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San Diego Community News Network







The Holiday in the Village will bring back many of the same attractions that Christmas in the Village had, such as (clockwise from top left) holiday music played by school bands, carolers, Santa Claus, and carnival rides. (Photos by Josh Mitchell ©yourfaceisrad.com)

A sort of new holiday tradition

Jeff Clemetson

Editor

he holidays are a time for traditions, and one of La Mesa's holiday traditions is returning this year — albeit with a new name and a new organization behind it.

Holiday in the Village — formerly known as Christmas in the Village — will be held on Dec. 10 from 10 a.m.–10 p.m. on La Mesa Boulevard between Spring and Fourth streets.

The event is the first to be put on by the newly formed La Mesa Village Association (LMVA) and although it has a new name, the event will still have the usual "Christmas flair," LMVA chairman Aaron Dean said.

"It's chestnuts roasting over three fireplaces down the middle of the street; it's Santa; it's carolers; it's Christmas lights," he said. "We went back and forth on changing the name numerous times, but because of the name change we were able to get some bigger sponsors this year."

With the help of sponsors and dues paid by members of the new association, Dean said Holiday in the Village will have more to offer than past events. There will be two stages for all-day music and entertainment, jumpies, face painting, rides and booths for holiday shopping.

"It's not just one kid ride, we almost have a full little amusement park this year," Dean said. "We'll

See **HOLIDAY** page 3 —

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Gifting the power of words

Joyell **Nevins**

a Mesa Rotary understands the power of words and the power of reading. And they want to make sure La Mesa and now Lemon Grove third graders understand that power too.

That's why every third grader in the La Mesa, Spring Valley and Lemon Grove district received their own Webster's New English Dictionary this month – approximately 1,750 kids. The dictionaries were purchased by the Rotary through the SoCal Dictionary Project (socaldp.org) and are 320 pages long, so they fit easily in a backpack.

Why a book dictionary when schools have online access?

See **DICTIONARIES** page 9 —

Lake Murray fireworks

Group works to revive July 4 celebration

Doug Curlee

Editor at Large

There is a move afoot in the Lake Murray area to relight the day-long Fourth of July music festival and fireworks display that went away five years ago as a result of a lawsuit by environmental lawyers.

The Coastkeepers' legal actions forced the cancellation of the annual party because of possible contamination of the water in the lake, which is a major reservoir for the city of San Diego.

As often happens with such

lawsuits, a settlement was agreed to that basically set up a new mechanism for handling environmental impact reports before permits are granted for such displays. Prior to the settlement, EIR's were not required.

Tracy Dahlkamp is the chair of the fireworks committee working to get the festival back on track.

"We love that this is another opportunity to bring our community together," she said. "We've heard over and over again how much this event has been missed."

Committee co-chair Jay Wilson

See **FIREWORKS** page 14 —



Fourth of July concerts like this one from 2010 may soon return to Lake Murray. (Photo by Don Brennan)





Anza-Borrego Foundation turns 50

Margie M. Palmer

The Anza-Borrego Foundation (ABF), the official nonprofit partner of the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, is about to turn 50 — and it is inviting hikers, campers and nature enthusiasts of all stripes to help celebrate.

The Foundation was formed on April 1, 1967 at the request of the California State Parks Commission; in addition to raising funds help provide financial support for Park programs, the ABF continues to work on land acquisition and conservation to "make the park whole."

ABF Executive Director Paige Rogowski notes that when the foundation was first commissioned, the park looked like Swiss cheese.

"The outer boundary of the park was created but there were a lot of privately owned parcels in the park. We've been acquiring those parcels over the years, and we've expanded the park out a little, but we still have about 10,000 acres of Swiss cheese inholding," she said. "We'll continue to work on that with willing sellers and we will certainly wait until the time is right for the owners to be ready to sell their properties over to the Foundation."

In addition to working on land acquisition, in the years

to come, the Foundation plans to expand parkland educational programs, increase staff and encourage positive, low impact-recreation for the visiting public.

"We will continue to fund projects with interpretative panels and staffing because the more that visitors can get questions answered about how they can enjoy the park without being destructive, the better the park will be in the end," she said.

Golden anniversary, golden opportunities for guests

As part of the golden anniversary celebration, the Foundation will be offering five weekends of free access to the three-mile Borrego Palm Canyon hiking trail. Free dates include Dec. 17–18, Jan. 21–22, Feb. 11–12, March 25–26.

"When we sat down to decide how we wanted to celebrate the 50th anniversary, we decided we wanted to give back to the people of Southern California and the people of San Diego in particular. We wanted to invite people to enjoy the park for free and to hopefully attract new audiences, and people who have not experienced the park before," Rogowski said.

The Foundation and the Park are also inviting visitors to complete two five-hike challenges on some of the best-known peaks and trails in the region.

The family-friendly trails,

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which include Borrego Palm Canyon Nature Trail, The Slot, Pictograph Trail, Calcite Mine and Mountain Palm Springs Loop can be completed independently by hikers.

When visitors finish all five hikes, they will receive a signed certificate from the park and a commemorative 50th anniversary sticker at the State Park Store.

The five-hike challenge is just the start of their 50th anniversary celebration.

"We'll have a big celebration on April 1, which will be 50 years to the day of the first meeting on April 1, 1967. We're still finalizing the details of that but we want to invite people to come celebrate that in person," she said.

Additional details will be available on the ABF website within the next two weeks.

"We are excited to look back and feel very proud of everything we've accomplished and looking forward to creating the vision of what we want [the park] to be in the next 50 years, 100 years or forever. We're proud to keep these lands open, accessible and wild."

For more information on the ABF 50th anniversary and/or the five-hike challenge, visit theabf.org.

—Margie M. Palmer is a San Diego-based freelance writer who has been racking up bylines for over a decade. Reach her at mmpst19@gmail.com.■

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The Slot is one of Anza-Borrego's most popular trails for hikers. (Courtesy of Anza-Borrego Foundation)



sdcnn.com Nov. 25 - Dec. 22, 2016 La Mesa Courier



Holiday in the Village will feature fireplaces on every block of La Mesa Boulevard between Spring and Fourth streets for roasting chestnuts. (Photo by Josh Mitchell ©yourfaceisrad.com)

Holiday, from page 1

have somewhere between 60 to 70 craft vendors — actual gift-buying locations, not solar companies, but a place for the community to come shop."

In addition to the craft vending, food trucks will complement the restaurants on La Mesa Boulevard, rather than compete with them.

"That's what a merchant association will do, rather than an outside promoter," Dean said. "I'm not going to bring in a burger truck and park outside of Johnny B's. I'm not going to bring in a Mexican taco truck right now when we have La Torta, Miguel's, Por Favor. The events and the people you bring in should be complementary and support the current businesses that are here. I'm not going to bring in someone who sells stones and incense and put them in front of Amethyst Moon. But that's what's happened in the past."



A fresh start

La Mesa Village Association formed this year to replace the now-defunct La Mesa Village Merchants Association, which ran out of money to hold events and is still in the red to the city of La Mesa for police and fire services.

With the future of downtown events up in the air, the city decided to keep them going by putting them on itself, like it did for this year's Oktoberfest.

We were thrust into having the responsibility of either letting Oktoberfest go away for a year and then try and find somebody to run and bring it back, or have the city step in and take it over and that's what we did," said City Councilmember Guy McWhirter, who headed up a special subcommittee that took charge of the traditional city events. "That's not what we want to be in the business of doing, but we want to make sure there's an organization that we feel comfortable enough with to turn it over to and keep it the same type of quality that we want to see in downtown."



La Mesa Village Association chair Aaron Dean (Photo by Jeff Clemetson)

Right now, that organization is the La Mesa Village Association, which already represents some 60 businesses in and around La Mesa Village.

"Our map is pretty expansive," Dean said. "It goes from University up to Lemon down to the corner where the Adult Enrichment Center is and wraps around Vons' shopping center. On top of it, we have an affiliation program so we have quite a few businesses joined who are in La Mesa but are outside of our map."

Businesses that join pay an annual fee of \$600 for a restaurant or bar; \$360 for a retail store; \$120 for office businesses; and \$60 for associate members. Members outside of the map area get a 35 percent discount and second businesses get a 50 percent discount.

Members benefit with access to participation in downtown events.

"I'll give you an example," Dean said. "For Holiday in the Village, because this event is in East Village, those who are members of the association down in West Village, they get a free vendor booth. They are the only ones that would be able to sell things that have nothing to do with gifts.

"It's our way of allowing those businesses to participate in an event that gets somewhere around 20,000 people. This year, [that turnout] is what we're expecting with our music lineup, food trucks and different things we have. The other benefit is you get a say."

La Mesa Village Association is currently operating with officers and board members who were more-or-less self-appointed by the initial group of business owners who started the organization

"So for right now, that's what we had to do," Dean said, adding that there will be regular elections in the future. "Just like you would expect from any new business, you have to just start up. There's no one taking a single salary. All the money that comes in is 100 percent used for events, used for the

merchants in this neighborhood."

Because of the history of the previous merchants association, making sure that the money is there to put on Holiday in the Village, at an estimated cost of \$30,000, is paramount to the success of the new business group.

"This year, it's our very first event, but between our membership dues, quite a few sponsors and our vendor booths, we'll be able to pull this event off and not be in the red," Dean said.

But a tight fiscal plan isn't the only factor in pulling off a successful event. According to McWhirter, communication with the city is just as important — a lesson learned from past events put on by the previous merchants association.

"[The city's relationship with the previous merchants association] wasn't adversarial, it was just the city didn't know what [they were] doing until the last minute."

To keep an open line of communication with the city, La Mesa Village Association meets once a week with McWhirter who acts in an advisory role to explain what the city might require or what the city might want in an event.

A look ahead

So, what future events does the city plan to let the new association hold?

"Right now it's really too early to say. This is the first event that this group has the responsibility of doing, so we want to see how that works out," McWhirter said. "We don't want to talk about anything in the future yet because it's like putting the cart before the horse."

But, so far, McWhirter is impressed with what he sees in the new association's planning for Holiday in the Village.

"They already have a full day of events prepared," he said. "I think there's going to be a lot of activity going on so this gives the opportunity for the first time for this association to say, 'OK, this is what we can do."

Beyond Holiday in the Village, Dean and McWhirter are hoping to see a lot more events happening downtown that the La Mesa Village Association would like to be a part of — car shows, the Antique Fair, the farmers market and even a possible music festival.

"When good events are put on right, it helps promote everybody — businesses thrive, the neighborhood loves it," Dean said.

For more information about the La Mesa Village Association and Holiday in the Village, visit lamesavillageassociation.org.

