

Conversations with the brewer:

Tony Clarke interviews AleSmith's

Tod Fizsimmons in 'Around the Keg'

page 11

Big time

operators

The RMD Group:
Dave Renzella, Rodrigo Iglesias and Michael Georgopoulos.

photo by Mike Savacool

Opening of Fluxx nightclub marks another triumph for savvy RMD Group

By HILLARY SCHULER-JONES | DOWNTOWN NEWS

The RMD Group has scored another victory in the Gaslamp district with the opening of Fluxx nightclub at 500 Fourth Ave., marking one more achievement in a long string of successes by Michael Georgopoulos and his team.

Georgopoulos, who got his start in the restaurant industry as a dishwasher at the age of 13, has steadily moved up the ranks to become a major contributor to the success of multiple hot spots in San Diego. He is the former general manager of Stingaree, and he helped launch Bar West and Universal before starting RMD Group in 2008.

His business partners at RMD Group hold similar credentials: Dave Renzella, Georgopoulos's uncle, worked in the food and beverage industry and is also a former GM of Stingaree. Rodrigo Iglesias was once a security guard for EnDev and spent 12 years managing clubs like Onyx in the Gaslamp.

The trio started RMD Group when Side Bar went up for sale, and they have been in growth mode ever since. After renovating both Side Bar and the neighboring Ciro's pizza, the team barely caught its breath before



Club-goers revel on the circular dance floor in the new state-of-the-art Fluxx nightclub at 500 Fourth Ave. Fluxx is just one of the RMD Group's successful projects in San Diego.
Photo by JOHN AUDLEY

planning Fluxx, which opened March 12.

The 11,000-square-foot club is one of the only "true" dance clubs in San Diego, Georgopolous said.

"RMD's vision was strictly as it related to flow and energy and vibe, and most importantly, we wanted the best lighting and sound system, certainly in San Diego, but also in Southern California and potentially beyond," Georgopolous said.

"Everybody dances everywhere ... but a true dance club has a dance floor that has lights and sound around it that are at a higher level than

everything else, and the design is that you are going to be on that floor dancing," he added. "That's what you have here, and you really don't get that at too many other places in town."

The result is what some have called "Vegas in San Diego." RMD Group worked with designer Davis Krumins of Davis Ink to come up with a theme that incorporates natural textures like wood, brick and rope with the latest in club technology, including state-of-the-art lighting fea-

SEE RMD, Page 9

One step closer

SD Port Commission OKs land transfer for convention center

By HILLARY SCHULER-JONES | DOWNTOWN NEWS

Unified Port of San Diego commissioners voted April 6 to authorize the transfer of six acres of land from Fifth Avenue Landing LLC (FAL) to the San Diego Convention Center Corporation (SDCCC) at a cost of \$13.5 million.

The parcel is the last remaining piece of open land the city's convention center could use to expand its current footprint.

In September, the mayor's Citizens Task Force on the Convention Center Project recommended in its final report that the SDCCC move forward with the expansion plans it has been considering since the center hit full capacity in 2001. SDCCC officials said they have turned away 381 events because of a lack of space or dates.

The task force also determined that over the last two decades, the center has generated \$18.3 billion for the regional economy and nearly \$365 million in tax revenue.

SEE CENTER, Page 4



Pedicab operators doing business downtown will be required to display an official decal. PAUL HANSEN | Downtown News

Pedicab ordinance is set to take hold

By HILLARY SCHULER-JONES | DOWNTOWN NEWS

A pedicab ordinance enacted by the City Council in October is one step closer to enforcement. City officials have now completed the distribution of 250 restricted-zone decals to pedicab owners and operators, said Lt. Tim Saelens of the San Diego Police Department's Traffic Division.

Pedicab owners or operators doing business in any of the four restricted zones — which include downtown, Mission Beach/Pacific Beach, Ocean Beach and La Jolla — will be required to display the official decal. The rules became effective March 19.

City officials will now issue written warnings to violators during a 30-day grace period that began March 19. After the grace period, any owner or operator not displaying a decal will be subject to a citation, according to police officials.

SEE PEDICABS, Page 4

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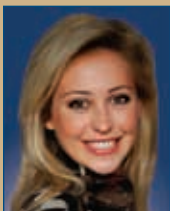
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CCDC seeks to renovate Gaslamp Square Park

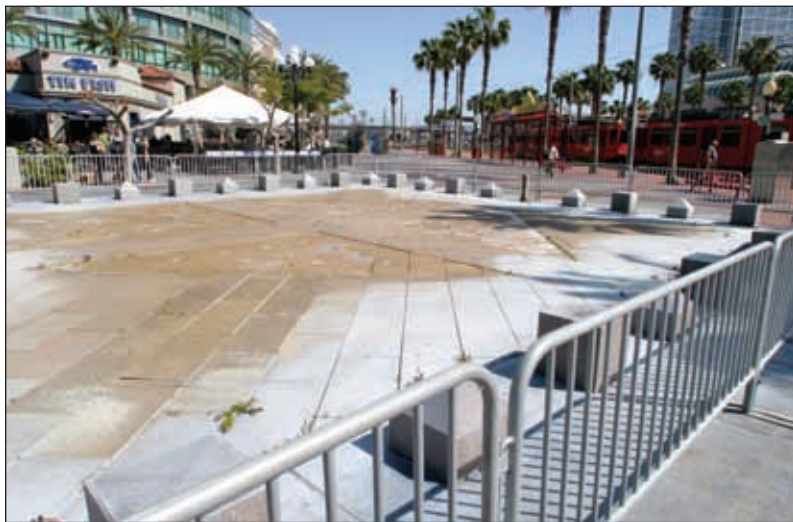
By HILLARY SCHULER-JONES
DOWNTOWN NEWS

The Centre City Development Corporation ((CCDC)) held a stakeholder meeting March 5 to get feedback from residents and business owners about how to revitalize Gaslamp Square Park, located at the corner of Fifthth and K streets.

City officials fenced off a broken water feature in the park, "Dancing Waters," citing it as a safety hazard, and the defunct fountain has sparked debate about how to rehabilitate the entire area.

Derek Danziger, CCDC's vice president of marketing and communications, said the stakeholders have proposed a variety of possibilities for renovating the land, from replacing the fountain to removing water features entirely. Participants at the March 5 meeting shared ideas with CCDC and Estrada Land Planning, the landscape architect firm CCDC hired to create new concepts for both Gaslamp Square Park and Children's Park, Danziger said.

CCDC plans to hold a public open



"Dancing Waters," a broken public fountain, has sparked debate about how to rehabilitate the entire area at Gaslamp Square Park.
PAUL HANSEN | Downtown News

house in early May to show everyone Estrada's concepts and get additional feedback on the designs, with the goal of making a final decision this summer, Danziger said.

"That's an extremely important area

of the city, in a highly visible place across from the Convention Center and at the foot of the Gaslamp, so it is really important that we come up with a concept that everyone will be happy with and support," he said.

Little Italy is waiting in line for new bathroom

By SEBASTIAN RUIZ | DOWNTOWN NEWS

The Centre City Development Corporation (CCDC) plans to add an additional public restroom in Little Italy sometime within the next fiscal year at an initial cost of about \$900,000. CCDC, a nonprofit corporation, presides over redevelopment tax dollars downtown.

One official said there is a catch.

"Little Italy would have to manage [the restroom]," said CCDC spokesman Derek Danziger.

Danziger points out a quirk in the

law limiting spending on public restrooms in downtown. While CCDC can help fund public restrooms as part of redevelopment, it cannot pay for maintenance, he said.

Developers pay for upkeep costs, he said.

The "Date Street" facility planned for Little Italy is one of the latest public restrooms being mulled by CCDC and city business agencies such as the Little Italy and the East Village associations. Details about the facility have not been laid out.

The agencies work together on one proposal at a time.

"In the future, we'll look at adding public restrooms at our new parks," said Brad Richter, CCDC's vice president of planning. "[But] right now there isn't a master plan in process. We've looked at this issue over the years."

Downtown's residents, tourists and transients currently have access to 11 publicly accessible restrooms scattered throughout the inner city and along the

SEE WAITING, Page 4

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Sunday, May 2, 2pm

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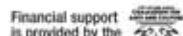
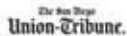
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WAITING

CONTINUED FROM Page 3

harbor. Most remain open part of the day, managed by private companies or by the Unified Port of San Diego. Seven restrooms stay open 24 hours day all week, according to CCDC reports.

Though District 2 City Councilman Kevin Faulconer has pushed for portable restrooms in the area in the past, CCDC has nothing to do with paying for those, Richter said.

Downtown restrooms (24 hours)

- Gaslamp Quarter Park (Tin Fish Building) 170 Sixth Avenue
- Civic Complex 202 C Street
- Solar Turbine North Embarcadero Promenade across from Solar Turbine
- Tuna Harbor Park
- Tuna Lane at the foot of G Street
- Embarcadero Marina Park North Foot of Marina Park Way
- Embarcadero Marina Park South Foot of Marina Park Way
- The Hilton

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Part-time restrooms

- One America Plaza 600 West Broadway
- Hours: 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily
- Lyceum 79 Horton Plaza
- Hours: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Mondays through Fridays
- The Legend Former Eighth Avenue Outfield Park
- Hours vary: open when the Outfield Park is open to the public
- Neil Good Day Center 299 17th Street
- Hours: 6 a.m. to 4 p.m.

— Compiled from a CCDC staff report

CENTER

CONTINUED FROM Page 1

Steven Johnson, vice president of public affairs for SDCCC, said before the April 6 vote that the property acquisition is an important step toward increasing the economic benefits that the convention center has had in the downtown area.

“[An expansion] will allow us to keep events like Comic-Con at our facility and in San Diego, which is a huge economic boom to the region, and it also allows us to attract groups who have outgrown our building back to San Diego,” said Johnson. He said the additional space would make it possible to host two groups at

once, so organizers could stagger the move-in/move-out times and event dates to provide a more consistent stream of visitors to the area.

The SDCCC will pay EAL \$1 million from reserves and issue a \$12.5 million promissory note to secure the land. There will be an annual principal payment of \$500,000, with the balance of the principal and interest scheduled to be paid by SDCCC at the end of a five-year financing period.

Now that the land has been acquired, the SDCCC will work with city officials and the Port Commission to identify funding streams, design the project, conduct an environmental review and seek public feedback. The project will require approval by the California Coastal Commission before it can proceed.

To view the full task force report, visit www.conventioncentertaskforce.org.

PEDICABS

CONTINUED FROM Page 1

The area encompassing the Downtown Zone is bordered by the south curb line of Ash Street between San Diego Bay and 11th Avenue; the east curb line of 11th Avenue between Ash Street and C Street; the north curb line of C Street between 11th Avenue and 14th Street and; the east curb line of 14th Street between C Street and San Diego Bay, according to the city's municipal code.

Saelens said the city began exploring the issues surrounding pedicabs several years ago when a group of business owners, residents and pedicab owners approached the city with a variety of concerns, including safety hazards, traffic congestion and accidents attributed to the

pedicabs, Saelens said.

Saelens noted that pedicab owners and operators had complained there were too many pedicab bicycles operating in the area and the increased competition made it difficult to make money.

In addition to limiting the number of pedicabs that are allowed to operate in restricted zones, the ordinance also establishes rules governing mandatory seatbelts, parking areas, passenger seating requirements, exterior markings and lighting, and the posting of the fare schedules.

