balboa Avenue Trolley Station final environmental document was released Nov. 14. PB planner's initial reaction was that most of their concerns/recommendations for the project were not addressed.

City planner Michael Prinz gave a slideshow presentation on the 210-acre Balboa Avenue Station Area Specific Plan, which provides for mixed use including office and residential units, then fielded audience questions.

"This is a transit priority area that the City is looking to develop with a 250-space parking lot with bus drop-off and pedestrian-access ramps and bicycle and multi-modal improvements," said Prinz.

The Balboa Avenue Trolley Stop is one of nine planned for the

ongoing Mid-Coast Trolley to extend blue line service from Santa Fe Depot downtown to University City, including Old Town and UC San Diego, starting in 2021.

Earlier this year, PBPG outlined several concerns in a letter to the City on the Balboa Avenue Trolley Station.

"The City should require all development and/or redevelopment to be compatible with EcoDistrict principles," stated the PBPG letter adding, "Rose Creek must be dedicated as parkland and be funded by the city for park services."

Prinz assured planners that economic sustainability is a prime consideration in implementing the new trolley station. But he said City staff nixed PBPG's request that Rose Creek become dedicated parkland. "It doesn't qualify because it's used for stormwater services and is not suitable," he said adding, "Rose Creek will remain dedicated open space."

Pressed on whether or not a pedestrian bridge over I-5 would be included in the project, Prinz said it is in the plans but is presently unfunded.

Planner's comments on the EIR were decidedly mixed.

"With the housing crisis, designers need to be able to move people around safely," said Kristin Victor. "This station is going to happen, but for infrastructure improvements, we're going to be relying on developers."

"Until you have infrastructure, I recommend you have bike paths

along both Garnet and Grand for bicycles and scooters, and no bikes on the sidewalk," said planner Eve Anderson.

Karin Zirk of Friends of Rose Creek was displeased with the EIR. "The City's Stormwater Department will never care about trash, invasive homeless people or any of the other problems," she said. "What we are getting with this project are density increases and nothing else. The City is not taking responsibility for safeguarding mobility and protecting our natural resources."

Board member Ed Gallagher views the new trolley stop as a unique opportunity to finally solve the 40-plus years of horrendous traffic congestion getting in and out of Pacific Beach especially in the East Mission Bay/Garnet/Balboa area. "That specific area could, potentially, be a completely new urban center, a new downtown for Pacific Beach, an incredible live-work-play urban center adjacent to a beautiful river walk with easy access to beach, bay and the rest of San Diego," he said. "By providing for practical mass-transit (bus, shuttle) 'and' bike/scooter/skateboard/rollerblade/pedestrian access from all four cardinal directions around that station, we can greatly relieve traffic congestion along all the major corridors in Pacific Beach 'and' solve the chronic parking problem as well."

PBPG will be dark in December and will hold its next regular meeting on Wednesday, Jan. 23.

Surfin Christmas Party with The Tourmaliners and the Bird Rockers at Tio leo's

By BART MENDOZA | BEACH & BAY PRESS

Surf's up at Tio leo's on Dec. 18 when the club hosts a "Surfin Christmas Party," featuring The Tourmaliners and the Bird Rockers. Beyond the classic Ventures and Chantays tunes, the night will include a raffle of a new Gordon and Smith surfboard and gift baskets from Leilani's Hawaiian Cafe in PB.

Proceeds from the raffle go to the Pacheco Mission, a nonprofit drug and alcohol recovery mission and church in Mazatlan, Mexico. Specifically, the new facility is in need of a new roof and remodeling. The Tourmaliners include guitarist Devon Berryhill, son of Surfaris guitarist Bob Berryhill, as well as drummer Jake Najor and guitarist Rob Glickman, best known for his work with NE1. This is a great opportunity to take in a great show while also helping those less fortunate.

Surfin Christmas Party: Tuesday, Dec. 18 at Tio Leo's, 5302 Napa St. at 9 p.m. 21 and up. tioleos.com.

The Mission Bay High School Music Program hosts its annual Winter Concert on Dec. 19, at the school's auditorium. Performing under the guidance of music director JP Balmat, the night will feature the school's Concert Band, Orchestra, Swing Choir, Preservationists and Mambo Orchestra.

Make no mistake, while these are students, there is top-tier talent with many of the players just a few years shy of hitting stages across the country. You can expect seasonal favorites among the tunes, but this is a wonderful way to check out the next wave of talent on the ground floor. Funds raised at the concert go to help support the music program.

Winter Concert: Wednesday, Dec. 19 at Mission Bay High School, 2475 Grand Ave, at 7 p.m. All ages. missionbaymusic.com.



The Tourmaliners will play at the Surfin Christmas Party on Dec. 18 at Tio Leo's.