—Reach Jeff Clemetson at jeff@sdcnn.com.■

How to Sell Your San Diego Home Without an Agent

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

Like other "For Sale by Owners", you'll be subjected to a hundred sales pitches from agents who will tell you how great they are and how you can't possibly sell your home by yourself. After all, without the proper information, selling a home isn't easy. Perhaps you've had your home on the market for several months with no offers from qualified buyers. This can be a very frustrating time, and many homeowners have given up their dreams of selling their homes themselves. But don't give up until you've read a new report entitled "Sell Your Own Home" which has been prepared especially for homesellers like you. You'll find that selling your home by yourself is entirely possible once you understand the process.

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Sudoku & Crossword puzzle answers from page 19

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A program to train your brain

Sara Appel-Lennon

Athy Lasky describes brain fitness as "hot sauce for the mind." "It wakes you up, makes you alert, and awakens your senses," she

Four years ago, the 71-year-old Lasky retired from working as a pharmacy technician after 33 years, but noticed her memory was growing foggy. After reading about a Posit Science brain fitness class offered through San Diego Continuing Education (SDCE) that sharpens cognitive skills and improves memory, she

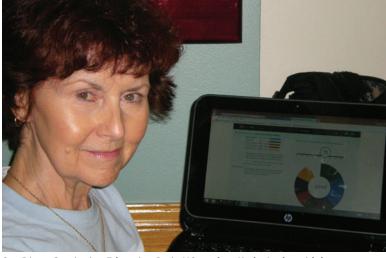
'[The class had] everything an adult needs in their later years and no computer skills required," she said. "I thought, I'm in. That's perfect for me. Sold!"

During the past four years, Lasky attended the brain fitness classes three hours per day, Tuesday through Thursday. The classes consisted of an hour of computer time, lectures about the brain, discussions and socializing.

Lasky's participation in the class was recently the subject of a story on preventing dementia by CNN's Dr. Sanjay Gupta. CNN staff interviewed and observed Lasky in her home, in the brain training classroom, at her fitness class, and even while she was driving. The program aired internationally in October and will air nationally in December.

In the CNN special, Dr. Gupta asked Lasky about where people can find the time to do brain fitness?

"How much time do you spend



San Diego Continuing Education Brain HQ student Kathy Lasky said the program has improved her cognitive functions after experiencing symptoms of dementia. (Photo by Sara Appel-Lennon)

watching television? How much time do you spend on Facebook? How much time do you spend on the telephone? I think you have time,' she said.

Because of the disciplined brain training, Lasky has returned to work. She doesn't need questions repeated. She hears sounds more distinctly. She focuses more intently and processes information and makes decisions more quickly, she said. Her driving skills have also improved, along with her peripheral vision and reflexes. And there has been another improvement she has noticed since taking the brain fitness

"At family board games, I'm proud to say I win my fair share and I'm the oldest of the generations," she said

When Posit Science compared her scores with others, Lasky ranked in

the top 91 percent for her age, and the top 88 percent overall.

According to the Posit Science website, Brain Fitness and Brain HQ are the only scientificallyresearched computer brain exercises. The idea is people can make their brains younger by doing specific computer brain exercises. Founder of Posit Science and "Father of Brain Plasticity" Dr. Michael Merzenich clinically proved "Double Decision" computerized brain exercises reduce risk of dementia by 48 percent.

"The concept at play here is known as neuroplasticity," said Dr. Gupta in the CNN special. "It's this idea that your brain can form new neural connections to prevent future problems or even to make up for ones that are lost due to a brain iniury like a concussion or a disease like Alzheimer's. I think what this

Double Decision has taught us is the speed of processing may be as important, if not more important, than memory or reasoning itself. If you want to reduce your rates of developing dementia later, focus on speed.

For Lasky, "focusing on speed" to reduce her dementia is now a permanent part of her life.

"I'll never stop, as long as I can get to class," she told Gupta in the CNN special. "I pencil it right in with everything else. It will enhance your life, help you live an independent life in your golden years with a healthy brain and physical health."

Brain training has also proved successful for Shinichi Ishikawa, 82, who started attending the classes a few years ago after suffering a brain injury from repeatedly falling out of bed. Before he took the classes, his family accompanied him most places and even taped Velcro inside his shoe with their contact information in case he was lost.

On the last day of class, Ishikawa told his story — and removed the Velcro. His neurologist declared that he is back to normal. He drives again and goes places independently. He regained his short-term memory and his sleep normalized. He again studies calculus and also continues his brain training.

Pat Mosteller is the department head of the SDCE Older Adult Program. She brought the classes to the Older Adult program after a sabbatical study into whether education and brain training generalize to other areas of life.

"Basically, we discovered that they did," she said. "If you make somebody's brain stronger through any kind of activity, they will be able to perform what they call Instrumental Activities of Daily Living — a concept discovered by Dr. Fred Gage of UCSD. And that means they can do lots of things better because they are keeping their brain active.'

All of the research she found about computerized brain training referenced Posit Science, so Mosteller contacted Dr. Merzenich.

"I was interested in incorporating what he knew into my classes," Mosteller said. "What he teaches me is we need to engage all parts of the brain."

Merzenich invited Mosteller to visit him where he presented her the software and has become a kind of mentor to her. She has since added brain strengthening strategies to the Older Adult curriculum.

Although there are websites that offer brain games and training such as Lumosity, Mosteller thinks brain fitness classes are better than sitting at home alone on a computer.

"They're not games, they're exercises," she said. "Exercises are tedious and boring. People need the discipline of a group setting."

SDCE is the only place in the world offering Posit Science Brain Fitness classes. Classes are held at the Ray & Joan Kroc Community Center, 6845 University Ave. in the Rolando neighborhood of San Diego, right on the La Mesa border. To enroll in brain training, visit bit. ly/2goC5uW.

For more information on brain training, visit brainhq.com.

-Sara Appel-Lennon is a creative writing instructor, children's author and a former professional clown. Her website is sara-appel-lennon.vpweb. com

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San Diego Community News Network editors (I to r) Ken Williams, Jeff Clemetson and Morgan Hurley (Photo by Todd Kammer)

SDCNN wins 7 SD Press Club 'Excellence in Journalism' awards

SDCNN Staff

S an Diego Community News Network (SDCNN) won a total of seven awards at San Diego Press Club's 43rd annual Excellence in Journalism Awards on Oct. 25 at the Joe & Vi Jacobs Center at Market Creek.

Hundreds of journalists and their guests turned out for the event, enjoying gournet tastings of local food, wine and craft beer at the reception before the ceremony. Mulligan Stew provided the music during the reception and Barbarella Fokos emceed during the presentation of special awards.

SDCNN publishes four monthlies, Mission Valley News, San Diego Downtown News, Mission Times Courier and La Mesa Courier and two biweeklies, San Diego Uptown News and Gay San Diego. The papers competed in the category of non-daily newspapers.

"I am proud of our talented team who continually offer our readers quality news and information that cannot be found anywhere else," said David Mannis, SDCNN publisher. "We strive to be the No. 1 resource for the communities we serve."

Jeff Clemetson, editor of Mission Valley News, Mission Times Courier and La Mesa Courier, won a first-place award:

• Education — "Finance High: Junior Achievement teaches literacy at new park," published in the October 2015 issue of Mission Times Courier. The article highlighted Mission Fed JA Finance Park, a hightech financial literacy campus that takes students through a virtual simulator of various career paths and life circumstances to realistically prepare them for the kinds of budget challenges they will face in their college and post-college years. Read it at bit.ly/2fgIyY9.

San Diego Uptown News won two awards. Ken Williams, editor of Uptown News, and former art director Vince Meehan shared a first-place award:

• Front page design — "Front page of Uptown News Feb. 12." The dramatic front cover featured a large photograph of North Park resident Nick Norris modeling his Predator Warpaint designed for our troops and hunters, featuring a "war type" headline that read: "War on skin cancer. Former SEAL creates line of camouflage face paint laden with sunscreen." The secondary photo was intense, featuring rows of empty shoes symbolizing the 54 lives that were lost in traffic accidents in 2015 in San Diego. See the digital edition at bit.ly/2dXE6f8.

Williams also won a secondplace award:

• General News — "Looking up: North Park's future coming into sharp focus," published Jan. 29 in Uptown News. The article provided an in-depth exploration of the first public glimpse at the final draft of the North Park Community Plan Update and explained what that vision would look like for local residents. Read it at bit.ly/1LBAVqp.

SDCNN Managing Editor Morgan M. Hurley, who is editor of both San Diego Downtown News and Gay San Diego, won two first-place awards:

• General News — "Hacking into the new sandiego.gov," published in the March issue of Downtown News. The article took at look at a meetup group that did a "live hack" on the city of San Diego's newly redesigned website to provide

important feedback on how well the site was working. Read it at bit. ly/2ewhNxJ.

• Series — "Stepping Stone series," published in Gay San Diego on Jan. 22 and Feb. 5. "A friend of the Stone" featured Cheryl Houk and her return to lead the region's only LGBT-centric drug and alcohol rehabilitation center. Read it at bit.ly/2ebNlWN. The second and final part of the series, "They keep coming back," explained how graduates of the program return to the center to give back. Read it at bit.ly/2eGDgnX.

Hurley won a second-place award, too:

• Feature — "A city in flux," published April 15 in Gay San Diego. The feature was on Cori Schumacher, a three-time world champion longboard surfer and lesbian activist, who has settled down in conservative Carlsbad and decided to run for City Council to bring about change. Read it at bit. ly/2ebTBxs.

Also, SDCNN contributor Kai Oliver-Kurtin won a secondplace award:

• Food — "Gaslamp restaurants stand the test of time," published in the February issue of Downtown News. The article asked restaurateurs at long-standing eateries about their recipe for success. Read it at bit.ly/1KxclGq.

The San Diego Press Club, which was established in 1973, is one of the largest clubs in the U.S. for media professionals.

—To find links of the San Diego Community News Network newspapers, visit sdcnn.com.■

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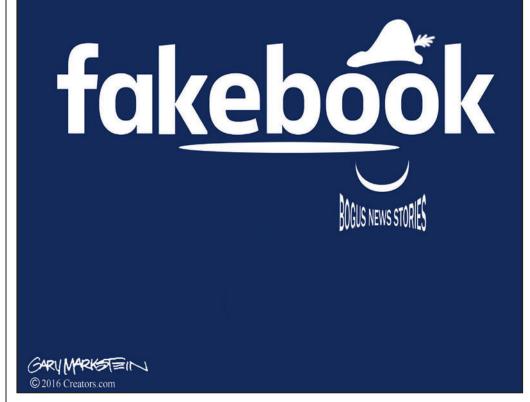












GUEST EDITORIAL

Select a charity, not a scam

Paul **Downey**

Giving to a charity each year is easy for most of us. We find ourselves drawn to a cause, a particular group, mission and, well, we just plain want to help those who may be less fortunate than ourselves. When you have a personal tie to an organization, giving your hard-earned dollars is simple.