According to a March 3 report to the City Council, program organizers issued 215 restricted-zone decals to existing pedicab owners and operators, and held a lottery to determine who would receive the remaining 35 decals.

The permits will be up for renewal every year, Saelens said.



EarthFair 2010 will attract a huge number of environmentally-friendly exhibitors to Balboa Park for the 20th annual event, held this year on April 18. COURTESY PHOTO

EarthFair 2010 unites green community

By MEAGHAN CLARK | DOWNTOWN NEWS

Celebrating 20 years in the city, EarthFair 2010, April 18 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. in Balboa Park, will bring together the green community like never before. Earth Day isn't just about the Children's Parade and yummy food, but a chance for all those small, non-profit, eco-friendly companies to showcase their efforts.

“It's a chance for those huge local groups that deserve support to get the word out and get them more involved,” said Carolyn Chase, one of the Earth Day founders.

Ninety percent of the exhibitors on Earth Day are local companies — from the diaper services to green remodelers, organic steam carpet cleaners and the San Diego Ford dealership, who is showcasing their new environmentally-friendly vehicle.

“It's usually their number one recruitment day,” Chase said. “Those involved work toward anything and everything to do with the environment. And in the long run, the event really connects hun-

dreds of people to do projects throughout the county.”

This year, new recruits presenting their work include local high school students who are raising money for endangered species.

“Every [exhibitor] has to do something for the planet, and this year we're clamping down” on proposal regulations, Chase added, keeping the green side of things as the focus.

EarthFair 2010 will host the eARTh Gallery art show, Cleaner Car Concourse, a children's activity center and several entertainment shows along with the 350 exhibitors.

Besides recruiting more than 400 volunteers for the event, the EarthFair staff is doing everything for the annual project that brings in about 70,000 visitors to San Diego — from advertising to media exposure, recruiting new volunteers and finding new exhibitors.

“We do it all!” Chase said.

For more information see www.earthdayweb.org.

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Discover a world of visual culture

A feast for the eyes awaits at Art Walk in Little Italy

By WILL BOWEN, Ph.D. | DOWNTOWN NEWS

Each year, Little Italy plays host to several large events, most with an Italian theme. The largest event of all is Art-Walk, now in its 26th year, currently sponsored by Mission Federal Credit Union.

This year, Little Italy will be transformed into a large piazza covering some 16 blocks April 24 and 25, from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Visitors will be able to stroll down the middle of the street to browse, admire and buy all different sorts of art, including painting, sculpture, glass and photography which will be shown by more than 300 artists.

There will also be six stages for 39 music and dance performances. Five of the stages will be on each corner of India Street from Date up to Grape streets. The sixth stage will be at the cement amphitheater at Amici Park, corner of Date and State streets. Some of the performers include John Torres, Steph Johnson, Ashley Matte, Steven Ybarra and Tom Griesgraber. There will also be two steel drum bands and dance performances by students from Aire Ensemble, Eveoke Dance Theatre, Malashock Dance School, Coronado School of the Arts, Culture Shock and Ballet Folklorico Tapatio de San Diego.

Activities specifically geared toward children will take place at the KidsWalk area located at the merger of Amici Park and Washington Elementary School. There, kids will be guided to playfully discover their inner artist using recycled and reclaimed materials.

Frankie Augustino, a local artist and employee of Blick Art Supplies on India



Activities geared toward children will be offered at Art Walk's KidsWalk area at the merger of Amici Park and Washington Elementary School. COURTESY PHOTO

Street, summed up the potential experience of ArtWalk.

"I really love this event. It's great to just walk around, talk to the artists, and maybe buy something," Augustino said. "I wish they did this more than once a year. It's really fun and great for promoting the arts."

With so many people due to attend,

parking will be at a premium. Plan on arriving early if you wish to park on the street. The Ace Parking Lot at the County Administration Building at 1600 Pacific Coast Highway is another option. It's a three block walk up to the activities. Participants can also park at Horton Plaza and take the trolley to the Little Italy stop.



FESTIVE ATTIRE Students from St. Vincent de Paul's School walk the parade route during the annual St. Patrick's Day Parade held March 13 near Sixth Avenue and Laurel Street. PAUL HANSEN | Downtown News



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The Center's Women's Resource Center will once again bring local women together for a day-long festival of workshops, entertainment and resources for lesbian, bisexual and transgender women.

This year's festival will focus on nourishing the diversity within the women's community. Event highlights include a lunchtime panel discussion, workshops covering everything from breast health to sexuality and a free lunch from Pizza Fusion.

For more info., email women@thecentersd.org.

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OBITUARY

Old Globe Theatre's Craig Noel dead at 94

By CHARLENE BALDRIDGE | DOWNTOWN NEWS

Beloved San Diego resident Craig Noel, who received the National Medal of Arts in 2007, died Saturday, April 3, in his home in Mission Hills.

Founding director of the Old Globe Theatre, Noel began acting at the Globe in 1937 and later became the driving force that guided the organization to excellence. He directed more than 200 productions over more than 70 years at the Globe.

Born in New Mexico in 1915, Noel had his first theatrical experience in kindergarten after the family moved to San Diego. His teacher cast him as a scary troll in the school production of "Billy Goats Gruff." He was small of stature and therefore the butt of bullying on the playground, and he loved the sense of power that being on stage gave him. His early experiences made him determined that this was the life for him.

Still acting, Noel graduated from San Diego High School in 1934. To make some extra money as he attended San Diego Normal School, now San Diego State University, he manned a coat-check booth at the 1935-36 California Pacific Exposition, hung out at the drug store where the young professionals known as the Old Globe Players ate meals and attended their 50-minute productions of Shakespeare's plays in the fair's

popular attraction, touted to fairgoers as a replica of Shakespeare's Globe.

The theater buildings were scheduled for demolition when the fair closed, but a group of local actors raised money, brought the Old Globe up to city code and began producing plays there in 1937 under not-for-profit status. Noel was a member of the initial community theater production, John van Druten's "The Distaff Side."

Noel became the Old Globe's principal director in 1941, and except for a brief time in Hollywood and during World War II in the Philippines and Tokyo, he never left.

In 1981, as he approached retirement age, Noel hand-picked the theater's next artistic director, Jack O'Brien, who brought national attention to the theater, which in 1984 received the Tony Award for Excellence in Regional Theatre.

Founder of the Globe's annual Shakespeare Festival, its bilingual outreach program, Teatro Meta, and the Old Globe/University of San Diego MFA program, Noel received San Diego's Living Treasure Award, the Governor's Award for the Arts and made *The San Diego Union-Tribune's* list of 25 people who shaped the city's history. The San Diego Theatre Critics Circle named its annual awards the "Craig Noel Awards for Excellence in Theatre," and until January, Noel bestowed each award personally, posing for photos with the

recipients.

As a director of hundreds of plays and a mentor to generations of artists, Noel's dedication inspired actors, directors and theater producers across the nation.

"You ask if I had any idea where the Globe was going at the beginning," Noel said in a circa 1995 interview with this writer. "I didn't know the exact course it was going to take. The optimism of youth being what it was, I thought I would be a movie star by the time I was 22, which is pretty old when you're 18."

"People are continually surprised when they ask that question to hear me say, 'Yes, I did know. Yes, I did believe. Yes, I did work hard because I thought I knew where the Globe was going and what it could be. If you don't have any idea where the theater could go, you meander and you don't make the commitment to the institution.'"

Thanks, Craig, for a life of commitment. You were always worthy of our medals and our devotion, and now we shall miss you dearly.

Charlene Baldrige, who can't remember when she first met Noel, is a member of the San Diego Theatre Critics Circle. Her first experience of the Old Globe was "Captain's Paradise" in 1962. She worked for the Old Globe from 1981-1995.



Craig Noel with President George W. Bush

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Commission helps make filming in San Diego a piece of cake

By HILLARY SCHULER-JONES
DOWNTOWN NEWS

With miles of beaches, 300-plus days of sunshine and a diverse array of scenic landscapes, San Diego is known as a favorite destination for tourists and an ideal location for living. What many do not know about the area is that it is also a choice location for shooting scenes for the silver screen.

The San Diego Film Commission, based in downtown offices on second Avenue, is responsible for drawing projects to the county, assisting the film crews in finding the right locations and atmosphere; streamlining the film permit process; collaborating with local, state and federal agencies to obtain clearances; and advocating on behalf of local film businesses to encourage local hiring.

The San Diego Film Commission was established in 1976 by San Diego's then-Mayor Pete Wilson in response to complaints from the film industry that production in the city required too much red tape.

According to the Film Commission's Economic Impact Report, film, television and advertising projects produced within San Diego County generated more than \$34 million for the local economy in Fiscal Year 2009 alone.

San Diego's first recorded brush with fame dates back to 1898, when The Edison Company shot a silent movie in the downtown area. Since then, hundreds of movies, TV shows, documentaries, commercials and advertisements have been shot throughout the county.

One of the most recent productions to hit San Diego is the television show "Terriers," which is described by Variety as "a comedic take on the private-eye world, revolving around an ex-cop

Fifty years of films in San Diego

"Beverly Hills Chihuahua" (2008)
"Into the Wild" (2007)
"Babel" (2006)
"Anchorman" (2003)
"Bruce Almighty" (2003)
"The Sum of All Fears" (2002)
"Pearl Harbor" (2000)
"Bring It On" (1999)
"Almost Famous" (1998)
"Apollo 13" (1995)
"True Lies" (1994)
"Hunt For Red October" (1990)
"Spaceballs" (1987)
"Top Gun" (1986)
"The Stuntman" (1980)
"Attack of the Killer Tomatoes!" (1978)
"Freaky Friday" (1977)
"Tora, Tora, Tora" (1970)
"The Big Mouth" (1967)
"It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World" (1963)

turned detective who teams up with a young hot-shot." The show is set in Ocean Beach, but the production crew is filming the first season at locations throughout San Diego County. The series, which will debut on the FX channel, stars Donal Logue (a film and TV veteran) and Michael Raymond-James ("Black Snake Moan").

San Diego has many noteworthy credits on both the small and silver screens. Episodes of "24," "Entourage," "Monk" and "The Bachelor" have featured the area in recent seasons. The show "Veronica Mars" shot its entire three-season run within San Diego County. Major motion pictures on the area's resume include "Almost Famous," "Bruce Almighty," "Top Gun," "The Sum of All Fears" and "Anchorman."

The presence of film crews can be exciting for local residents, who have

occasionally had the chance to appear on the big screen themselves. When "Bring It On," a movie based on the world of competitive cheerleading, was filmed in San Diego in 1999, producers used local cheer squads from around the county as competitors in key scenes.

Of course, not every aspect of filming is glamorous. Some projects shoot scenes or photos that require road closures, public transportation detours, crowd control or pyrotechnic feats that can be inconvenient for residents and tourists alike. In order to mitigate the impact, directors and producers turn to the non-profit San Diego Film Commission to oversee the production process for every project within San Diego County from start to finish.

"We are told over and over that people like to come here because we make it easy and safe," said Film Commissioner Cathy Anderson. "We've never had a lawsuit or an accident. We are problem solvers — we are trying to avoid problems and we are proactive."

All of the commission's employees have years of previous film experience so that they understand the unique needs of the production crews they work with. This experience yields an advantage that can help San Diego win business from competing locations like Hawaii, New Mexico and Canada.

"It's a competition and everyone in the world wants this business," Anderson said.

"We offer a unique attraction by providing people who are specialists in their field, and when [film crews] get here, I'm very confident because my people have massive skill sets."