Java Joe's is now The Backdrop, but the song remains the same. On Dec. 13, the venue will host the Merry Navikwanzikkah Show, a night of music that will double as a donation spot for Toys for Tots. Hosted by singer-songwriters Gaby Aparicio and Amanda Cogan, there will be a lineup that includes Christopher Dale, Rob Dee, MC Flow, Courtney Preis, Marklyn Retzer, DJ Teelyn and Kimo Shim. The outdoor setting (with heatlamps) makes The Backdrop the perfect spot for a holiday sing-a-long.

Merry Navikwanzikkah Show: Thursday, Dec. 13 at The Backdrop, 2011 Congress St. at 7:30 p.m. All ages. thebackdropsd.com.

Jazz fans with the Christmas spirit will want to attend the "Holiday Groove" concert taking place at Dizzy's on Dec. 16. The night will feature seasonal favorites from throughout the decades, with vocals from Allison Adams

Tucker and Leonard Patton.

Adding to the fun will be an all-star backing group that includes bassist Sean Hicke, percussionist Tommy Aros (Fattburger / Luis Miguel) and guitarist Peter Sprague (Dianne Reeves / Blurring the Edges). Even those jaded by holiday music will find much to enjoy at this concert, which once again illustrates the amazing level of talent in the local music community.

Holiday Groove: Sunday, Dec. 16 at Dizzy's, 1717 Morena Blvd., at 7 p.m. All ages. dizzys-jazz.com.

Alongside jazz, blues has also been going through a local renaissance of late, with plenty of young talent joining long-time favorites. One of the brightest talents is singer Mercedes Moore who appears at Humphrey's Backstage Live on Dec. 17.

Moore is a captivating performer with an excellent band that includes acclaimed keyboardist Taryn Donath, mixing up a blend of blues, R&B and rockabilly. Moore's sultry fiery vocals are great on a catalog of classics such as "I Would Rather Go Blind," but where she really excels is on more rockin' tunes, such as her own "Mojo Hannah."

Mercedes Moore: Monday, Dec. 17 at Humphrey's Backstage Live, 2241 Shelter Island Drive. 7 p.m. humphreysbackstage-live.com.

Anyone who wants a change from the holiday tunes will want to head to The Casbah for a free Christmas Eve tradition, "Exile On Kettner Blvd." As the name implies, the whole evening is devoted to the music of The Rolling Stones, covering their early R&B days through the modern era.

Making this a must, the music will be performed by a who's who of local talent, the whole night helmed by guitarist Andrew McKeag, best known for his work with Uncle Joe's Big Ol' Driver, Dirty Sweet and more. While the list of musicians is a secret at the moment, this event is never less than fun and a great way to start your Christmas.

Exile on Kettner: Wednesday, Dec. 24 at The Casbah, 2501 Kettner Blvd., at 9 p.m.

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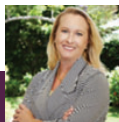
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BUCS SPORTS NOTEBOOK>>

By DAVE THOMAS | BEACH & BAY PRESS

Boys basketball

Head coach Marshawn Cherry has the Bucs at 2-2 heading into this week.

Boogie Ellis is doing a great job in leading the way for the Bucs. According to Cherry, Ellis leads the team in scoring and assists as usual.

Meantime, Cherry noted that

Ronnie Latting is dominating inside, being a double-double machine for the Bucs.

In a game in which Ellis was injured, Cherry pointed out that Savaughn Davis really stepped up with a 21-point, nine-assist game in a tough win over Los Altos High.

"The team is playing against all-state level teams, so we will get it together going into league and return to our CIF open division form," Cherry said.

Mission Bay sees action again on Dec. 14 in the Beach Bash before play in the BSN Showcase the next day.

Girls basketball

The Bucs enter the week with a mark of 1-1 for head coach Vince Ichihara.

"We have had a team effort across the board and will continue to need everyone on the roster to contribute," Ichihara remarked. "We have a lot of new players on the varsity team, so we are still learning to play with each other but look forward to a good season."

Mission Bay is next in action when it hosts Clairemont High on Saturday.

Girls water polo

Head coach Lyndsay Sutterley has her team with an overall record of 2-1, 1-0 in league action.

According to Sutterley, key team members have been Piper McCarty (attacker), Izanna Hypse (center) and Callie McLean (goalie).

"We are excited to see where this year is going to take us," Sutterley said. "We have a lot of new energy on the team that is ready to step into different roles. We have had some great success early on and we are hoping to build upon this success as the season continues."

Boys soccer

The Bucs stand at 3-1.

According to head coach Joe Panian, top contributors early in the campaign include defender Victor Lopez (senior), midfielders Enrique Moreno (senior), Andrew Hutchinson (sophomore), Anthony Munoz (junior), Cody Armstrong (junior) and goalie Braiz Ramirez (sophomore).

"The team is coming together well," Panian commented. "The team has good chemistry."

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