However, what happens when you don't have a charity in mind or you are new to donating financially? Often during this time of year, con artists take advantage of the generosity of San Diegans and take the hardearned money for themselves, rather than for reputable and legitimate nonprofit organizations that serve the most vulnerable in our community. Here are seven quick tips to help you chose a legitimate organization and avoid being scammed:

Only give to a charity you know.

Do your research! Research an organization before you donate. There are a variety of online resources that provide free access to comprehensive reports about nonprofit organizations. Start with a visit to California Attorney General's Registry of Charitable Trusts (oag.ca.gov/charities), the Better Business Bureau's Wise Giving Alliance (give. org), Guidestar (guidestar.com) and Charity Navigator (charitynavigator.org). Plus, go to the organization's website and really get a good understanding of what the charity does and who benefits from your donation.

Ask questions. Real charities are able to tell you how they use their donations and what portion of your contribution will go directly to the group they are trying to help. Ideally, 85 cents of every dollar raised should go directly to programs and services of the charitable organization, with the minimal amount remaining to underwrite administrative

salaries and operational expenses. Also, ask them for a 990 tax form. If they cannot give you this information, don't give them your money.

Do not send to a P.O. box. Make sure the organization has an actual street address, where you can go and see the charity in action at anytime.

Ask for a tour. Or, even better, just show up unannounced. A reputable charity would be delighted to give you a tour on the spot.

There should be no hard sell. Organizations don't need money "today." If they cannot give you an answer for what the donation is to be used for then walk away.

Leverage your contribution. Often times, reputable organizations will have donors who will match your contribution during their fundraising campaigns. The commitment by donors to their preferred organization shows credibility. For example, right now at Serving Seniors, thanks to a generous long-time donor, financial donations made during our Hidden Hungry campaign will be matched dollar for dollar up to \$50,000.

There are many fine charities in San Diego doing great that are worthy of your support. By following the tips above, you will sleep soundly knowing that your time and dollars are being spent well.

As president/CEO of Serving Seniors, I would like to thank all of you who have graciously supported us in 2016. We appreciate your kindness and generosity, and have been able to accomplish so much this year with your help. For those of you who haven't made a gift yet, please "kick our tires," and connect with us to see what we are all about.

—Paul Downey is the president and CEO of Serving Seniors, a nonprofit agency dedicated to keeping San Diego seniors healthy and independent. Learn more at servingseniors.org.■

LETTERS

Reading and libraries

Re: "La Mesa Reads: Books by and about veterans" [Volume 6, Issue 10]

Kudos to Librarian Heather Pisani-Kristl for her thoughtful piece on Veterans Day reading. Another unmistakable example of the multiple, varied and continuous contributions local libraries make to our quality of life.

While it is a shame that the sitting City Council apparently cannot find the will to finish La Mesa's permanent library, that failure does not give the rest of us a pass. By design, the planned La Mesa Library would serve as a vibrant hub for learning and citizen participation in a revitalized city center.

Those working, like Ms. Pisani-Kristl, in less-than-ideal circumstances in the temporary facility deserve our gratitude and our support. But that's not enough. Let's pay it forward and finish the permanent library – it's clearly up to us.

—Dr. Anthony McIvor

GUEST EDITORIAL

Tips for shopping Covered California health plans

Covered CA Staff



With Covered California's three-month open-enrollment period starting Nov. 1, it's a great time to shop for the best fit for your health coverage. During Covered California open enrollment, which runs through Jan. 31, consumers can choose among 11 name-brand health insurance plans that offer high-quality and affordable coverage. Here are some helpful tips.

Shop, shop, shop around

Covered California's online Shop and Compare Tool provides consumers with detailed information about various health plans in specific regions throughout the state. You can compare premium costs, the four pricing tiers, and subsidies available to help you pay for coverage. With some health insurance premium costs expected to rise in 2017, the Shop and Compare Tool allows consumers to evaluate their options. Try out the Shop and Compare Tool at /bit. ly/2f53ZME.

Get in-person help to find the best value

Health insurance is complicated. Getting help choosing the right plan and completing the application is free and confidential. There are thousands of Covered California certified insurance agents and enrollment counselors located throughout the state. They can help guide you to the health plan that is the best fit and best value for you and your family. Find free local help at coveredca.com/get-help/local/ to enroll.

Check out provider networks

If you want to visit a particular doctor, be sure to check with the specific health plan to confirm that the physicians you want to see are indeed in the plan's network of doctors. In 2017, each enrollee in a Covered California health plan will be assigned a primary care physician. Learn more about primary care physicians at bit.ly/2fhxHKd.

Vision and dental plans offer added bonuses

While children's dental and vision coverage has always been included as part of all health insurance plans sold through Covered California, adults can now enroll in family dental and vision plans at competitive rates.

Enroll early, get health coverage earlier

Enrolling in a Covered California health plan by Dec. 15 allows you to start the new year with coverage. Having health insurance in place starting Jan. 1 can reduce your worries about having to pay a tax penalties for not being covered, which are \$695 per adult and half that amount for those under age 18 in the household or 2.5 percent of your family income — whichever is greater. Additionally, gone is the mental gamble of hoping nothing happens — such as a car accident, sports injury, or unexpected illness.

When it comes to your health, knowing that you are covered is the best plan. Enroll online or with a Certified Insurance Agent or Certified Enrollment Counselor at coveredca.com. ■



HURRY! Voting for Best of La Mesa closes on January 13

MAIL YOUR BALLOT TO: La Mesa Courier Best of La Mesa
123 Camino de la Reina, Suite 202 East, San Diego, CA 92108.
OR VOTE ONLINE AT: lamesacourier.com. One ballot per person. Ballots must be postmarked, submitted online, or hand-delivered by 5 p.m. Jan. 13.
CONTACT INFO (Must be filled out for your vote to be counted):
NAME:
ADDRESS:
DAYTIME PHONE:
FMAII:

Vote and you will be entered for a chance to win theater tickets and other great prizes!

ENTRY RULES: You choose your favorite! Tell us who the best of the best is and you'll be entered into our free drawing.

Mail your ballot to: 123 Camino de la Reina, Suite 202 East, San Diego, CA 92108 or submit online at: lamesacourier.com

Dining & Entertainment	Happy Hour	Vegetarian/Vegan	Furniture Store		
American Cuisine	Health Food Store	Wine Bar	Gym/Health Club		
Bakery	Hot Wings	Business & Retail	Hair Salon Home Improvement		
Barbecue	Indian Cuisine				
Beer	Irish Pub	Accountant	Hospital		
Billiards	Italian Cuisine	Acupuncture	Hotel		
Breakfast	Japanese Cuisine	Antiques	Insurance Broker		
	Jazz Bar	Art Gallery	Jeweler		
Brunch	Late Night Dining	Attorney	Massage		
Burger	Live Music Venue	Auto Dealer	Men's Apparel		
Burrito	Lunch	Auto Repair Shop	Museum		
Business Lunch	Margarita	Bank	New Business		
Casino	Martini	Barber	Optometrist		
Casino Buffet	Mexican Cuisine	Bicycle Shop	Pawn Shop		
Casual Dining	Micro Brewery	Bookstore	Personal Trainer		
Chinese Cuisine	New Restaurant	Boutique	Pet Boarding		
Cocktail	Nightclub	Bridal Shop	Pet Grooming		
Coffee Shop	Outdoor Dining	Car Wash	Plumber		
Comfort Food	Pet Friendly Dining	Chiropractor	Preschool		
Dance Club	Pizza	College/University	Property Management Company		
Deli	Romantic Dining	Consignment/Resale	Real Estate Agent		
Dessert	Rooftop Lounge	Cosmetic Surgeon	Real Estate Office		
Dinner	Salad	Credit Union	Retirement Living		
Donut Shop	Sandwich	Day Spa	Tanning Salon		
Family Restaurant	SD County Winery	Dentist	Tattoo/Piercing		
Farmers Market	Seafood	Discount Store	Tuxedo Shop		
Fast Food	Sports Bar	Doctor	Veterinarian		
Fine Dining	Steakhouse	Dry Cleaners	Wedding Venue		
French Cuisine	Sushi	Financial Planner	Women's Apparel		
Greek Cuisine	Thai Cuisine	Florist			
	Tildi Cuisille		Yoga Studio		





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Holiday party, election victories, new officers



A hearty potluck, stacks of gifts for military children and Christmas joy rang through the home of Navajo Canyon Republican Women, Federated member Ginny Wisely as we gathered together for our annual holiday celebration and election of officers for the new year. Although not all of our candidates won and too many tax increases were passed, it was a good election for Republicans across the country and, after so many disappointing years in the past, it felt good to rejoice among friends.



The Navajo Canyon Republican Women Federated are celebrating local and national election wins, including the election of Republican Donald Trump for President of the United States. (Facebook)

After a very busy 2016, Sally Steele was installed for her second year as president. We'll have names and pictures of the full slate in the next issues of the Mission Times Courier and La Mesa Courier. Waskah Whelan was once again lauded for her extreme leadership as precinct and campaign chairman for the San Diego County Federated Women. Those who contributed so much of their time were also thanked.

The new year begins Tuesday, Jan. 10, 2017, at La Mesa's Brigantine Restaurant. Although the speaker had not been finalized by our publication date, we can count on the first meeting after the election to be exuberant!

Check-in time for the 11 a.m. luncheon meeting is 10:30 a.m. A full-course luncheon will be served at noon with the speaker following at 12:30 p.m. To join us, RSVP to NCRWF99@gmail.com or call Marjie at 619-990-2791. Cost is \$20 and reservations are required. Please join us!

For more information on all our activities, visit us at navajocanyonrwf.org and also like us on Facebook.

—Judy McCarty is publicity chair for the Navajo Canyon Republican Women, Federated. Reach her at jhmccarty@cox.net.■

Roy Zimmerman to headline Holiday Fest

Musician, social satirist to entertain local Dems



Linda **Armacost** *and* Jeff **Benesch**

They say that laughter is the best medicine, and so the La Mesa Foothills Democratic Club welcomes back singer/songwriter Roy Zimmerman to highlight our Dec. 7 Holiday Fest. Members remember Zimmerman's hilarious and biting satire from last year's party, and we should all be entertained anew given the last 12 months of political shenanigans.

And as tradition holds, we will welcome all members and guests to enjoy our holiday feast, with turkey, ham, and all the trimmings supplied by the club. Members are encouraged to bring appetizers, side dishes, salads, and desserts to augment the club's meat carvings, veggie lasagna and beverages.