Producers also turn to the Film Commission when they need information or



Cathy Anderson relaxes among the many movie posters in the downtown offices of the San Diego Film Commission.
PAUL HANSEN | Downtown News



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Question and Answer: Meet Padres new general manager Jed Hoyer

By **ANTHONY GENTILE** | DOWNTOWN NEWS

The San Diego Padres' biggest move this offseason didn't come on the field. It came in the front office when the team hired Jed Hoyer to be the eighth general manager in club history last fall. The 36-year-old Hoyer comes to San Diego after spending seven years with the Boston Red Sox, the last three as assistant general manager. With the season just under way on April 5, Downtown News talked with Hoyer to talk about his brief time with the club and his projections for 2010.

How does a team that has averaged 93 losses the past two seasons make strides in 2010?

Hoyer: "The most important thing is really focusing on young, athletic talent. We can make strides this year



New Padres General Manager Jed Hoyer checks out the action during spring training. Hoyer was named GM after last season, replacing Kevin Towers.

COURTESY PHOTO SAN DIEGO PADRES

with guys like Tony Gwynn (OF), Will Venable (OF), Kyle Blanks (OF), Everth Cabrera (SS) and Mat Latos (RHP), to name a few – these are young players that haven't really reached their ceiling yet and that's an area where we can make strides."

How challenging is it to field a competitive team with payroll limitations?

Hoyer: "It's a different puzzle to put together. You're not going to be out there looking at the highest price free agents. Young players are inexpensive players and you can certainly field a very good team without having one of the highest payrolls – examples like Cleveland, Tampa Bay and Minnesota are certainly instructive."

What have been the biggest moves this offseason (aside from yourself)?

Hoyer: "From a non-player standpoint, our focus on the amateur draft side I think was probably the biggest thing. We really reconstructed the scouting department. I brought over Jason McLeod from Boston to be the Assistant GM here and we hired a number of scouts. We also added a number of very good players – Jon Garland (RHP), Yorvit Torrealba (C), Jerry Hairston (Utility), Aaron Cunning-

ham (OF) and we brought back Scott Hairston."

Is there something you would like to tell the fans?

Hoyer: "This team played incredibly hard at the end of last season, they played really hard in spring training. I don't make predictions, but I'm sure that this team will go

out every night and be well prepared and both play incredibly hard and play up to their potential. There are no players on our team that we worry about at all from an energy and effort standpoint and think that's very important."

For the full interview, visit www.sandiegodowntownnews.com.

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FILM

CONTINUED FROM Page 7

resources that will help them set the tone for their production. That was the case in 2003 when the crew of "Anchorman" was looking for inspiration to portray the news scene in the 1970s.

"The producers came to us because they wanted some resources on what the news industry was like in the 1970s," Anderson said. "Our first thought was to put them in touch with [former San Diego anchorman] Jack White, because he was an institution in the San Diego news scene for years, and

we also knew that he was an archivist."

The movie was originally slated to film in Portland, but producers were so impressed with White's knowledge that they hired him as a consultant for "Anchorman" and moved production to San Diego. Main character Ron Burgundy (played by Will Farrell) brought further notoriety to America's Finest City with his memorable sign-off, "Stay classy, San Diego."

The Film Commission will continue to look for new projects to bring to the county and Anderson said San Diego is already in the running as a location for two major motion pictures set to film this year.



It's all
Happening!
**Marc & Darlynn
Menkin**

One of our favorite quotes from famous fiction writer JRR Tolkien is "Just because I wander, doesn't mean I'm lost." Far from it. In fact on a recent stroll through downtown San Diego, we discovered all sorts of happening spots. Here are some favorites.

• Promoted as an upscale dive bar, the owners of **Quality Social** have a message: Ditch the pretentious attitude. Everyone is welcome. Even the ads carry the message that fist pumping and name-dropping are prohibited. "Don't expect any arrogance. We want people to feel relaxed and know they're going to get a good experience at a low cost," said owner Chris Dexter. Located in the former EXY space on Sixth and F Street, Quality Social features cocktails like "Not your grandma's gin & tonic" and "dirty old man," while bar food favorites include gourmet hot dogs and wings. There's even a private champagne parlor in the women's restroom and a hidden event room in the back. Hint: You have to walk through the kitchen to gain access. When you get there, look for the one-way mirror. "It's hysterical. Whenever I'm in that back room, I'll see people walk up to the mirror and check themselves out. They have no idea that people on the other side of the mirror are watching them," Dexter said.

• We're excited about the fun line-up at **The**

San Diego Repertory Theatre and its interactive events. "Hairspray" kicks off the summer season, making its California regional premier at the Lyceum in July. Other highlights include "Superior Donuts," a funny comedy hot off Broadway, and "Storyville," which transports audiences to New Orleans Red Light District in 1917. The Rep's Surround Events are free and open to the public. They're held in the Lyceum lobby before or after each performance and include Q&A with cast members and the production team.

• Comedy fans have a lot to be excited about starting with **Conan O'Brien** at the San Diego Civic Theatre on April. At the Fleetwood on Tuesdays, check out the **free comedy shows** hosted by Ryan Mirvis. The restaurant also features an all you can eat crab deal for \$24.95.

Tipsy Crow (formerly the Bitter End) will feature its next comedy show on April 22, hosted by Mal Hall. We checked out last month's show and noticed several new additions including a funny slide show of audience members from previous shows. Hall even sells T-shirts with the word LAUGH. "I came up with the idea of putting Laugh on the shirt when a lot of people were in a downward spiral. I wanted something that would make them feel better and forget about their worries," Hall said. If you go, don't forget to smile, you could wind up in his slide show. Say cheese!

– **Marc & Darlynn Menkin** are the co-owners of **Where You Want To Be Tours**. Many of their tours and teambuilding scavenger hunts feature secret downtown areas. www.wheretours.com

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The cast of Pump Boys and Dinettes, photo by Ken Jacques



Chris "Ludacris" Bridges is one of the most recent major acts to perform at Fluxx nightclub, 500 Fourth Ave.
Photo by JOHN AUDLEY

RMD

CONTINUED FROM Page 1

tures and backlit photos of robots and vintage toys on the walls. The club's three bars each overlook the dance floor and performance stage, which has already hosted Warren G, FloRida and Brandy as special guests.

Fluxx is billed as "a club in constant change," an appropriate tagline for the ever-evolving nightclub scene, and that concept is incorporated into the club's design. Many of the decorative components are interchangeable, including the artwork on the wall, some elements in the bars, the lighting scheme and the backdrop on stage, which will all

be replaced by a new theme every six weeks, Georgopoulos said.

He also said that after only a few weeks of operating, the bar is already running smoothly, and his partners are considering their next move. They have been getting calls from nightclub owners in Las Vegas and other parts of the country who want to tap into the winning management formula they have created, but they might also try building another bar from scratch.

"I know what we are not going to do — we're not going to do another nightclub in the Gaslamp, we're not going to do another lounge in the Gaslamp, we're not going to do another pizzeria in the Gaslamp," Georgopoulos said. "But outside of that, really, the sky's the limit."



Urban Solace, 3823 30th St., offers a unique menu of "new American comfort food," craft beers and a great selection of wines, places guest comfort as its main priority.
Photo by CLAUDIA JORDAN | Urban Solace

Enjoy a culinary retreat

An eclectic restaurant row has risen only minutes from downtown

By ANGIE HARMAN | DOWNTOWN NEWS

North Park is the new Hillcrest, said one local business owner. The area just to the north of Balboa Park continues its rise as one of the hottest neighborhoods in town as more and more new businesses open.

The neighborhood has been transformed, beginning in the 1990s, to the bustling, eclectic culinary center it is today. Practically every week, a new pub, wine bar or restaurant opens in the area dubbed "Restaurant Row," each with a unique offering and exciting new design concept. From farm to table to comfort

food, craft beers to extensive wine cellars and winemaker dinners, there seems to be something for everyone. A quick online search results in more than 50 restaurants and bars in the area.

And it's simple to get to North Park from the downtown area. Just take C Street to Pershing, hang a left on 30th Street and you are right in the center of the action. For less than a \$10 cab ride, you can experience one of the most happening places in San Diego. Many of the restaurants in North Park are emphasizing a local, neighborhood feel, and it shows in the excellent service.

Mosaic Wine Bar — voted "Best

Gourmet Pizza in San Diego" in 2009 by Foodie Nation and Best Pour by San Diego Magazine. It offers a fun atmosphere with a broad selection of food including small bites, flatbreads, gourmet pizzas, salads and panini. They have great wines, too. 3422 30th St. (619) 906-4747, www.mosaicwinebar.com.

Urban Solace — One of the most highly-touted restaurants in the area, Urban Solace claims guest comfort as its main priority. Offering a unique menu of "new American comfort food," craft beers and a great selection of wines,

SEE NORTH PARK, Page 10

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NORTH PARK

CONTINUED FROM Page 9

Urban Solace is reminiscent of the South, particularly the New Orleans French Quarter. The menu features fresh meats all naturally produced, a seafood selection adhering to the Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch List, organic local veggies and organic or biodynamic West Coast-produced wines. Urban Solace has earned quite a following and has won numerous awards including Best New Restaurant, 2009 and Best of the Best, 2009 by San Diego Magazine. 3823 30th St. (619) 295-6464, www.urbansolace.net.

Toronado — An offshoot of the original in San Francisco, this gastropub offers a huge selection of crafted beers with friendly and beer knowledgeable bartenders. Cozy and quaint, Toronado features around 50 beers on draft and a generous selection of bottles. They serve a decent selection of above-average pub fare, and board games are popular with the crowd. 4026 30th St. (619) 282-0456, www.toronadosd.com.

Tioli's Craze Burger — Two Germans moved into an Italian restaurant and opened this fun burger joint, which has been featured on the Food Network. The menu selection of more than 30 kinds of burgers offers the outlandish, including alligator, ostrich, venison, lamb, buffalo and even kangaroo. Served with unique and creative sauces and ingredients, Tioli's Craze Burger offers a unique twist to an American favorite. For the not-so-adventurous, don't worry. They also serve good ol' natural Angus beef burgers with no hormones. Comfy, laid-back atmosphere. 4201 30th St., North Park. (619) 282-6044, www.crazeburger.com.

Around the corner on Adams Avenue is **Blind Lady Alehouse**, serving up pizza, salads, appetizers, and a large



Il Postino, 3959 30th St., an Italian restaurant with a unique and exciting design concept with an extensive wine list and plans to expand from its current selection of more than 400 wines, a separate wine bar and deli counter along with a fine dining restaurant.

selection of handcrafted brews. Patrons seem to really enjoy the relaxing atmosphere. Included in the list of California's 150 Best Bars of 2009 by Draft Magazine. The BLAH, as they call themselves, hosts plenty of fun tastings and community events. 3416 Adams Ave., Normal Heights. (619) 255-2491, www.blindlady.blogspot.com.

The newest restaurant to make its anticipated debut on Restaurant Row is **Il Postino** (the postman), an Italian restaurant with a unique and exciting design concept located in the base of the swanky La Boheme Condominiums. Owned by Antonino Mastellone of the immensely popular Arrivederci in Hillcrest and Bon Appetito in Little Italy, this spacious venue accommodates large parties and special occasions. "I love the people of North Park. I love the people of San Diego, so I am excited to be in North Park and see some of the regular customers from my other restaurants stopping in. It makes me happy," Mastellone said.