As usual, we'll start our festivities at 6 p.m., and Zimmerman will take the stage about 7 p.m. Zimmerman will be selling CDs of his best and most memorable concerts, so be prepared to buy some great holiday gifts for friends and family. We ask each members and guests to donate \$15 at the door, or whatever one can afford to offset the costs of the evening's food and entertainment. We'll be meeting at the usual place, the spacious La Mesa Community Center, 4975 Memorial Drive, just



election-weary Democrats at the next meeting of the La Mesa Foothills Democratic Club. (Courtesy of LMFDC)

North of University Avenue in La

Because of the overflow crowds for this annual event, we ask willing and able members to park by the Little League field and take the short walk up the stairs to the Community Center. Let's leave the adjacent parking lot for those that most need to be close to the meeting room.

We also ask each member and guest to contribute to our annual holiday charity. This year we are supporting the efforts of Santa Sophia Church to feed needy families in the Casa de Oro area. Please bring canned and nonperishable foods that can assist those in dire straits during the holiday season. They also like to give out "street-ready" foods such as high protein bars, fruit and nut snacks and pop tarts.

We also support the efforts of La Mesa Methodist Church who offer the city's homeless citizens showers and other necessities during the fall and winter months. We ask you bring new, unused toiletries, toothpaste, toothbrushes, shaving supplies, shampoo, soaps, lotions, and other similar items for those who don't take these items for granted.

While the results of the national election on Nov. 8 don't leave us much room for optimism, our local candidates and issues had a banner night. We helped elect board member Colin

Parent to La Mesa City Council; Senator Kamala Harris; Congress members Susan Davis and Scott Peters; State Senator Toni Atkins, Assemblypersons Shirley Weber, Lorena Gonzalez and Todd Gloria; Supervisor Dave Roberts; San Diego City Council winners Barbara Bry and Georgette Gomez; and San Diego City Attorney Mara Elliot.

We passed measures K and L which will require November elections for all San Diego City offices and measures; we legalized cannabis; upheld the statewide plastic bag ban; and defeated the Chargers stadium measure. SANDAG's freeway-centric tax proposal, and the Lilac Hills overdevelopment in Valley Center went down to defeat.

Our collective Get Out The Vote efforts in total passed nearly 75 percent of the San Diego County Democratic Party's recommendations. Our supported candidates on local water boards won the day; as did George Gastil in the Lemon Grove mayoral contest. A Democratic even won a seat on the El Cajon City Council — a real first.

In the presidential contest, San Diego County went for Clinton/Kaine by 17 points over the Republican ticket, a wider margin than Barack Obama won in 2008 and 2012. And we helped propel Hillary to a popular vote victory even if the Electoral College vote didn't go our way. Our growing Democratic edge in voter registration countywide — now well over 100,000 — bodes well for 2018, 2020 and beyond.

La Mesa Foothills Democratic Club draws members from the communities of Allied Gardens, San Carlos, Del Cerro, the College Area, La Mesa, Mt. Helix, Casa de Oro, Santee and other nearby East County Communities. All residents are welcome to attend our monthly meetings which take place on the first Wednesday of each month. Please visit our website for coming events at lamesafoothillsdemocratic-club.com and like us on Facebook.

—Linda Armacost is president and Jeff Benesch is vice president for programming of the La Mesa Foothills Democratic Club. Reach them at jeffbenesch@gmail.com. sdcnn.com Nov. 25 - Dec. 22, 2016 La Mesa Courier



Students in Elsa Goodwin's class at La Mesa Dale Elementary show off their new dictionaries. (Photo by Becki Schwartz)

Dictionaries, from page 1

According to the Rotary's project notes, "it matters a great deal." Educators have told them online dictionaries are better suited for adults; elementary students benefit far more when they learn to use an actual dictionary book.

The book doesn't 'pop up' the word or fix the spelling for the student like an online site would. The student has to consider the spelling and word breakdown to locate the word. Plus, students will often find new words on their way to look up the original one.

"It gets them into the mindset on how to do things," explained Rotarian Bonnie Welch, who runs a karate school in La Mesa.

Welch was one of more than 17 Rotarians who volunteered to hand deliver these books to the classrooms.

"It's really neat to be able to share my love of language with them," Rotarian and delivery volunteer Becki Schwartz said. Schwartz works as a physical therapist.

The front of each dictionary contains a sticker with the Rotary's Four-Way test. The Four-Way test is a set of principles the Rotaries live and do business by, asking themselves four questions before any decision or behavior:

Is it the truth? Is it fair to all concerned? Will it build goodwill and better friendships? Will it be beneficial to all concerned?

When the dictionaries are presented to the students, they review these four questions together with the Rotarian.

"It was cool to be able to share what Rotary is and what we do," Schwartz said. "Rotary principles fall in line with their school rules and being good citizens of their community and their world."

Welch added, "These are principles that Rotary lives under, but everybody should think about."

Now, not all students are overjoyed about a dictionary. But they do act like Santa has come to town when they find out that that book belongs to them — permanently. On the sticker in the front is also special space for the student to put their own name, and at the end of the year



Bonnie Welch hands out dictionaries provided by the La Mesa Rotary to third graders at Murdock Elementary. (Photo by Joyell Nevins)

they get to take the book home for good.

"For some of these students [in some schools a large majority], this is the first book they own," Welch said.

The Rotary project has been ongoing for several years now, so many of the current third graders have older siblings with their own dictionaries — continuing the generation of reading.

And that is beneficial to all concerned.

Projects like this and the upcoming "Bikes for Kids" are funded by the La Mesa Rotary Foundation. The Foundation welcomes donations, which can be given at lamesarotary.org.

—Freelance writer Joyell Nevins can be reached at joyellc@gmail.com. You can also follow her blog Small World, Big God at swblog.wordpress.com.■

27 Quick and Easy Fix Ups to Sell Your La Mesa Home Fast and for Top Dollar

La Mesa -

Because your home may well be your largest asset, selling it is probably one of the most important decisions you will make in your life. And once you have made that decision, you'll want to sell your home for the highest price in the shortest time possible without compromising your sanity. Before you place your home on the market, here's a way to help you to be as prepared as possible.

To assist home seller's, a new industry report has just been released called "27 Valuable Tips That You Should Know to Get Your Home Sold Fast and for Top Dollar." It tackles the important issues you need to know to make your home competitive in today's tough, aggressive marketplace. Through these 27 tips you will discover how to protect and capitalize on your most important investment, reduce stress, be in control of your situation, and make the best profit possible.

In this report you'll discover how to avoid financial disappointment or worse, a financial disaster when selling your home. Using a common-sense approach, you will get the straight facts about what can make or break the sale of your home.

You owe it to yourself to learn how these important tips will give you the competitive edge to get your home sold fast and for the most amount of money. Order your free report today. To hear a brief recorded message about how to order your FREE copy of this report call toll-free 1-866-220-9502 and enter 1023. You can call any time, 24 hours a day, 7days a week.

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WARNING: 10 Critical Questions to Ask Before You Hire a La Mesa Area Real Estate Agent

La Mesa -

Not all real estate agents are the same. If you decide to seek the help of an agent when selling or buying your home, you need some good information before you make any moves.

Choosing a real estate agent is one of those critical issues that can cost or save you thousands of dollars. In this FREE special report, we give you the specific questions you should be asking to ensure that you get the best representation for your needs.

Before you hire any real estate agent, call and get a copy of a FREE Report entitled "10 questions to Ask Before You Hire an Agent". To hear a brief recorded message about how to order your FREE copy of this report call toll-free 1-866-220-9502 and enter 1006. You can call any time, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

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Retired staff and alumni pose with principal Dan Barnes behind one of the seven new benches on campus that were donated to celebrate Grossmont High School's 96-year-old history. (Courtesy of GHS Museum)

Grossmont celebrates new construction, Homecoming events, fall athletics



EDUCATION

Connie and Lynn Baer

rossmont High School (GHS) has much to be thankful for this month. First, we appreciate our community, whose support of Propositions H and U enabled us to modernize and improve our historic campus.

In the past six years, Foothillers have benefited from the construction of six new buildings — the Science Building and Boys and Girls Physical Education Facility, both opened in 2010; the Child Development Center, which opened in 2012; the Humanities Building, opened in 2013; the 2014 Automotive Technology Facility; and in 2016, the Student Support Services Building and Art Building. These buildings replaced structures that were up to 80 years old.

Now thanks to Proposition BB, the final piece of the puzzle will be completed with the new Student Event Center and Performing Arts classrooms, which will begin construction in

We are appreciative of our alumni, retired staff and community whose donations have enabled us to celebrate our 96-year-old history throughout the campus with benches and bronze plaques. This past year, GHS has seven new benches. Two near the new office proclaim the values that define Foothillers — "Grossmont High School: Excellence since 1920" and "A Grossmont Tradition: Achievement, Honor, Service".

Three new bronze plaques were dedicated on Homecoming — two honoring former principals Carl Quicksall and Bill Davis and one celebrating the 62-year history of the Christmas Pageant.

The restored 1922 master school clock hangs inside the new office, thanks to the volunteer efforts of the members of the National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors. Chapter 133-Western Electrics of Southern California and Jim



Homecoming King Dennis Bragg shares a dance with Queen Faith Davies. (Courtesy of GHS Museum)

Simpson of Time and Treasures in La Mesa. We thank Bob Stockton, Class of 1955, for funding the bronze plaque and the companion classroom clock.

Homecoming

Congratulations to the ASB class for planning a successful Homecoming. 2016 Homecoming Queen Faith Davies was crowned during Friday's football game, and King Dennis Bragg was crowned at the Saturday night Homecoming Grossmont Palooza

Fall athletics

Finally, we'd like to celebrate the achievements of our fall athletes and coaches (as of Nov. 18). Several teams reached CIF competition: Division IV Girls Volleyball, second place in the Valley League, reached the quarterfinals; Girls Tennis, also second place in the Valley League, reached the second round of CIF. Destiny Bacon was chosen the Valley League's Tennis Athlete of the Year and three players earned First Team recognition - Destiny Bacon, Bella Mesta and Jillian Kan.

The Division I Boys Water Polo Team, second place in the Hills League, competed in the CIF semi-finals. Both the Varsity Boys and Girls Cross Country teams placed second in league finals and

competed Nov. 19 in CIF.

The Varsity Football Team was placed in the CIF Open Division, the eight best teams in San Diego County, and played Mission Hills Nov. 18 at Grossmont. The Foothillers, 9-1 regular season and second in the Hills League, are the No. 4 seed in the Open Division. (Of the eight Open Division members, three are in the Grossmont Hills League!)