The restaurant's design was loosely inspired by the 1998 Italian movie of the same name and incorporates the Italian postal theme throughout. The decor borrows from the mail system in

Italy, with vintage Italian postal graphics from actual express mail and large numbers stenciled on the walls. Wine is the other theme of Il Postino, as can be seen throughout in the custom tables and bar with screen printed wine details tattooed across them.

The architect and interior designer, Serena Zalleo, was born in Italy. Zalleo studied architecture at the Facoltà di Architettura in Torino, Italy and the Ecole d'architecture de Saint' Etienne in France. Zalleo is a partner at Ctrl-Arch, an architectural and interior design firm based in Los Angeles and Torino, Italy. "The goal of the design," Zalleo said, "was to create a modern space without that minimal feel. Modern but warm."

Zalleo has worked on several other projects in San Diego including the Keating Hotel's Merk Restaurant and Sway Lounge.

Luca Forte, resident wine expert and director for Il Postino, selects and oversees an extensive wine list and plans to expand from its current selection of more than 400 wines. Il Postino features a separate wine bar and deli counter along with a fine dining restaurant. 3959 30th St. (619) 325-0809.

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An interview with AleSmith's Tod Fitzsimmons



Around the Keg
TONY CLARKE

One undeniable perk to living in San Diego is our access to a wide variety of great breweries and the brewers who make it all happen. One of those brewers is AleSmith Brewing Company's Tod Fitzsimmons.

AleSmith has been a San Diego fixture since 1996. Founded by members of San Diego's very own homebrew club,

Quality Ale and Fermentation Fraternity (QUAFF), AleSmith has a reputation for creating some of the best beers in the country. With offerings like the coffee-laden Speedway Stout and seasonal Evil Dead Red, Tod and AleSmith have consistently earned ratings among the top 100 beers in the world by RateBeer.com and BeerAdvocate.com. Success like this earned AleSmith the title of Small Brewery of the Year in 2008 by the Great American Beer Festival. Recently, I had the chance to sit down with Tod to discuss the culture of success at AleSmith.

What jobs did you hold before coming to AleSmith?

"I used to run my own courier service for businesses in the area. Through my deliveries I came into a job at a lab testing water and soil samples. The job provided a steady income but I knew it was only temporary."

How did you get into brewing?

"Probably like most people that homebrew, I picked it up as a hobby. I liked the combination of science and art. You get to play with formulas and calculations, but the end result is purely an expression of your personal artistic creativity. I started homebrewing in 1993 and began attending regular QUAFF meetings in 1994."

Tell us about your experiences with QUAFF

"QUAFF is great. I still attend meetings from time to time. In the very beginning, I was more of a passive member, attending regular meetings and learning as much as I could. As time went by, I started to volunteer my time with the club newsletter. I did this for about a year

before I became the club VP. Most VP's are groomed to take over club president and I was no exception. I served as QUAFF president for two years. While I was the VP and president I tried to emphasize our club's participation in homebrew competitions and education through the Beer Judge Certification Program (BJCP). Overall, QUAFF was a great place to gain some experience making and competing beers, learn how to properly judge a beer competition and, of course, meet some great brewers."

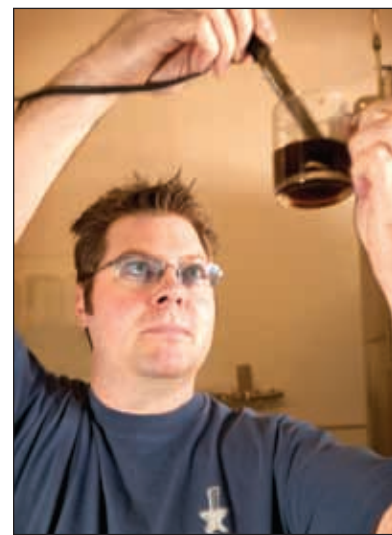
How did you come to AleSmith?

"AleSmith was started by friends and fellow QUAFF members Skip Virgilio and Ted Newcomb. At the time I was still working at the lab testing water and soil

samples, although I was being repeatedly let go and rehired. During my down time in between layoffs, I began to volunteer my time to AleSmith doing odd jobs around the brewery. As time went on, I began to keep steady hours volunteering at the brewery. Eventually, I approached Skip about a permanent paid position, as my lab job was no longer a stable income source. It wasn't until a couple of years had passed working at the brewery that I was offered the chance to become a brewer at AleSmith."

Do you have any formal education in brewing?

"I do not. I'm proud to say that I've learned all I know through my home-



AleSmith Brewing Company's Tod Fitzsimmons

SEE ALESMITH, Page 15



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\$0.75 Wings (min. 5)
\$3.00 Firehouse Draft Pints
\$2.00 Domestic Pints

THIRSTY THURSDAYS 4PM to Close
\$2 Domestic Pints* • \$3 Wells • \$5 Jager • \$8 Domestic Pitchers*
\$10 Import Pitchers • \$4.99 Mozzarella Cheese Sticks
\$4.99 Crispy Grilled Quesadillas • \$4.99 Beer Battered Onion Rings
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From Russia with tough love

FIT SAVVY

By Connie Cook | Guest Columnist

Gather round, fitness fanatics. Today's workout lesson includes a list of similar items. Please choose the one that is most beneficial to your exercise regimen: Kettle Korn, Kettle Chips, Kettle One or kettle bell (ding ding ding — you are correct by selecting the last one!).

Choosing any of the first three options can lead you to a much needed workout with the last!

Kettlebell workouts have been around for decades and originated in Russia (those Russians think of everything — vodka, fur hats, nesting dolls, mail order brides, etc.). The Russian word for kettlebells is "girya," and the Russian men who used them were called "gireviks," a term still used today by those who participate in the training, including women.

The Russian military has long used kettlebells for conditioning their troops. Instead of testing strength and endurance with push-ups, they use a high repetition kettlebell snatch test, (similar to a "clean and press") which is not for the faint of heart.

Kettlebells have recently become main stream in the U.S. thanks to a man named Pavel Tsatsouline, who was a kettlebell trainer for not only the United States armed forces but the Soviet Union forces as well. When Russian and U.S. Special Forces started competing against each other after the Soviet Union broke up, the Americans made a disturbing discovery. They were totally exhausted and the



Fit Athletic club member performing full core kettle bell push up with RKC-certified kettle bell trainer Daniel Soto.

Russians wouldn't even be catching their breath. The Americans found out the Russians were all working out with kettlebells, so they began incorporating the kettlebell into their training routines. Now, half the Secret Service is snatching kettlebells.

Visualize a flat-bottomed bowling ball with a handle. Essentially, this is a kettlebell, a pretty cool chunk of bad boy iron that can increase your strength, endurance, agility and balance. Kettlebells challenge both the muscular and cardiovascular systems with dynamic, total-body movements and recruit many muscle groups at once, which forces you to control your entire body, especially your core.

The lifting and controlling of a kettlebell builds both strength and stability at the same time, so it's a great way to get a whole body workout in a short time.

Although kettlebells develop strength, a kettlebell-trained body is not bulky; it's a leaner, more athletic look. Kettlebell workouts increase density, making your muscles stronger and harder, especially in your low back, hip and glute areas. This is a huge bonus for women who like having a firm, rounded, derriere; or "kettle butt."

Kettlebells vary in weight and size and come in poods, an old Russian measure of weight, which equals 16 kg., or roughly 35 pounds. An average man can start with a 35-pounder and the average woman can begin with an 18-pounder. This may not seem like much weight, but after a high number of reps are performed, it will feel much heavier than that! Most men will eventually progress to a 53-pounder, the standard issue size in the Russian military. Seventy-pounders are used only by a few advanced guys and in elite competitions. And although there are 88-pounders, they are for absolute mutants with freakish strength.

Kettlebell training will definitely uncover the athlete in you, and the best way to begin this type of training is with a certified professional with a lot of experience. Choose an RKC (Russian Kettlebell Certification) trainer and not just some kettlebell-totin' know-it-all who has taken a few classes and considers himself a pro.

Your first kettlebell session will be a killer (prepare for soreness), but your body will adapt quickly to the controlled, motion-based lifts and rotations. By the time you've mastered advanced reps (Turkish getups, renegade rows and pistols), you'll have the heightened endurance and leaner, stronger muscles of regular kettlebellers, and you'll feel worth your weight in gold.



Connie Cook "C²"
Fitness Director
Fit Athletic Club

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Vineyard Place
MIKE KALLAY

We all know that California is blessed for growing world class wines. From the Paris Tasting of 1976, where California wines bested the French counterparts in both white and red, to the foreign ownership of vines here in this state by some of the world's oldest and most revered families like the Perrin family, the Frescobaldi and the Rothschilds.

We know that a lot of the wines being made in our state are considered to be at or near the top of their respective categories on the world stage. Sometimes success breeds ignorance, and sometimes, in the case of grape growing regions, it breeds xenophobia. I think both of these issues come to light when talking about Oregon and Washington wines — not just to us spoiled California winos, but to the rest of this country.

Oregon, in my opinion, is making the best and most dependable pinot noir on the planet. People in some wine circles know this to be true, but try telling that to the average diner at a New York City restaurant and you'll surely be met with a laugh. Oregon, and more specifically, the Willamette Valley, produces some of the most earthy and ethereal pinots anywhere. The wines have the red fruit of the best years in Burgundy, France, along with the telltale barnyard/earthy aromas. The wines show beautiful minerality and purity of fruit — every year. Some years are better than others, but you are very infrequently going to be disappointed with a vintage to the point that you are often disappointed with the Burgundian counterparts. Domaine Drouhin in the Willamette stunned the wine world by taking first place in a 1979 pinot tasting in Paris. Of course, it only further underlines the point of Oregon's potential when you learn that the Drouhin in said Domaine is actually the Drouhin family of Burgundy, France. They know a thing about terroir.

Washington is excelling at producing Bordeaux varietals, as well as syrah, which if you remember my last manifesto — er, article, does well albeit differently almost anywhere. You may be surprised to learn that the center of Walla Walla is longitudinally the same as Bordeaux, France. But, much like California, Washington offers a much more consistent growing season than the French equivalent, resulting in wines that range from good to great between different vintages, instead of epic and terrible. The eastern high plains and near-desert regions show a different soil type than California as well — much more like the sandy/alluvial soils in France.

Here's some interesting facts about Washington as well: Did you know that there are 300 days of sunshine? How about that the more northerly latitude gives the grapes almost 17 1/2 hours of sunshine every day? Perhaps the most interesting factoid is that the soils are very poor in nitrogen, meaning that the vines have to work harder for their nutrients, and the resultant grapes therefore have the potential to be much more interesting. One of my favorite producers from Washington is L'Ecole 41. They make a dense and luscious cabernet, as well as a lipsmacking merlot — and my absolute favorite, their Columbia Valley syrah. You may only know the Chateau St. Michelle's and Columbia Crests of Washington, but there are more than 600 bonded wineries in the state. Actu-



ally, Columbia Crest produced what Wine Spectator last year called the No. 1 wine in its top 100 issue — their 2005 Cabernet Sauvignon Reserve from the Columbia Valley. While a score from a magazine or a medal at a competition is no guarantee that you'll love the wine, you can at least take away that the wine was interesting and unique enough to capture the hearts of those tasters at the magazine who taste tens of thousands of wines a year. And, you should take away that Washington may in fact be at or near the top of the world charts for cab, merlot and syrah.