Impressively, the Foothiller defense broke a CIF record for most fumble recoveries in a season with 28. Offensively, the team ranks in the top five in San Diego for points and yards per game. Quarterback Hunter Gaines leads East County in yards passing and touchdowns, while receiver Domonique Guevara leads East County in catches, receiving yards, and touchdowns.

To learn more about Grossmont, a school that celebrates its past and present, plan to visit us or explore our museum website. Visit the museum: noon-4 p.m. Dec. 7. Contact Information: ghsmuseum@guhsd. net or 619-668-6140. Website: foothillermuseum.com.

—Connie and Lynn Baer write on behalf of the Grossmont high School Museum.

sdcnn.com EDUCATION Nov. 25 - Dec. 22, 2016 La Mesa Courier 1 1



Helix Highlights

Jennifer Osborn

Helix helping Helix

Helix just began its annual food drive to assist 15 Helix families who are most in need. All donations will be given to the families during finals week in December. Students and staff members will be donating food, and staff will contribute money for gift cards. We welcome our community to participate. Anyone interested in contributing to this cause should email Helix social worker Danielle Yee at yee@ helixcharter.net

Student Empowerment Club

The Student Empowerment Club hosted the Fall Clean Up Day on campus on Saturday, Nov. 19. Approximately 50 students participated, working on general projects to tidy up the campus. Students earned community service hours to put toward the 40 hours required for graduation.

New technology course

The Technology Department will pilot a new class called MESA (Math Engineering Science Achievement) starting in



Parents interested in having their children attend Helix Charter High School need to attend one of the upcoming Intent to Enroll meetings. (Google Panaramio)

January. We are hoping to align more with industry standards and are hoping to grow pathways from this new class.

Helix already has an after school program for those interested in Engineering, Architecture and Construction (ACE). In this program, students learn elements of all three areas, and create a model of an actual structure, using the principles learned. They then participate in an event with other ACE programs from around the county where each school showcases

their project. Helix students consistently earn scholarships and cash awards at the event each year.

The new MESA course and the ACE program continues Helix's efforts to prepare students for life after graduation.

Helix Girls and Boys Golf programs

The Helix Girls and Boys Golf Programs are selling discounted (\$15 off the regular price), single day admission tickets to the PGA Farmers Insurance Open at Torrey Pines Golf Course, which will take place Jan. 25–29, 2017. Tickets are \$35 each, with \$25 from each ticket sold going back to the Helix Golf Programs. The money raised will be used to support equipment and operating costs. Contact Frank Theroux at theroux@helixcharter.net

2017-18 enrollment

Enrollment for the 2017-18 school year is rapidly approaching. Families interested in enrolling their incoming ninth grader, or new students grades 10–12, will need to attend an upcoming Intent to Enroll meeting in order to be considered for enrollment. The following are the scheduled dates and locations (all are on Wednesdays):

- Jan. 11, 6 p.m. Helix Charter High School
- Jan. 18, 6 p.m. Vista La Mesa Academy
- Jan. 25, 6 p.m. Lemon Grove Academy
- Feb. 1, 6 p.m. Parkway Middle School
- Feb. 8, 6 p.m. La Mesa Arts Academy
- Feb. 15, 6 p.m. –
 Mount Vernon Academy
- Feb. 22, 6 p.m. Helix Charter High School

More details regarding the enrollment process are in the works – we anticipate having this information finalized by early January. When information is available, it will be found on the school website, helixcharter.net (click on "Entrance Boundary/ Lottery Information" on the left side of the page).

If you are interested in finding out more about Helix Charter High School, please attend one of our Excellence in Education Tours, held twice monthly. The tours for January are the Jan. 5 at 8:10 a.m. and Jan. 19 at 5:30 p.m. Reserve your spot using our website, helix-charter.net.

As always, we welcome your input. Please don't hesitate to contact me at josborn@helixcharter.net.

Mobile Pet Grooming

—Jennifer Osborn writes on behalf of Helix Charter High School.■

8 Simple Safety Tips for Online Shopping

Online shopping has become so common with consumers that it's easy to develop bad habits when it comes to protecting your personal information. With the holidays, and holiday shopping fast approaching, now is a good time for consumers to remind themselves how they can stay safe while shopping online.

Whether making purchases on a mobile device or home computer, here are eight tips to keep your personal information protected this holiday season.

- **1. Use a familiar website.** Rather than click on an ad, start at your favorite retail outlet's website.
- 2. Look for the icon of a green padlock in the URL address bar. It could also appear at the bottom of your browser. This signifies added security.
- Never buy anything from a site that doesn't have secure sockets layer (SSL) encryption. You'll know if a website has it because it will start with 'HTTPS://' rather than just 'HTTP://'.
- 4. No online shopping site should ever ask for your social security number or birthdate to do business. Provide as little information as possible to online retailers.
- 5. Check your accounts regularly, especially during the holidays. Don't wait for your statement to identify fraudulent charges. If you see something wrong, call your bank or credit card company immediately. You may be protected against fraudulent charges.

- Make sure your devices are up-to-date on their antivirus protection.
- **7.** Be careful where you click. Avoid unknown pop-up ads or ads imbedded in unfamiliar websites.
- 8. Don't send your credit card information via email or post on social media, even in private messages.

Another way to keep your personal information protected is to make sure your devices are protected. There are several ways to maintain the most up-to-date protection on your computer or mobile device.

- 1. Lock your device with a password.
- 2. Be mindful of what you download.
- 3. Update when prompted
- **4.** Delete apps that are no longer being used from mobile devices.
- **5.** Disable WiFi and Bluetooth when not in use.
- **6.** Install security software, and update regularly.

Cox customers can stay one step ahead with Cox Security Suite Plus powered by McAfee, a free service included with Cox High Speed Internet. You can protect up to five Windows or Mac OS X computers, Android smartphones and tablets, and Apple iOS iPhones and iPads through each Cox account.

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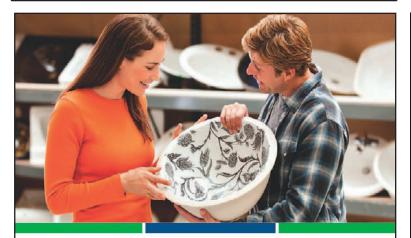
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Working on Pandora

David **Dixon**

Stage manager and Helix High School alumnus, Kevin Katan, has been living an exciting and artistic life. He is currently involved with the touring Cirque du Soleil show set in the same universe as James Cameron's "Avatar," "Toruk: The First Flight."

THEATER

Ever since he was young, Katan focused on theater arts. At Helix, he participated in theater, show choir and Christian Youth Theatre.

In college, Katan attended UCSD and received a degree in theater arts. Through his connections with the campus, he worked at the La Jolla Playhouse and The Old Globe. While being involved with different shows around the world, he kept on trying to work with Cirque.

"I persistently applied for jobs with them over the years," he said. "The opportunity to work on 'Toruk' came up last year. I wouldn't have gotten it if I didn't develop a love for theater."

Working on "Toruk" has given Katan more appreciation for the cinematic science fiction epic. He admires the theme about how the humanoids known as the Na'vi are connected with their planet. That message is reflected in the live adventure.

"It tells an important story about how you can lose your connection with the environment," he said. "The tale is a very universal

As a stage manager, he has to make sure the performers are

"It's a very physical production for the artists," he said.

On an artistic level, he helps make sure that the content of the story doesn't change at the numerous theaters.

"This includes the timing of



Helix High School alumnus Kevin Katan is the current stage manager for Cirque du Soleil's production of "Toruk: The First Flight," which was inspired by the film "Avatar." (Courtesy of Chase Angelo Dean)

"Toruk: The First Flight" **Valley View**

Casino Center 3500 Sports Arena Blvd. San Diego

Through Sunday, Nov. 27 For tickets and information visit axs.com or call

the cues, the visual elements and having the artists in the right position," he said.

619-224-4171

One of Katan's favorite scenes uses kites to symbolize different creatures from the planet, Pandora.

"The artists run to create their own air current," he said. "It's been a technical challenge for us to monitor air flow so we can make the act come across as seamless. Working on this sequence has been really rewarding."

Katan was lucky enough to meet some of the biggest names associated with "Avatar." Cameron came to Louisiana during early rehearsals before opening to share his thoughts and input. The successful filmmaker watched the official premiere in Montreal and again in Los Angeles.

"He was very happy and had nothing, but praise for us," he

In addition, Zoe Saldana also watched "Toruk" in L.A. Katan respected how much she enjoyed seeing Na'vi clan members onstage.

At the moment, Katan plans on only focusing on his work as stage manager of "Toruk."

"I'm glad that I get to be working on this project right now," he said. "It's been a real blessing working with this group."

In spite of his busy schedule, Katan still makes time to visit La Mesa and spent Thanksgiving week with his family here, including his "mom and grandmas" who still live here.

When it comes to "Toruk," Katan wants audiences to know that the plot is more crucial compared to other Cirque

"The narrative is the primary vehicle of the show," he said. "We are using acrobatics to reinforce the story that we are telling, as opposed to being the main drive of the evening. That makes this iourney more unique compared to other Cirque shows that have come to San Diego."

If you haven't bought tickets to "Toruk" yet, it's guaranteed to have the typical visual mastery associated with Cirque. Katan is an example of how being devoted to the arts can pay off in spades.

—David Dixon is a freelance theater and film writer. Reach him at daviddixon0202@gmail.



conditioning this seminar is a must.

sdcnn.com Nov. 25 - Dec. 22, 2016 La Mesa Courier 13

Burgundy is the hot color for fall gardens

Gary Jones

The color burgundy seems like it is everywhere when it comes to fall clothing this year. Similar to a trendy fashion design, plant lovers these days have been far ahead of fashion houses in incorporating this color trend.

For several years now, plant breeders have been showing off wine-colored plants that have gardeners drooling. But it is not necessarily the blossoms that are burgundy. In fact, more likely it is the foliage. Descriptions may range from burgundy and merlot to garnet and oxblood. The color is a deep red of varying shades. And no matter what you call it, this deep, saturated color is very much in keeping with the cooler seasons of fall and winter.

Consider the following rich merlot- and garnet-toned plants for your fall garden:

Heuchera

Coral bells now come in an amazing array of colors and most are the jewel tones of autumn. Heuchera Frost has silvery leaves with dark burgundy veins. Chocolate Ruffles have leaves that are rich chocolate on top and deep burgundy on the bottom. The extreme ruffling exposes both fall colors at once. On leaves with a rusty merlot, Cherry Cola forms small plants that are perfect for the front of beds and pots.