Yes, there are domestic vineyards outside of California that matter to the wine

connoisseur. Oregon and Washington are often surpassing California in terms of great wine, so open up your buying patterns a bit and prepare to be amazed at the stellar flavors and structures of these Pacific Northwest wines.

Do you know the trouble that USC has playing Oregon up in Eugene? That's kind of what I'm talking about. California is not always and not even usually better than Oregon, or Washington, at what they do best.

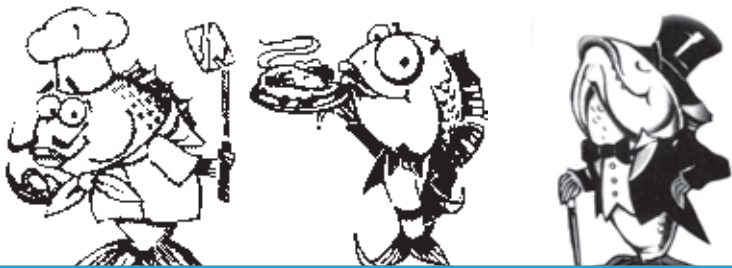
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Things can really heat up at Funky Garcia's on the weekends when folks come looking for some late night chow after a night on the town.

A funky good time

Funky Garcia's offers unique ambiance and surprisingly different Mexican fare

By ANGIE HARMAN | DOWNTOWN NEWS

For one of the best bargains in the Gaslamp Quarter, pop into Funky Garcia's Mexican Eatery and Bar. Not your typical Mexican joint, Funky Garcia's is a pleasant surprise with décor best described as rustic chic. Dark wood plank floors, high back booths in chocolate leather and cowhide prints, and a handful of cozy corner booths make this a perfect spot for grabbing a bite to eat

and wetting your whistle. Tequila barrel lamp shades, wagon wheel chandeliers and other rustic fixtures suspended from ropes provide just the right lighting. Original red brick walls were restored last year when the previous restaurant closed and was converted into Funky Garcia's. In fact, the historic building has been open for more than 125 years. Funky Garcia's owners designed the space and made all of the seating, bar stools, booths and fixtures in the restaurant themselves. But despite its décor, Funky Garcia's is casual and very affordable.

Most of the waitresses during my visit wore sassy cowboy boots, shorts and T-shirts. The waitstaff is personable, friendly and eager to offer recommendations. According to Moe Sadighian, chef and part owner, they strive to bring the fun atmosphere and great Mexican cuisine of Tijuana and Cancun, Mexico to San Diego. The menu features tasty, authentic Mexican treats like Famous Street Tacos, house made salsas, guacamole and chips. I sampled the al pastor, shrimp and carnitas street tacos and all are excellent. The Taco Al Pastor is a perfect mix of sweet and spicy flavors. I was curious about the ingredients but this is apparently very tricky to make, and the recipe is kept on the QT. Churros topped with Mexican caramel are heavenly; leave room for them, it's worth it.

I would personally visit Funky Garcia's just for one of their specialty dishes called Esquite — this delicious dish of roasted corn shaved from the cob and served in a bowl with butter, mayo, lime juice, Cotija cheese and Tamazula Salsa is amazing. If you have never tried it, you must immediately do so! All of the restaurant's recipes have been created by Sadighian. If you

Funky Garcia's Mexican Eatery and Bar

WHERE: 421 Market St.
HOURS: Mondays-Saturdays, 11:30 a.m.-2 a.m.; Sundays, 10 a.m.-10 p.m..
CONTACT: (619) 233-8659
www.funkygarcias.com

have frequented Tabule, his other hip restaurant around the corner, you'll know that only the freshest ingredients are used.

"If it's not good enough for my family, it's not good enough for our clients," Sadighian said.

Sadighian and his business partners have a real passion for what they're doing and it shows.

Funky Garcia's prices are well below average for eateries in the Gaslamp area. Happy hour is held from 3 to 7 p.m. every day and all day on Wednesday, which is an excellent bargain with half off all drinks, including top shelf liquor and a good selection of tasty margaritas, tequilas, beers and a fully stocked bar. Wednesday's happy hour also means half price appetizers.

Things can really heat up on the weekends when folks come looking for some late night chow after a night on the town. People start to dance and really have a good time.

Tip your sombrero to "Los Patrones" on the way out — a colorful cartoon portrait of the restaurant's partners hangs next to the door: Alberto Macias, Miguel Marquez, Moe Sadighian and, of course, Señor Funky Garcia himself — all sporting sombreros.

Cinco de Mayo promises to be a great time as Funky Garcia's celebrates its one year anniversary.

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MEZZANINE

ALESMITH

CONTINUED FROM Page 11

brewing experiences, my membership in QUAFF and through on-the-job training at AleSmith."

Who comes up with the recipes at AleSmith?

"It's a mixture of people and sources really. Some of our recipes are originals from Skip and Ted, some recipes are collaborations between Peter and myself, and others are purely my own creations.

For example, Speedway Stout, not in its present form, was an original recipe created by Skip and his friends. Once Skip sold the brewery to Peter, Speedway began to morph into the version you see today. Lil' Devil was a collaboration between Peter and myself. Evil Dead Red is my recipe. Basically, we try to create recipes that positively answer the question: Do I want to drink a pint of this?"

How do you explain the award-winning culture at AleSmith?

"I'd say by staying as true to uncompromising quality as possible. We have a

much different vision for our brewery than most. We very much believe in quality over quantity, and we are very happy being a small artisan brewery. We like to stay true to the classic beer styles for the most part. Again, that comes down to making beers that you would want to drink a few pints of. We are always working to make the best beer we can, and we are constantly tweaking our recipes to make that happen."

Do you have any advice for aspiring professional brewers?

"My advice would be to make sure you learn the business of brewing, not just the brewing process. Brewing is the least of your worries when you attach the professional tag. Find partners who are business-minded and that you work well with. Don't be blinded by the brewing and forget the business side."

What is your favorite AleSmith beer?

"That depends on my mood. I am definitely a hophead, so I tend to gravitate towards our hoppy beers. You would normally see our IPA, Nut Brown or Lil'

Devil on my home tap."

Thanks to Tod Fitzsimmons for sitting down and taking the time to talk beer! If you've never had an AleSmith beer, or it's been a while, I suggest you grab a bottle and sit down over a nice meal or with friends and break it open. Cheers!

For more information about AleSmith Brewing Company, visit: www.alesmith.com

Tony Clarke and his wife, Liz, own Airdale Brewing Company, located in San Diego. www.airdalebrewing.com

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Panificio e Ristorante Solunto

Panificio e Ristorante Solunto has been around for over 40 years. The name change from Solunto Baking Co is only to show that we added a restaurant for the evening. The décor has changed as well to uplift the ambiance for day and night. One of the last original family members still runs the new transition of a landmark that made San Diego exuberant in delicious Sicilian style bread, cookies and pastries. The lunch portion of the business still carries all the delicacies that made us flourish like sandwiches, hot food, and pizza. Now the dinnertime has a great influence in the Little Italy arena of great food. Hours are as follows: Bakery/Lunchtime Monday 9AM-3PM, Tues-Fri 9AM-5PM, Saturday 8AM-5PM Sunday 8AM-4PM Dinnertime Tues-Sat 5PM-10PM Address: 1643 India St San Diego CA 92101 619-233-3506 www.solunto.biz email: solunto@cox.net

Richard Walker's Pancake House

Richard Walker's Pancake House, an upscale fusion of traditional and gourmet breakfast favorites, is now open in the Marina District in downtown San Diego. Serving classic-style griddlecakes, crepes, omelets and other specialties, this pancake house is certain to become the "premier" breakfast destination for San Diego's residents, employees and the tourist community! Open 6:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. 7 days a week, and if you are unable to stay and enjoy the atmosphere, take Richard Walker's with you as we prepare orders to go.

Funky Garcia's

Where Dreams Become Reality...after a few drinks! Stop by Funky Garcias (located at 421 Market Str) for these great weekday promotions. MONDAY INDUSTRY NIGHT-\$4 shots of Patron Silver, Don Julio Blanco, Jack Daniels and other fine spirits from 7pm-Close. TACO TUESDAY- \$2 Tecate and Tecate Light, \$4 Smirnoff and Cuervo Tradicional. HAPPY WEDNESDAY-1/2 price all drinks and appetizers ALL DAY! THURSDAY 80's NIGHT- \$3 Tecate and Tecate Lights, \$2 12oz Bud Light drafts. Incredible Mexican brunch 10am to 2pm \$1 Mimosas \$3 tecate and tecate lights, \$5 incredible bloody maries. For additional information, please see www.funkygarcias.com.

Tabule Restaurant + Bar

Tabule is a cozy hidden gem. Tucked away on 4th Avenue between Market Street and Island Avenue is Tabule Restaurant + Wine Bar. Tabule's menu spans a wide variety of international cuisines including Italian, Thai, Middle Eastern, ceviches, sushi, seafood dishes and steaks. Tabule has also been voted as one of the "Top10 Restaurants in the Gaslamp Quarter" as well as "Most Romantic". In addition to their unique dishes, Tabule hosts a daily "Power Hour" from 5pm-6pm Monday through Friday. All drinks and appetizers are HALF PRICE and this includes their signature Pomegranate Martini. On Tuesday guests can enjoy and ALL NIGHT HAPPY HOUR from 5pm to close and another extended Happy Hour from 3pm-6pm on Saturdays and Sundays.

Salazar's Taco Shop

Salazar's Taco Shop Began as a dream in 1945 and turned into a reality in 1972. The owner and founder, Frank Salazar, began working at the age of 14 in the kitchen of the La Fonda Hotel in Santa Fe under the supervision of a German chef named Konrad. Today the "taste of home" quality of the food is enjoyed by many long-time customers and some of our new neighbors who are becoming our new regulars. The fine food at Salazar's can be enjoyed seven days a week, 6:30 am until 9 p.m. Breakfast, lunch and dinner as well as food to go are served all day. Bulk food orders with advance notice are available. The margaritas are real and the bottled beer is cold. The best thing I've ever been told by a customer is that "there's a genuine-ness about this place."