Naturally, Autumn Leaves are







(I to r) Osteospermum, Crimson Butterfly Gaura and Cherry Cola Heuchera (Courtesy of Armstrong Garden Centers)

perfect for autumn. The beautifully rounded leaves are bold red in spring, taupe in summer and ruby red in the fall. Fire Alarm is another heuchera with four distinct seasons of color. This one happens to be bright red in spring, brown red in summer and then turns oxblood in the fall. Fire Chief is a glowing winered all year-long. Like rich red leather, Mahogany is a purple overlaid with a silver sheen, turning to garnet in the fall and winter seasons.

It is difficult to leave the excitement of coral bells without mentioning an amazing assortment of other fall

colors—obsidian, copper, orange, cinnamon-peach, gold, silver with striking black veins, gold with red centers and red veining as well as dark purple. Clearly, coral bells are one of the season's great plants.

Loropetalum

It is possible to find varieties of this Chinese fringe-flower with purple, almost black, foliage as well as bronzy green. However, the ones in the burgundy-merlot range are Burgundy Blast, Ruby with its very dark burgundy leaves and Ever Red. All three of them form 6-foot shrubs, but can easily be kept smaller, if desired.

These gallon-sized plants make great anchors for fall container gardens.

Gaura

This is a favorite water-wise plant and the variety known as Crimson Butterflies has hot pink flowers that seem to float above beautiful wine-colored leaves.

Osteospermum

African daisies have been used as common decorative freeway plants because they are tough and can withstand heat. The updated versions are exponentially improved in color and appearance. Look for Burgundy

and Serenity Red, the new, mounding varieties. These will bloom throughout the fall season.

Rex Begonia

Rex begonias used to be difficult to find. Due to the craze for unusual and colorful foliage plants, they are now commonly available during all but the coldest months. They thrive best when planted in containers. Although there are other colors in their leaves, Painter's Palette and Ruby Slippers are predominately rich, saturated wine-red.

Viola

The Sorbet series of viola is certainly one of the very best cool-season flowers. Sorbets bloom non-stop from early fall until June. And the color range is truly amazing. For comparisons sake, think how tough it is to pick your favorite flavor at Menchie's or Yogurtland. Try choosing from the 42 different types of Sorbet violas with names like Banana Cream and Coconut Swirl. If you are looking for burgundy, there is only one choice: the gorgeous Carmine Rose.

How have you incorporated burgundy into your fall garden? Share a photo or two of your best autumn display with us.

—Gary Jones is the Chief Horticulturist at Armstrong Garden Centers, which has locations on Friars Road and Morena Boulevard. Email your drought and gardening questions to growingdialogue@armstronggarden.com. ■



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COURIER COURIER

Fireworks, from page 1

echoed the sentiment.

"It's just great that all these families have an interest in bringing the fireworks back," he said.

As they proceed, it's worth remembering that much of this will be in remembrance of well-known and much-beloved community activist John Pilch, who passed away last May.

There is now a clearly defined path for them to follow, and it begins with Cindy Kodama, head of the city's Special Events office.

"There's a lot to it, but it can be done if everybody follows the steps outlined by CEQA, the California Environmental Quality Act," Kodama said. "There are a lot of agencies and departments involved, and they'll all need to sign off on the application in order for this to happen.

"Ideally, we'd like to have everything done and in our hands at least 60 days before the event. There's a 12-page application that has to be done, and an environmental assessment completed. There'll need to be a production meeting with all the relevant agencies involved."

There are a lot of relevant agencies. The list seems daunting, but they all need to sign off: Parks and Recreation, Water, Storm Water, police from both San Diego and La Mesa, San Diego and La Mesa



The Lake Murray music and fireworks festival was one of the most popular Independence Day events in San Diego and La Mesa. (*Photo by Brett Alan, brettalanphotography.com*)

fire departments, the Regional Water Quality Control Board, and any and all private contractors that may be involved in the fireworks and cleanup.

There will be fees involved for all the various reports and paperwork, but they are not terribly expensive — just numerous.

Dalhkamp says the committee plans to go to area businesses and merchants for support for the efforts, selling sponsorships.

"We've already heard from a number of local businesses, saying they'd like to be involved," she said. "We may also try to become a 501(c)(3) nonprofit group, and we're looking at a GoFundMe effort as well. We think there'll be a lot of support as we get closer to the date. We hope to raise \$60-\$75,000 to make the fireworks return a big success."

Dalkhamp said they are already off to a good start with a \$15,000 pledge from Stromberg Orthodontics who has come forward as a potential title sponsor, as long as the permits get passed.

s long as the permits get passed The committee wants to make the reborn festival even bigger and better than it was before it went away. That'll take some doing, but they seem up to the task.

For more information on how to get involved in the effort to bring back the Lake Murray fireworks and music festival, or to make a donation, contact Tracy Dahlkamp at tracydahlkamp@gmail.com.

—Doug Curlee is Editor at Large. Reach him at doug@sdcnn. com.■

NEWS BRIEFS

Salvation Army bells ring again

The Salvation Army's Red Kettle fundraising drive has begun and will continue through Christmas Eve. The Kroc Center will host a number of the Salvation Army's Red Kettles at locations throughout East San Diego, La Mesa and Lemon Grove. Ringing bells are always associated with the 133-year tradition of the Red Kettle drive. Funds collected in the Kroc Center Red Kettles will benefit the Family Resource Center.

New gallery and framing shop opens

Roz and Dan Oserin recently opened Nainsook Framing + Art at 8130 La Mesa Blvd. in the West Village. Nainsook means "eye pleasure" in Hindi.

The business offers custom framing for two-dimensional art, and specialty framing of sports memorabilia and family treasures. The gallery's art selection includes two-dimensional oil and watercolor paintings, fiber sculpture, ceramics and wood items from local artists. A variety of art classes, workshops and their popular "Creative YOU" Wine + Art classes will also be offered.

The Oserins also own Pret-a-Porter Salon & Spa nearby in the Village. The Nainsook Framing + Art website address is nainsookframing.com.



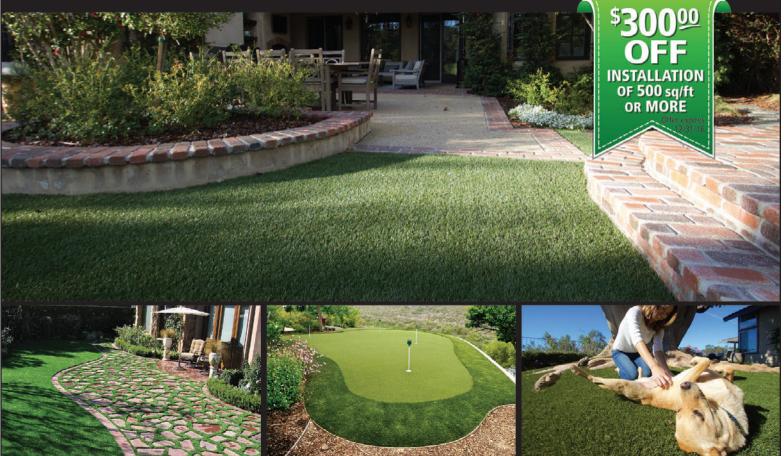
Oliver "Ollie" Shirley IV

Eagle Scout earns every badge possible

Eagle Scout Oliver "Ollie" Shirley IV, a 17-year-old member of St. Martin of Tours Catholic Church in La Mesa's Troop 51, has earned all 36 merit badges offered by the Boy Scouts of America (BSA). In addition, he was awarded the William T. Hornaday Award and the Thomas Edison Supernova Award. Fewer than 350 Scouts from the United Sates have ever earned every merit badge offered by the BSA during its 106-year history.

Shirley, a senior in the Engineering Academy at Patrick Henry High School and avid outdoorsman and naturalist, earned the William T. Hornaday Award for service in ecology and conservation — an award only shared by 2,200 Scouts since the award was established in 1914. Using the knowledge he obtained from earning the Bird Study, Woodwork, Carpentry, and Drafting merit badges,

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Murray Manor Elementary gets grant for student iPads

Yusife **Nazir**

The Barona Education Grant is intended to serve schools that have the highest needs due to their lack of funding and other factors that place them in a deficit. Thanks to Anderson, who was the endorsing legislator for Murray Manor Elementary school this year, the hardship which the school faced has now been relieved. Anderson has been involved with the grant program since 2006.

Murray Manor Elementary School was unable to ensure protection for the school's iPads, a critical tool that has been integrated within the school's curriculum and a key component in facilitating learning for the students. As a result of the generous donation from the Barona Educational Grant program, the elementary school can now purchase 125 iPad cases, ensuring that these tools remain available for future grade-schoolers.

"Barona has displayed unconditional support for our community's youth and education, and I am honored to be part of Murray Manor Elementary School's application to witness the great impact the donation will bring," Anderson said. "Thanks to Barona's generosity, a local school will be able to secure future students' access to technology."

—Yusife Nazir is a legislative intern for Sen. Joel Anderson's office.■



State Sen. Joel Anderson speaks to students and faculty at Murray Manor Elementary School on Oct. 28. Anderson was there to support the Barona Education Grant, which was given to Murray to fund technology in the classrooms. (Courtesy of Sen. Joel Anderson's office)



Taking flight: I recently joined East County business leaders for a special groundbreaking next to Gillespie Field.

We formally kicked off the first stage of construction for the Cajon Air Center, a planned, 70- acre hub of new hangers and other aviationrelated businesses. The massive project is expected to create 1,200 jobs during construction and 440 permanent positions after that.

That's a huge plus for our East County economy – jobs, jobs, jobs! Major road improvements near Gillespie are also in the works. The Board of Supervisors last year jump-started funding to improve the Bradley Avenue and state Route 67 interchange.

Construction will be overseen by the state and could start as soon as next year.

Grand openings: Ribbon-cutting ceremonies are one of the best parts of my job. It's great to see so many wonderful projects opening across our community.

I recently helped cut the ribbon at ceremonies marking the completion of a new track at Oak Grove Middle School in Jamul, an athletic field at STEAM Academy in Spring Valley and new memory care units at Noah Homes in Rancho San Diego, the first of their kind in the state. The county helped fund each project.

Tapped out: Help is now

available through the county for property owners with dry wells due to drought.

Those who qualify can receive lowinterest loans to replace individual water well systems and install temporary water tanks. The assistance is not for landscaping or agricultural needs.

For more information, email the County Office of Emergency Services at readysd@sdcounty.ca.gov or call 858-565-3490.

For more District 2 news, go todiannejacob.com or follow me on Facebook and Twitter. If I can assist with a county issue, please call my office at 619-531-5522 or email dianne.jacob@sdcounty.ca.gov.

Have a great East County day!