The Local

The Local is your spot for good eats and cheap drinks. Known for our lobster tacos, homemade 'Diegan' style foods, good selection of local beers, stiff drinks, special events, and the "Drink Local" shirt! The Local eatery and drinking hole, 1065 4th Ave, DOWNTOWN San Diego 619-231-4447. Check out our menu, specials, and events on our website: www.thelocalsandiego.com

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Downtown • “CityFront Terrace”

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For full details in a recorded message,
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You'll feel like you're on top of the world at this 33rd floor, northwest corner luxury residence complete with dual terraces, dual parking, gleaming hardwood and stone finishes & never-ending water views!
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Downtown • “The Mark”

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Downtown • “Renaissance”

Boasting one of the best water views in the Marina District, this 20th-floor penthouse-level residence features over 2,000 square feet! Original owner recreated the interior by creating an open living space and a gourmet kitchen to die for! Four balconies and dual side-by-side parking, too!
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Downtown • “Renaissance”

You'll want to see this premium, West-facing, highly-upgraded residence in one of the Marina District's most desirable luxury high-rise communities! Gleaming hardwood and stone flooring, unique cable lighting, Venetian plaster & remote-controlled motorized drapes are just the beginning!
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Downtown • “Park Place”

You'll want to see this wonderful residence with lovely Southwest views, dual balconies, expansive stone flooring and an ambient 2-sided fireplace in one of the Marina District's most sought-after communities! May convey furnished!
For full details in a recorded message,
call 1-800-709-1995, Ext. 5339

Downtown • “The Grande”

Featuring an upgraded and pristine interior, this lovely residence enjoys gleaming cherry hardwood floors, a bay view terrace, a black granite kitchen with glass tile back-splash and stainless appliances, dual secured parking spaces, and may convey “furnished” with a strong offer! Stunning!
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Downtown • “Harbor Club”

You'll want to make this lovely residence your home or home-away-from-home! Featuring stunning views to the South and East, it enjoys an oversize view terrace and two terrific parking spaces near the entrance. This resort-style community is located in the heart of the Marina District.
For full details in a recorded message,
call 1-800-709-1995, Ext. 5109

Downtown • “Harbor Club”

You'll love this perfect pied a terre in the Marina District's premier, resort-style, luxury high-rise community! The residence boasts panoramic southeast corner views to the Coronado Bridge, Bay, and Petco Park, an elegant granite kitchen & an oversize view terrace. Enjoy!
For details in a recorded message,
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Downtown • “Park Row”

The ideal first-time buyer property, this lower level one-bedroom in one of the Marina District's original communities includes a private patio with storage and secured parking. The community includes security guard, pool, spa, and meeting room PLUS lots of guest parking for a lower-than-average HOA fee! Bargain-priced!
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Downtown • “Pinnacle”

Enjoy panoramic, 26th-floor city and Coronado Bay Bridge views from this picture-perfect, two-bedroom residence in one of the Marina District's most popular, luxury, residential high-rise communities! Walk to a multitude of restaurants and entertainment venues from this beautifully located development!
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Downtown • “La Vita Short Sale”

Take advantage of this super opportunity to own a pristine starter property in Little Italy's premier residential community with superb north-facing views over the scenic courtyard! Walk to everything the village offers from this ideally-located property!
For full details in a recorded message,
call 1-800-709-1995, ext. 5089

Downtown • “Acqua Vista Short Sale”

Hurry hurry to take advantage of this great SHORT-SALE opportunity in super convenient Little Italy locale! Priced to sell, this one-bedroom includes a private terrace and granite kitchen! The community boasts a pool, spa, fitness center, and security!
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Downtown • “CityFront Terrace”

Explore the opportunities available at Downtown's only brick residential community and take advantage of this below-market, SHORT-SALE opportunity! The iconic Old Soap Factory is the cornerstone of the building and adds an historic element.
For full details in a recorded message,
call 1-800-709-1995, Ext. 5489

Downtown • “Meridian”

The ideal second home or primary residence, this east-facing residence is in wonderful condition and boasts wonderful night-time views of the city lights and urban surroundings! Meridian is Downtown San Diego's own “Trump Tower,” complete with service and amenities beyond compare!
For full details in a recorded message,
call 1-800-709-1995, Ext. 5259

Downtown • “Harbor Club”

Enjoy over 2,500 square feet of luxury and expansive views to the West, South, and East from this elegant residence! The warm and inviting interior boasts gleaming marble flooring, walls of windows taking in the views, three bedrooms, three walk-in closets, and three bathrooms. A bonus is the three secured parking spaces! Truly a resort environment in the heart of the coveted Marina District!
For full details in a recorded message,
call 1-800-709-1995, Ext. 5219

Downtown • “Alta”

Listed a year ago at approximately \$200,000 more, this super SHORT SALE is a rare opportunity to enjoy a prime, 14th floor, northwest corner beauty in one of Downtown's most exciting, newer communities, complete with stunning views, an oversize terrace, gleaming hardwood floors, & top-quality finishes and upgrades throughout! Take advantage!
For full details in a recorded message,
call 1-800-709-1995, Ext. 5309

Downtown • “ParkLoft Short Sale”

Almost 1,700 square feet of classic “loft” design are in evidence, including high ceilings, cement walls and ceilings, exposed ductwork, & custom lighting. A room-size, organized walk-in closet is a dream! Take advantage of this super, below-market opportunity!
For full details in a recorded message,
call 1-800-709-1995, Ext. 5349

Downtown • “Park Terrace”

APPROVED SHORT SALE, this almost new, 5th floor one-bedroom looks out to the stands at Petco Park, which is right across the street! The residence includes a private terrace, secured parking, and a granite and stainless kitchen. FHA approved complex!
For full details in a recorded message,
call 1-800-709-1995, Ext. 5389

Downtown • “Electra”

Amazingly priced under \$400,000, this street-level row home in the original historical facade of the SDG&E Station B features street access as well as interior hallway access, rich hardwood floors, dual, separated master suites, and a granite and stainless kitchen!
For full details in a recorded message,
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Downtown • “Icon”

The ideal Downtown starter property and NOT a short sale or REO, this pristine one-bedroom residence in East Village's “hippest” residential community enjoys hardwood floors, a private terrace, secured parking, and a gleaming granite and stainless-steel kitchen!
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SAN DIEGO DOWNTOWN NEWS

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B3-6

FASHION FORWARD
SAN DIEGO'S FASHION FORECAST FOR 2010

SHOT by NORTON

APRIL 2010 | VOL. 11, No. 4



‘It’s definitely about creation’

Michael Lee, right, lounges with models during last year’s San Diego Bikini Week, which he created. Lee is also organizing this year’s Bikini Week on June 30 to July 4, the second annual summer event promoting local lines, models and parties.

COURTESY PHOTO

Hair-fashion-lifestyle fusion: It’s all part of the process for A Style Concierge owners

By MEAGHAN CLARK | DOWNTOWN NEWS

Stuffed to the brim with eye candy — from local designs by Fables by Barrie and Doosh Bags to stylists with deep red locks patterned in tattoos — A Style Concierge’s F Street boutique is the Mecca for local, retrofitted riffraff.

With mellow rock screaming through the speakers and an array of hooded miscreants meandering up and down the city block, the small venue is fitted floor to ceiling with everything from shop publicity to jewelry, clothing, swivel chairs, scissors and mirrors.

Hailed as “movers and shakers” of San Diego fashion, Michael Lee and Jeremy Harris of A Style Concierge don’t just limit themselves to hair. Creating their hair-fashion-lifestyle fusion in late 2007, the two trained stylists and lifestyle experts began promoting the brand immediately.

“When the business launched, we carried a small array of men’s and women’s clothing

which were buyouts from boutiques that were closing up shop ... we saw quickly that our customers appreciated shopping while waiting for the hair service to be finishing,” Lee said. “The trend was catching on, but A Style Concierge (ASC) was doing more than hair and clothes, we were also doing plenty of fashion events like photo shoots, fashion shows, designer showcases, charity events and much, much more.”

Offering everything from routine hair salon services to men’s and women’s fashions, a special pre-style package (from makeup to beverage services and VIP escorts with entry into a club) and production events, it’s turned into a haven for the San Diego elite. Don’t be confused by the stained-street entrance.

It’s runway to remodel, revisions to remakes for Lee, moving from project to project in the next year. Next on the menu isn’t just ASC’s boutique move to Fifth Street along with the boutique expansion, but a professional “Ensemble” that leads monthly downtown events incor-



Jeremy Harris, a partner in A Style Concierge, prepares a model’s hair during an event at The Merk Bistro.

Photo by JAMES NORTON

porating both the arts and entertainment.

“We want to create a high-value event for those that are looking for more to do and see away from the clubs and bars,” Lee said, explaining about his new program “Ensemble.”

“We want to encourage students, business owners and artists to come and see what San Diego can offer,” he added. “We are hopeful that

SEE **STYLE**, Page B7



Minnesota-based magician Nick Sharpe said he looks forward to the annual Spring Busker Festival at Seaport Village.

COURTESY PHOTO

The ‘wow’ factor Spring Busker Festival arrives at Seaport Village

By BART MENDOZA | DOWNTOWN NEWS

While in the U.S. the word “busking” conjures up visions of a guitarist playing on a street corner, playing endless cover versions for spare change, in much of the rest of the world busking is considered a cherished art form in which street performers wow the imagination. Slowly, the perception of buskers is shifting, thanks in no small part to events like the Spring Busker Festival taking place at Seaport Village on April 10 and April 11 from noon to 5 p.m.

Now in its fourth year, the reason for the festival’s success is obvious to Seaport Village general manager Terry Hall.

“It’s a really fun weekend for both locals and tourists,” she said.

With numerous cobblestone paths among the shops, there is free entertainment at just about every turn.

“We get an amazing mix of people for what has become our signature event,” Hall said. “The combining of an outdoor art form with our location on the water is a perfect match.”

Although the most visible form of busking is still the omnipresent guy or gal with a guitar, the Spring Busker Festival avoids that sort of entertainment completely.

SEE **BUSKER**, Page B9

PERFORMING ARTS

‘Alive and Well’ provides a Civil War battleground (of the sexes)

By CHARLENE BALDRIDGE | DOWNTOWN NEWS

Kenny Finkle’s “Alive and Well,” playing at the Old Globe through April 25, is a formulaic romantic comedy that strives unsuccessfully to deliver a meaningful message about our divided country. It’s as if someone along the road to its co-world production (Virginia Stage

Company and The Old Globe) decided such a message, tacked on at the 11th hour, would make the piece relevant beyond its obvious entertainment quotient.

The situation is fun. The actors are attractive and loaded with opposites-attract chemistry. The writing is glib and funny in a Yankee meets yokel way.

Big city writer Carla Keenan is on assignment in Virginia. Her guide is Civil War re-enactor Zachariah Clemenson, clad in rebel mufti. Fetchingly, she wears a Union army uniform as the two set out on her objective: to find the “ghost of the lonesome soldier” that’s been seen around these parts, and write a story about him.

Zachariah, for whom the Civil War never ended, explains the sightings thus: “The people of this region have invented their own Sasquatch.”

He insists that Carla can never write her story properly unless they walk 100 miles to Appomattox, where Gen. Robert E. Lee surrendered. Carla insists she’d rather rent a car and sleep in hotels with

Internet connections and free breakfasts. Zachariah will have none of it: she must walk in the shoes of a soldier, eat hard-tack and drink moonshine.

She is tough; he is tender though implacable, and soldier she does, hard-tack and moonshine too. The inevitable

SEE **ALIVE**, Page B13

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Alexander Salazar at the Alexander Salazar Fine Art Grand Opening.



Phoebe Chongchua, Michael Bayless, and Liz Saracho at the Alexander Salazar Fine Art Grand Opening.

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FASHION FORWARD

SAN DIEGO'S FASHION FORECAST FOR 2010



Kelsey

Alexa

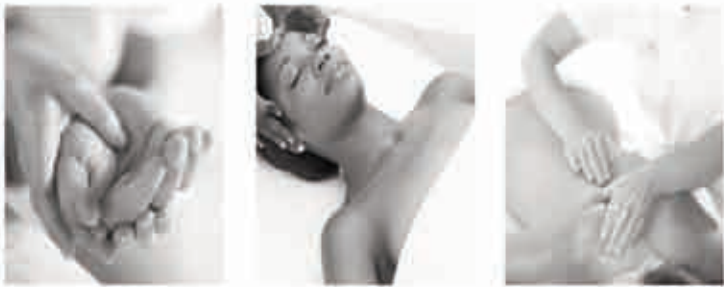
▲ Kelsey wears leggings from Haven, Necklace from Micha Designs
Alexa wears dress from Haven, Necklaces from Pretty Is

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Playsuits by Jennafer Grace.
Jewelry from Mona Lisa.
Shoes from Pretty Is

Kelsey wears sunglasses from
A Style Concierge Boutique
Necklace from Pretty Is

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▶ Kelsey wears leggings from Haven,
Necklace from Micha Designs
Alexa wears dress from Haven,
Necklaces from Pretty Is

▶ Skirt by Bcat Threads
Top from Mona Lisa
Bracelet from Haven Boutique



▶ Alexa wears dress from
Haven, necklaces from
Pretty Is



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Bcat Threads (bcathreads.com)

Retail Boutiques:
Haven Boutique at 751 5th Ave.
"Pretty Is" Boutique at 418 3rd Ave.
Mona Lisa Boutique at 509 Park Blvd.
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Photography Assistants:
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Models:
Alexa Parashos and Kelsey Stuart

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downtown by A Style Concierge Salon
uptown by Disconnected Salon

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Pure Fitness at 501 West Broadway



Michael Lee and Che Gonzalez at one of their Super Bowl weekend events. A Style Concierge provided makeovers to all guests who attended. Photo by JAMES NORTON

STYLE

CONTINUED FROM Page B1

new artists and creative minds can see business opportunities in their home town rather than having to move to Los Angeles or New York."