—Dianne Jacobs is San Diego County Supervisor for District 2.■









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In addition to being able to purchase charitable gifts, traditional trinkets like jewelry will be on sale at the Alternative Christmas Fair. (Courtesy of La Mesa First United Methodist Church)

A Christmas alternative

Joyell Nevins

The holiday season is upon us. A time for materialism and superfluous shopping, a time for packages overflowing and debilitating cases of the "gimme's"... but what if there was an alternative? Many churches in the area are offering ways to give and groups to support without partaking in the mall mania.

Alternative fairs

La Mesa United Methodist Church is one of the churches hosting an "Alternative Christmas Market," helping several local nonprofits and international organizations.

"Rather than buying a gift card for a restaurant, you can do something that has a long-lasting impact," Ann Buffington said of the market. Buffington is one of several volunteers that are helping to coordinate the festive event.

The market will feature several booths with agencies ranging from Mama's Kitchen, which delivers three meals a day at no charge to local men, women and children living with AIDS or cancer (they've delivered 8 million meals since their formation in 1990), to the Heifer Project, which provides livestock to families for food and sustainable income. You can buy "gifts" to support the projects in honor of yourself or others.

"We're supporting nonprofits that do the grunt work," Buffington said.

The market also supports the church's own ministries like their part in the local Interfaith Shelter Network, where they open up the building to the homeless and offer

food, showers and clothing, or the international Guatemala Project.

The church sends a regular group to Guatemala to help build stoves in people's homes for heating and cooking purposes. They bring back items the women have woven to sell at the market. That money goes back to the people of Guatemala.

The Alternative Christmas Market is from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 4 in the church's social hall. La Mesa United Methodist Church is located at 4690 Palm Ave.

First United Methodist Church of San Diego at 2111 Camino Del Rio South hosts an "Alternative Christmas Gift Fair" as well. Theirs is open during Sunday services on Sunday Dec. 4 and Dec. 11 – 9 a.m., 10:30 a.m., and noon.

First United Methodist also supports both local and international ministries. They have gift options from one dollar, which could buy a notebook for a San Diego inmate through the Kairos Prison Ministries, to \$150, which would provide a well and safe water for a family in southeast Asia through Americans Helping Asian Children.

The gift fair also funds ministries that work with Haitian refugees, local elementary children, ex-offenders, AIDS patients, and women escaping violent relationships. It contributes to the salaries of Methodist missionaries in Tanzania, Palestine, Cambodia, and the Tijuana borderlands. Overall, the fair offers options for 10 local groups and seven different international ministries.

If you can't make it on a Sunday morning, visit online. The church will offer an online store for the alternative fair that opens Nov. 28 at fumcsd.org/ChristmasGifts.

The Giving Tree

If you still want the shopping hustle and bustle experience while giving back, you can purchase a child's gift for The Giving Tree at Mission Trails Church.

The church will be collecting Christmas gifts for families in need at Foster Elementary School at Allied Gardens, which lists more than 50 percent of its student population as "socioeconomically disadvantaged."

The tree will also support families at the special education school Springall Academy in San Carlos. The academy states it serves K-12 students facing an array of challenges, including learning disabilities, emotional and behavioral disorders and autism, and specializes in serving those with multiple disabilities.

"The families are terrific – they



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• Alternative, from page 16

just face some challenges larger than the average family with school-aged kids," Pastor Kyle Walters said "So since 2010 w made it a commitment to do what we can to help the faculty, students and families flourish.'

The church event hopes to get gifts such as clothes for elementary school kids, as well as sports toys such as jump ropes, Frisbees, soccer balls, basketballs and footballs. Gifts can be dropped off on Sundays Dec. 4 and 11, and will be delivered to families on Thursday, Dec. 18. The church is located at 4880 Zion Ave. For more information, call 619-582-2033.

-Freelance writer Joyell Nevins can be reached at joyellc@gmail. com. You can also follow her blog Small World, Big God at swblog. wordpress.com.

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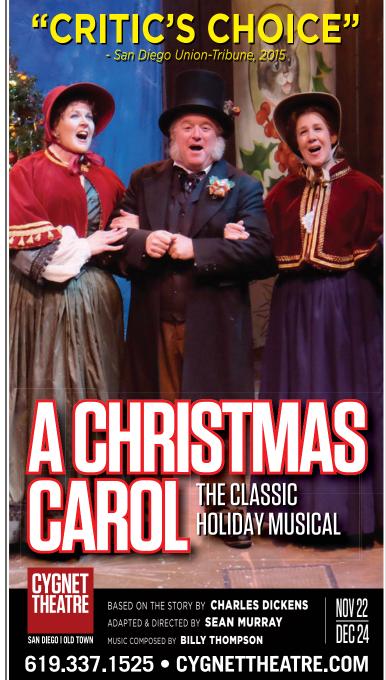
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The downtown waterfront location is slated to close Jan. 31, 2017, so make your holiday reservations now and relive your memories at the Embarcadero while you still can. The La Mesa location will remain open and offers a freshly renovated interior, beautiful outdoor patio dining, dog-friendly outdoor seating, and relaxing views of our spring-fed pond.

New happy hour treats like Filet Mignon Flautas and Jalapeno Cheese Crab Bites compliment a fully discounted beer, wine, and cocktail list Monday thru Friday 3:30-6:30 p.m.

Started by Catherine "Mama" Ghio in 1946, Anthony's Fish Grotto is still family owned and operated by her grandchildren. Her recipes and sauces are still closely held secrets made to the same exacting standards she demanded 70 years ago.

▶ News Briefs, from page 14

Shirley constructed, installed and spent two years monitoring 12 small bird nest boxes for Mission Trails Regional Park (MTRP), benefiting House Wrens, Ash-Throated Flycatchers, Bewick's Wrens, Tree Swallows, Western Bluebirds and House Finches.

Other Boy Scout awards he earned include the God and Life Religious Emblem; Dr. Bernard Harris (Bronze) and Thomas Edison (Silver) Supernova Awards for achievement in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics; James M. Stewart Good Citizenship Award; El Camino Real High Adventure medal; 50-Miler Award; 75 Nights Camping Award; two Eagle Silver Palms; a Certificate of Appreciation from the City of San Diego Parks and Recreation Department; and declared "Outstanding Youth" by the Rolando Community Council.



Quarry Apartment Homes (Courtesy of CBRE Group, Inc.)

Apartment complex sells for \$17 million

CBRE Group Inc. announced the sale of The Quarry Apartment Homes, 4330 Palm Ave., for \$17 million. The luxury apartment community is comprised of three three-story buildings and 60 units, with an average unit size of 717 square feet. It includes a total of 43,765 square feet of residential space on 1.59 acres of land.

Kevin Mulhern and Rachel Parsons of CBRE Group Inc. represented the seller, Silvergate Development, based in San Diego. The buyer was an affiliate of John Jaffe Company, LP.

Deadline nears for free and reduced-cost meals

Residents with children attending the La Mesa-Spring Valley School District may apply for the Free and Reduced Meals program. Those whose families qualify for the program must complete and submit their application by Nov. 29. The federally subsidized program helps participating children receive proper nutrition, which aids in keeping students healthy and focused during class. Students in the program are assigned a PIN/student ID number that they may use to access the reduced or free lunches at school. Applications may be found at all La Mesa-Spring Valley schools as well as online at LMSVSchools.org.

Meeting the deadline is not only important for the students participating, but the number of qualified applicants count in the state's distribution of funding for local schools.



A Heartland Fire ladder truck helps raise the flag in Fletcher Hills. (Courtesy of Kiwanis Club of Fletcher Hills)

Fletcher Hills receives new flag

The Kiwanis Club of Fletcher Hills raised a new United States flag at the intersection of Fletcher Hills and Navajo Road, and the old, worn one at the site received an honorable retirement during a Nov. 19

A ladder truck from the Heartland Fire and Rescue Service was used to hoist the new 5-by-8-foot version of Old Glory. The Kiwanis Club of Fletcher Hills maintains the flag, the pole and the lighting, which illuminates the flag around the clock each day. According to a plaque on the flagpole base, the Optimist Club of Cowles Mountain erected the flagpole in 1968 and is "maintained in perpetuity" by the Kiwanis.

Fletcher Hills Kiwanis president Tim Horning and Heartland Fire Chief Ted Kakuris coordinated the event.



Alvarado Medical Group is moving into the former CitiBank building on Jackson Drive. (Courtesy of Lee & Associates)

Final day for donations approaches

Monday, Nov. 28 is the last day the La Mesa Chamber of Commerce will be accepting food and clothing items donated for homebound seniors in the area before the items are packed for distribution. The purpose of the collection is to help make the holiday season a little brighter for homebound senior citizens in La Mesa. Items still needed include canned food, crackers, breakfast bars, snacks and toiletries.

Items for donation may be dropped off Friday or Monday between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. at the La Mesa Chamber of Commerce office, 8080 La Mesa Blvd.. Suite 212. If unable to deliver the items and need them to be picked up, call Mary England, 619-251-7730.

La Mesa property leased to medical group

Lee & Associates completed an eight-year lease on behalf of Alvarado Medical Group for a 4,641-square-foot building at 5332 Jackson Drive in La Mesa. The lease is valued at slightly more than \$1 million. Jeff Abramson and Marc Dudzik of Lee & Associates-North County represented the landlord, KLTK Properties, LLC as well as the tenant, Alvarado Medical Group. Alvarado Medical Group offers primary care and medical specialists.

"The site is centrally located near Grossmont Center and adjacent to Interstate 8," Abramson said in a prepared statement. "This also allows them to expand their needed services in an area that is limited in the number of properties that will allow this type of medical facility without lengthy approvals from the city.

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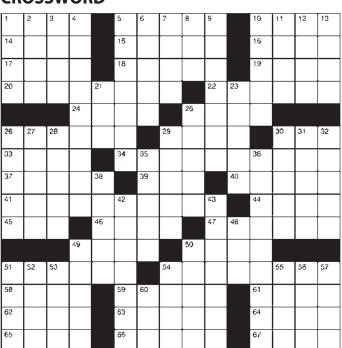
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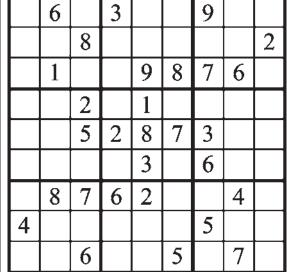
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SUDOKU

Fill in the blank cells using numbers 1 to 9. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and 3x3 block. Use logic and process elimination to solve the puzzle.