As if his day isn't already brimming, Lee has put together this year's Bikini Week — the second annual summer event promoting local lines, models and parties — and styling, promoting the company's clients.

"There's never a dull day in my world," Lee said.

It might be surprising that this 40-year-old former cable guy can handle this style overload, but Lee takes it in stride — finally passionate about his career.

Now sober, he said, after he became "desperate for a quality life," Lee found his way to cosmetology school, finishing with the California Hair Design

Academy in La Mesa.

Now, with his business exploding, he deems himself a "treasure hunter, because I want to discover things, ideas, concepts that have never tried or [been] done before."

After just two years, Lee Harris, have taken on more than most can chew, and yet they succeed.

"My life is no longer about accumulation — it's definitely about creation," Lee said.

The Lingerie Lounge: a feminine boutique

By DIANA CAVAGNARO | DOWNTOWN NEWS

The Lingerie Lounge opened in the Gaslamp Quarter last month and is celebrating its grand opening.

Alicia O'Sullivan is the local owner and has a sister store in Mammoth Lake that is run by her mother, Marlene Rheault. The merchandise includes lingerie, swimwear, beach cover-ups and little dresses.

Alicia said that the décor of this intimate space is shabby chic. This feminine boutique is filled with chandeliers and crystals along with some aspects of vintage. She said that she wanted to keep that vintage look because the building was built in 1889. At different times it was a brothel, an orphanage and a hospital.

Alicia said that the most popular items are bridal lingerie and gift items for bridal showers. She said that the trend right now is the pin-up girl looks with polka dots and waist cinchers. Purples and eggplant colors are very popular, but black lingerie is always the bomb for her customers. Another unique item is sleepwear that can be worn to the grocery store and not just the bedroom.

"I am sending lingerie off for a Playboy photo shoot for the Playmate of



Store owner Alicia O'Sullivan in The Lingerie Lounge, 431 "J" St. DIANA CAVAGNARO | Downtown News

the Year," Alicia said. "This is the biggest issue next to the holiday issue. If they use my lingerie for the cover, it will be a tremendous boost and great exposure for my business."

Stay tuned to find out the results! "The lingerie business is hugely-competitive and Victoria's Secret is

my biggest competition," she said. "They are too commercial for my taste so I sell new brands to my customers that have good quality and lower price points."

The Lingerie Lounge is located at 431 "J" St., or you can shop online at www.shoplingeriellounge.com.

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Fashion Files

Diana Cavagnaro

Fashion Soirée

Pure Fitness was the venue for Fashion Soirée, a cool mixer on March 25. The guests surrounded the pool on the Sky Deck overlooking the beautiful downtown San Diego skyline. Hors d'oeuvres were served by the Gaslamp restaurant de'Medici and the South Park restaurant Alchemy. San Tropez served yummy desserts.

The fashion show began at dusk and continued into the evening. Models strutted their stuff on the catwalk adjacent to the pool. The first local designer was Sylvia Giamanco who showed off her hot VAI Fitness line that is the select attire for the gym. The Little Italy boutique Kapreeza delighted the crowd with its sexy European lingerie and swimwear. The finale was the knockout designs by Francisco Medavog who showcased his "Space Invaders" line.

Michael London founded Pure Fitness in 1992. He is a former San Diego Charger and prominent local attorney. Currently, Michael and his wife Anna run four health spas; and Pure Fitness located downtown at 501 W. Broadway.

Spring 2010 Designer Preview

Nordstrom presented the spring 2010 Designer Preview at the New Children's Museum on Feb. 24. This sold-out event is a highly-anticipated show every year, featuring an on-site designer boutique previewing spring designs by American and European designers. There was a frenzy of happy shoppers during the cocktail reception. Waters Catering provided hors d'oeuvres and dessert. Violinist Ysanne Spevack and DJ Myson King set the mood with their delightful music.

This year the runway was set up as a maze and the audience members were



Shimmering blue eveningwear from the spring 2010 Designer Preview.

DIANA CAVAGNARO | Downtown News

seated in four sections facing different directions. The models came out unexpectedly, keeping everyone guessing. The runway previewed collections from Missoni, Donna Karan, Versace, Dries Van Noten, Jason Wu, Dolce & Gabbana, Michael Kors, Marni, Emilio Pucci, Lanvin and Oscar de la Renta.

Models had eyelashes painted on their eyes reminiscent of the 1960s. Some of the trends were strapless and one-shoulder dresses, multi floral prints, transparent fabrics and all shades of the color blue. Marni created a new trend wearing the sockette with designer heels or flats. One of my favorite parts of the show was watching the designer shoes as the models come out wearing Jimmy Choo, Manolo Blahnik and Yves Saint Laurent footwear.

This show raised more than \$65,000 for The New Children's Museum which opened its doors in 2008.

Runway at the Park

Runway at the Park was a high-energy fashion show at the Park Manor Suites Hotel on March 13. The catwalk was set up with a long runway that had parallel seating on both sides. Featured designers were Gordana (GOGA) Gehlhausen, Betsy Johnson and Tracey Jean. GOGA was recently one of the top four contestants on Project Runway 6. Betsy Johnson is world-renowned for her designs and Tracey Jean is a new emerging designer on the scene. A Style Concierge designed the cutting edge make-up and hair, transforming the models into tres chic models.

Additional participants were Cecilia Boutique, a Mission Hills Boutique, and custom swimwear from ABBL and accessories from La Chica Chic. Gretchen Productions produced this high-fashion event.

A Splash of Fashion

Soroptimist International of San Diego presented "A Splash of Fashion" at the Hilton San Diego Bayfront on March 20. This 38th annual event combined a shopping boutique, a "One Plate Concept" luncheon and a colorful fashion show all around the theme of water.

Rory Devine was emcee for the afternoon and presented the the Soroptimist Ruby Award's: For Women Helping

Women. These inspirational honorees were: Dilkhaz Ahmed, executive director for License to Freedom; Teri Burg, executive director of Stand Up for Kids; Margaret Eilerman, supervisor for a residence for single pregnant women; Susie Faber, Stylish Noggins for hair loss; and Cyndi Jones, of Mainstream, a magazine that is the voice for people with disabilities.

Macy's provided fashions for this fun show. Gretchen Productions choreographed the runway with an entertaining afternoon that gave the audience a splash of fashion, singing and dancing.

Soroptimist International of San Diego has been making a difference in women and girls' lives since 1931 in San Diego, making it the oldest service club for women here.

Upcoming events

April 9 — Vista Hill Foundation's annual boutique, luncheon and fashion show Viva La Moda at the Manchester Grand Hyatt. A fashion show featuring styles from a variety of upscale San Diego boutiques. For information contact: Vista Hill Foundation, (858) 514-5153

April 11 — Thread Show (curated indie design and fashion) at Horton Event Space, Fourth and Broadway, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. For more information visit www.threadshow.com

April 22 — San Diego Air & Space Museum and Leonard Simpson present Fashion Takes Flight at the San Diego Air & Space Museum in Balboa Park. For information call (619) 234-8291

Diana Cavagnaro is a nationally-recognized hat designer and milliner. She has operated a fashion business for 28 years, the last 18 years in the downtown Gaslamp Quarter. Diana has taught in the Fashion Department at San Diego Mesa College for 18 years. She is an active member of the Gaslamp Quarter Association, The American Sewing Guild, the San Diego Costume Council and Fashion Group International. www.aheadproductions.com



A stunning attention-getter from Francisco Medavog at Fashion Soirée.

DIANA CAVAGNARO | Downtown News



A vivid print dress showcased at the Soroptimist's A Splash of Fashion show.

DIANA CAVAGNARO | Downtown News



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Music is focus of musician-friendly Stage Saloon

By **BART MENDOZA** | DOWNTOWN NEWS

While downtown San Diego is virtually awash in entertainment opportunities, pickings were once slim for fans of local rock, hip-hop, Americana or singer-songwriters. Local jazz aficionados had Croce's and Dizzy's, but until the 300-person capacity Stage Saloon opened its doors in April 2008, other genres were relegated to weekly showcase nights or specialty shows, with DJs and cover bands making up the bulk of the music heard.

For Stage owner Eric Alexander, who is also part owner of the Gaslamp Tavern, local, original music was always in the plan. Alexander is frontman for one of the area's best-known cover bands, The Disco Pimps, who he performs with at the club every Saturday night.

"Because I'm a 'lifer' musician myself, I wanted to have a place where the music

was the focus," Alexander said. "In so many places, the band just sets up in the corner and everything where the entertainment is concerned seems like an after thought. I wanted a venue that looks and sounds good — with great sightlines — which also understands and respects performers."

Perks for musicians include a green room and full backline of drums and amplifiers.

Alexander said that he welcomes all types of music. Indeed, the venue has hosted events as varied as CD release parties for hip-hop's Bloodstone and the Princess or Black Cherry Music Groups singer-songwriter competitions.

"I've noticed that it's bands that get the best reaction, no matter what the style of music is that they play," Alexander said.

Promoter Chris Leyva of The Black Cherry Recording Group has staged many events at the Stage Saloon.

THE STAGE SALOON

WHERE: 762 Fifth Ave.

INFORMATION: www.stagesaloon.com

"There's lots of things to like before you even get into the venue," he said. "Being right in the heart of Fifth Avenue, with all that walk-by traffic, hustle and commotion can be exciting. Add in the size of the venue, which is ideal for up and coming bands and you've got a place that should be on the radar of every local music fan in town."

For promoter Cathryn Beeks, it's the visibility of the performers that's most appealing.

"The room is cool and the sound and lights are really great, but what makes a difference is that the (raised) stage is visible from the street," Beeks said. "It's clear the place is owned by a musician who tries to

make the place musician-friendly."

Guitarist Anna Troy, who has performed at the club several times, concurs.

"You can really tell a lot of thought went into the musicians' side of things," she said. "The idea of having to maneuver a full drum set or heavy amps through downtown crowds is kind of scary anyway you look at it, so something like them providing a backline is huge. It makes things so much easier for the performers, in the basic logistics, and it's good for the public as well, because it all but eliminates between-band downtime."

The Stage Saloon has recently expanded beyond a basic mix of drinks, snacks and music, adding dinner to its menu, with Italian entrees available beginning at 5 p.m. Mood-setting gangster movies accompany the dining experience.

While Alexander is best known for his role in the Disco Pimps and joined forces



The stage offers musicians a green room and full backline of drums and amplifiers.
PAUL HANSEN | Downtown News

with a Van Halen tribute band, he said he looks forward to eventually playing some of his own music at the Stage and beyond.

"The opening of a place like this has always been a dream for me and now it's time," he said. "Now that I've got my arms around the business end, my New Year's resolution was to get back into that kind of stuff," he said

BUSKER

CONTINUED FROM **Page B1**

"We're looking for the extraordinary, the unusual, acts that are going to have jaws dropping at the end," Hall said.

This year, 10 performers from around the world will compete for \$500 in air-line travel.

"We do require that there be no profanity and that the performance be very family-oriented, but we also want to go beyond the expected music-type acts," she said. "This is more about stunts and magic, things with a 'wow' factor."

There are slight exceptions to that rule.

"For music fans, we do have a unicyclist who plays the fiddle as part of his act," Hall joked.

Los Angeles duo Alex Clark and Dave Kaplan comprise Project Dynamite, a comedy stunt show featuring everything from acrobatics to fire juggling, which won the Spring Busker Festival competition two years ago. Touring the world on a year-round basis, Clark considers that his career choice is "not tough on me, but with all the travel and being away from home, it is on family and loved ones," he said.

However, Clark said, travel is one of the things that makes busking appealing.

"It's great moving from place to place and meeting new people, exposing your art to different audiences," he said. "There's no better feeling than building a crowd out of nothing and having what you do bring people together that otherwise might not even talk to each other, in a shared moment."

Minnesota-based Nick Sharpe, a sleight-of-hand magician, has included San Diego on his busking travels around the world since 1986. He notes the brisk pace of a busker's life.

"I'm on the road at least seven months a year, playing everything from corporate gigs to European festivals and in between. But even with three to five shows a day, it's still a lot of fun," he said.

He concurs with Clark that travel is one of busking's attractions.

"It's wonderful, but I have to say the number one reason for me is the freedom to do things on my schedule and the ability to be creative in what I do," Sharpe said.

Both Clark and Sharpe are effusive in their praise for the Spring Busker Festival, whether they win or not.

"It's really the biggest deal out of any of the events we play in the United States and definitely the only one as organized as this," Sharpe said.

While Seaport Village has no immediate plans to expand the festival, Hall notes that with the increasing popularity of the event, a second weekend might make sense in the future.

"We're getting so many requests to perform here each year and it seems to keep building, each festival gets a little bigger as the word spreads on what a fun event it is," she said. "I can see it growing for years."

In addition to the regular Spring Busker Festival, for the second year in a row, there will be a separate component to the event, with Buskers after Dark, taking place on April 10 from 7 to 10 p.m. While the daytime events are family-friendly, the night time performances are recommended for those 18 and up, due to edgier humor and language.

"It's a chance for the performers to let their hair down a little," Hall said.

The Spring Busker Festival takes place on April 10 to 11 at Seaport Village, 849 W. Harbor Drive. The event is free and runs from noon to 5 p.m. both days. For more information, visit www.seaportvillagebuskerfestival.com

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NETWORKING NEWS

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Downtown Breakfast Speaker Series launches on April 22 at the Hall of Champions. Join us as we discuss the Business of Sports, San Diego Sports and the Impact on the local economy with guests panelists - Jeff Moorad, Owner of the San Diego Padres, Mark Fabiani, General Counsel of the San Diego Chargers, and George Chamberlin - Executive Director of the San Diego Daily Transcript. TICKETS ON SALE NOW AND GOING FAST!! More event information can be found at WWW.6DEGREESBUSINESS.COM



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8:00 to 9:00pm—Group Choreographies

Tuesday

7:00 to 8:00pm—Level 2
8:00 to 9:00pm—Level 3

Wednesday

3:00 to 4:00pm—Children's Tango
7:15 to 8:15pm—Level 1
8:15 to 9:15pm—Practica

Thursday

7:00 to 8:00pm—Level 2
8:00 to 9:00pm—Level 3

Friday

8:00 to 9:00pm— "Nuevo" Fundamentals
9:00 to 10:00pm—Nuevolonga

The Group Choreographies class prepares students for Tango "Stage" performances.

The Practica class allows students of all levels to practice under guidance social Tango dancing.

The Tango Inspired class is a mix or fusion of dance moves, inspired on Tango, known as "Nuevo" or "Alternative" Tango. It is one of the most popular classes on the schedule.

2010 SUMMER LEARN TO ROW CAMPS AT SAN DIEGO ROWING CLUB

The SDRC Summer Learn to Row programs will be led this year by Coach Zach Johnson, Head Coach, UCSD Men's Varsity Crew. Coach Zach has rowed competitively since the age of nine and has

medaled nine times at National Championships. He has led the UCSD Crew to a silver medal at the 2006 ECAC National Championship and gold medals in the Men's Varsity 8 at the 2007 and 2009 San Diego Crew Classic. This summer, SDRC offers four two-week sessions, 9 am – 11:30 am Monday through Friday for boys and girls

ages 11 – 18, and at least 5' in height. All sessions are held at the beautiful SDRC Boathouse located at 1220 El Carmel Place in Mission Beach. The fee is \$300 per camper, per session.

For more information, please contact the boathouse at sandiegorc@sbcglobal.net or call (858) 488-1893.

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MBAC Camp is now "The Watersports Camp"

The exciting and popular day-camp at the Mission Bay Aquatic Center has changed its name and logo and is now known simply as "The Watersports Camp." While the name has changed, the camp will continue to offer the same great services and camps for all levels in wakeboarding, waterskiing, surfing, sailing, kayaking, windsurfing, and marine science. In addition, the camp will offer a few new options this year, which include a full day small boat racing camp, and a half-day multi-sport camp. The camp has been in operation for over 30 years and is offered by Associated Students of SDSU, UCSD recreation and the Peninsula Family YMCA. The camp offers both spring break and

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SEE CAMPS, Page 12

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CAMPS

CONTINUED FROM Page 11

Save It Forward at SuperCamp

You've probably heard the term "pay it forward." When you enroll your middle school or high school student in SuperCamp this summer you can "Save it Forward."

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At the Old Globe

Through April 18 in the Old Globe Theatre: Marc Camoletti and Beverley Cross' London/Broadway hit, "Boeing-Boeing" is a farce that concerns an architect who juggles three flight attendant "fiancées," that is, until turbulence hits.

Through April 26 in the Globe's new Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre: Another comedy, Kenny Finkle's "Alive & Well," which concerns an ill-suited couple searching for the oldest living Civil War veteran.

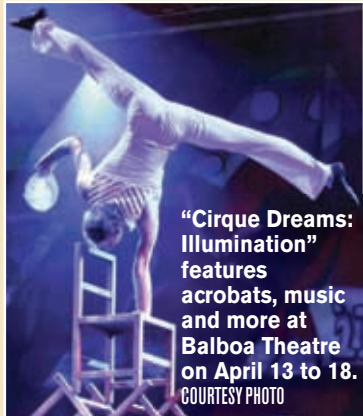
Tickets: www.theoldglobe.com or (619) 23-GLOBE.

At the Lyceum Theatre

Through April 11, from the San Diego Repertory Theatre: Todd Salovey directs a workshop production of "A Weekend with Pablo Picasso," written by and starring Herbert Siguenza of "Culture Clash." Siguenza sings, clowns, paints, sculpts and impersonates a matador, a Minotaur and a satyr.

At the Civic Theatre

"La Traviata," Giuseppe Verdi's great romance based on "La Dame aux Camelias" closes San Diego Opera's 2010 season April 17, 20, 23, and 25 (matinee). Celebrated soprano Eliza-



"Cirque Dreams: Illumination" features acrobats, music and more at Balboa Theatre on April 13 to 18. COURTESY PHOTO

beth Futral sings Violetta. For information and tickets: www.sdopera.com or (619) 533-7000

At Copley Symphony Hall

On April 9 and 10 at 8 p.m. each night, Marvin Hamlish will conduct a San Diego Symphony Winter Pops program titled "Marvin's Manhattan with New York Voices," featuring New York Voices, a vocal jazz quartet that takes listeners on a musical tour of Manhattan.

April 22, 24, 29 and 30 conductor Jahja Ling and the San Diego Symphony present four special concerts composing a Jacobs' Masterworks Beethoven Festival that encompasses symphonies, piano concertos and overtures and features pianist Yefim Bronfman.

For schedules and tickets, go to www.sandiegosymphony.org or phone (619) 235-0804

At the Balboa Theatre

April 13-18, Broadway San Diego presents "Cirque Dreams: Illumination," an imaginative entertainment with acrobats, music and more, set amid towering buildings and infinite possibilities. Balboa Theatre, 868 Fourth Avenue at E Street, www.sandiegoteatres.org or (619) 570-1100.



Kelly McAndrew as Clara and James Knight as Zachariah in Kenny Finkle's "Alive and Well," playing at the Old Globe. Photo by CRAIG SCHWARTZ

ALIVE

CONTINUED FROM Page B1

happens: sexual if not intellectual attraction grows while Zachariah guides Clara, unharmed, out the other side of her challenges, which include his broken compass and a violent storm.

Kelly McAndrew and James Knight are delightful as the ill-suited couple. They seem to relish performing this mindless fluff; their improbable pairing is like the Beverly Hillbilly meets college-educated, smartass Vanity Fair writer. As she declares at the outset, Carla is never wrong and never apologizes. Zachariah is equally stubborn. It's a perfect setup for a war and a throwback to once-popular battle of the sexes film and television.

It's as if Finkle purposefully wrote a play that would appeal to theatergoers of a certain age, who will have an enjoyable evening despite their better judgment.

New York director Jeremy Dobrish zestfully stages "Alive and Well" with fine period feel. Robin Roberts' set is facile and Shelly Williams' costumes are appropriately stressed and sweat-stained. Michael Gottlieb is lighting designer and Paul Peterson is responsible for sound.

"Alive and Well" continues at 7 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays; 8 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays; 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays; and 7 p.m. Sundays through April 25 in the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, Old Globe, Balboa Park, \$29-\$62, www.theoldglobe.org or (619) 23-GLOBE.

PETS IN THE CITY

Pet Day on the Bay Cruise

On Saturday, May 15, Hornblower Cruises & Events will present the 10th annual Pet Day on the Bay's Ten and a Towel to benefit the Helen Woodward Animal Center. The Ten and a Towel to Cruise theme is new on the 10th anniversary of Pet Day on the Bay. The event is no longer free. Tickets for the cruises are now \$10 with any donation of a gently used towel or blanket for the orphaned pets at Helen Woodward. Dogs still cruise free on May 15 only. Three one-hour bay cruises will be available at 10:30 a.m., noon and 1:30 p.m. for donors and dogs on Hornblower Cruises & Events.

For more info, call (619) 686-8700, or visit www.hornblower.com/hce/port/overview/sd+petdayonbay.

Loews Coronado Bay Resort Surf Dog Competition

The 2010 "Loews Coronado Bay Resort Surf Dog Competition" takes place on Saturday, May 22 in Imperial Beach. See Spot surf during nation's original surfing competition for man's best friend. Named one of the hottest events in the world, this year's event is expected to draw more than 60 competitors and thousands of spectators from across the U.S. The competition begins at 10 a.m. ending with an awards ceremony at 2 p.m. Come out with the entire family to enjoy this action packed day!

The cost to enter the competition is \$50 for division one or two and \$55 for division three. All contestants score a goody bag and competition medal. Attendance is free.

To register or for more information, visit www.loewssurfdog.com.

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