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Handyman/Carpentry

BOOKS 20 La Mesa Courier | Nov. 25 - Dec. 22, 2016 sdcnn.com

Books to help you see other points of view



he unavoidable news of the moment is, of course, the results of the presidential election. While some people are thrilled by the outcome, others are frightened and uncertain about what the future holds. What I can say from us here at the library is that we are here for everyone. It doesn't matter your age, race, faith, employment status, gender, country of origin, sexual orientation or who you voted for. We will help everyone with respect — with the one caveat, that you treat each other with respect.

On that general theme, here are some books that can help us all see each other's points of view, books about the struggles, suffering and successes of some of the diverse members of our nation and community.

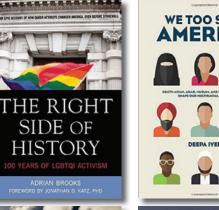
Sociologist Arlie Russell Hochschild decided that she needed to get out of her bubble in Berkeley, California, and went to live in one of the poorest regions of Louisiana. In-depth stories of the lives of rural white families on the edge of poverty make up her acclaimed book "Strangers

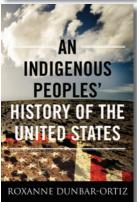
in Their Own Land: Anger and Mourning on the American Right." Along similar lines, Matthew Desmond's "Evicted: Power and Profit in America" is about the appalling way in which once-rare evictions have become commonplace among some of the nation's poorest.

Michelle Alexander's "The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness" is about racism faced by African-Americans, particularly as it relates to law enforcement, prison and the "war on drugs." The book also pushes back hard against the idea that American racism is over. Wesley Lowrey's upcoming "They Can't Kill Us All: Ferguson, Baltimore and a New Era in America's Racial Justice Movement" is a highly-anticipated book about the journalist's experiences covering police violence and the protest movement that has sprung up to oppose it.

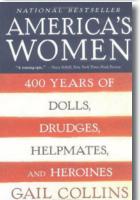
"We Too Sing America: South Asian, Muslim and Sikh Immigrants Shape Our Multicultural Future" is Deepya Iyer's examination of the lives of these immigrant groups, and the impact of terrorism, fear, and bigotry on their lives. The book focuses on the racial profiling and attacks that this group has faced since Sept. 11, 2001.

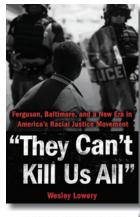
"An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States" by Roxanne

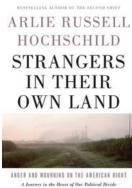


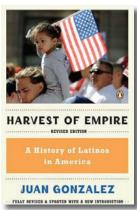


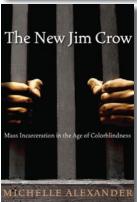












Dunbar-Ortiz won an American Book Award in 2015 for its look at 400 years of American history from the point of view of Native Americans instead of European immigrants. Erika Lee's "The Making of Asian America" is another history book, featuring Asian immigrants' experiences from the nation's earliest days, their struggles against racism, and the complicated social situations of modern times.

Juan Gonzalez's "Harvest of Empire: A History of Latinos in America" is a hefty volume chronicling Latinos in North America

from the colonial period to the present, including new immigrants and long-time citizens. If you want a guicker read, there is also "Latino USA: A Cartoon History," which tells the long tale of Latinos with a lighter tone, fully illustrated by artist Lalo Alcarez and written by Ilan Stevens.

Gail Collins' book "America's Women: 400 Years of Dolls, Drudges, Helpmates and Heroines" tells the stories of generations of individual women of all ethnicities and backgrounds, while also looking at how women's lives were shaped by changing

times, and how women themselves also did the shaping. And Adrian Brooks' "The Right Side of History: 100 Years of LGBTQ Activism" is a compendium of essays and first-person accounts of life for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender folks, with focus on the individuals involved in the struggle for their civil rights.

-Jake Sexton is librarian at the La Mesa branch of the San Diego County Library. Call the library at 619-469-2151, visit in person at 8074 Alison Ave., or get information online at sdcl.org.

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Healthy tune-ups at Sheldon's

Frank Sabatini Jr.



on't let the name fool you. Sheldon's Service Station isn't in the business of oil changes and brake jobs. It hasn't been for at least 50 years. But the bones of the circa-1920 building remain largely intact, and they've given way to a charming café that serves breakfast and lunch daily.

Business partners Aaron Dean and Gy Kirk launched the La Mesa Village venture in October, and they'll soon open down the street Boulevard Noodles and Boulevard Yogurt. A third and much larger project is also in their pipeline – Depot Springs Beer Company, which will encompass a brewing facility, restaurant, kid's zone and amphitheater when it opens early next year at 9401 Fletcher Parkway.

At Sheldon's, they've introduced a bright and healthy bill of fare that includes fluffy potato latkes topped with vegan crème fraiche and apple-pear compote; blue corn chilaquiles with poached eggs, black beans and smoked tomatillo salsa; and a couple of creative takes on avocado toast. They're among the morning starts that rival your everyday pancake and omelet plates.

In lieu of the Milanese-style avocado toast with arugula. burrata and aged balsamic, we chose the za'atar version featuring two slices of multi-grain

Sheldon's Service Station 8401 La Mesa Blvd. Prices: Breakfast, \$6.50 to \$13; lunch \$6 to \$11

bread crowned with watermelon radishes, Greek yogurt and two expertly poached eggs. Adding depth of flavor was a dusting of Middle Eastern spices (za'atar), which paired swimmingly to the generous layers of smashed avocado in the construct.

Lunch potentially begins with a

bowl of earthy Portobello mushroom soup spiked with chives and a little cream. Smooth and rich, it was as meaty tasting as chili con carne, sans the beef and heavy dose of cholesterol.

From the midday menu, we progressed to a couple of outstanding sandwiches while skipping over two different salads, one of which mingles arugula, apples, shaved fennel and burrata, and the other featuring quinoa, roasted butternut squash, haricot verts and pomegranate

Much to my liking, the albacore tuna salad incorporates a good measure of hardboiled eggs, just like the way my mom used to

make it. The mixture was generously contained between slices of toasted multi-grain bread along with arugula and fresh tomatoes.

The daily panini was impossible to pass up – blistered jalapenos with Monterey Jack cheese, tomatoes, cilantro, Sriracha, and optional bacon to boot. My companion, who is fearful of spicy foods, embraced the sandwich's medium heat level without drama. So well-conceived, I vote that it becomes a fixture on the regular lunch menu.

Seating at Sheldon's is mostly outdoors, on a spacious, inviting patio the owners added to the property. Inside is an order counter, where Café Moto coffee drinks are made in eyeshot of a display case flaunting muffins and pastries. Beer and wine are

also available.

A few vestiges from the servicestation days remain in place, such as an arched window on the side of the building, a wooden door that led to the station's small office, and some non-active wiring on a ceiling that fits the café's historic aesthetic.

On the front of the building is a plaque by the La Mesa Historical Society honoring George Sheldon for constructing "one of the first full-service gas stations in La Mesa." It also features an old photograph of the structure at a time when the area was much sleepier.

Sheldon's location is idyllic. It sits across the street from Legacy Park and is a stone's throw from La Mesa Boulevard's shops and restaurants, which include the newish Coin Haus as well as Bo-beau Kitchen + Garden, both operated by Cohn Restaurant Group.

'We came in at the right time," Dean said. "There are a lot more millennials and young families moving into the area. In a couple of years, people will be shocked at what a really cool neighborhood this has turned out to be.'

Sheldon's operates from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. daily, although starting Nov. 15 it will stay open until 8 p.m. In addition, live acoustic music is held on the patio from 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays.

—Frank Sabatini Jr. is the author of "Secret San Diego" (ECW Press), and began his local writing career more than two decades ago as a staffer for the former San Diego Tribune. Reach him at fsabatini@san.rr.com.
■



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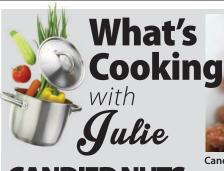
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CANDIED NUTS

Julie Ann White

Candied nuts are so fun to have out when company arrives or just for yourself for snacking. They are delicious eaten out of the bowl or over salads and are perfect as a holiday gift. Merry Christmas and Happy Hanukkah!



Candied nuts are perfect for the holidays (Stock image)

Ingredients:

1 pound of pecans

1 pound almonds (nuts can be raw or roasted)

1 cup granulated sugar 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon

pinch of salt pinch of Cayenne pepper

1 egg white, beaten 3 tablespoons water

Directions:

Preheat oven to 250 degrees. Whisk egg white and water in

In another bowl, mix remaining ingredients. Toss nuts into egg white mixture and mix until nuts are coated.

Spread nuts mixture on a cookie sheet and bake for one

Toss after 30 minutes. Cool and enjoy!

GETHER. 619.445.6002 | SYCUAN.COM GUESTS MUST BE 18+ TO ENTER CASINO AND RESTAURANTS, MUST BE 21+ TO ENTER THEATRE AND SPORTS BAR, PLEASE PLAY RESPONSIBLY,

Don't take your pets for granted during holidays

Sari Reis



As the holidays approach, I encourage you to invite your social, furry kids to participate in as many festive experiences as possible.

When friends and relatives come to visit, allow your pets to interact with guests, rather than relegating them to a crate or behind a closed door. If you are planning a festive meal, provide some special healthy treats that they can enjoy while you are sitting at the table.

If travel plans are part of your holiday agenda, take your dogs with you if you can. There are so many hotels, motels and restaurants now that allow well-behaved dogs as patrons and I know the furry kids would rather be with you than left at home. Check out the venues you plan to visit to see if dogs are allowed and if so, bring them along. If not permitted, see if there is a doggie daycare nearby where they can enjoy some fun romping around with their peers

while you are engaged. If traveling with your dogs is not an option, or you have other animals that require care while you are away, hire a professional pet sitter or engage the services of someone who is trustworthy, responsible and knowledgeable to care for them. Not only will they get the love and attention they deserve while you are away, but you will have the peace of mind knowing they are happy and well cared for in your absence.

As the new year approaches and you start to set goals for 2017, be sure to include your pets in your plans. Promise yourself you will feed your dogs and cats the highest quality food you can comfortably afford. Schedule more frequent walks with your dog. The exercise will be good for both of you. Purchase that wonderful cat tree for your kitty so he gets to sit in a high place by the window and enjoy the outdoors safely. Promise to give your furry kids as



Make sure to include your pets in the season's festivities. (Stock image)

much of your time, care and attention as you can possibly manage, and commit yourself to getting them to the vet for their wellness exams. Don't wait until they start showing signs of ill health.

Last month, due to ill health, I regrettably was unable to do my regular dog walks and pet visits and I cannot tell you how much I missed that part of my life. I missed the kitty headbutts and watching the crazy antics of a tabby with a new catnip toy. I longed for the feel of a dog's soft fur, their messy et kisses and the wagging tails that tell me how happy they are $% \left\{ 1,2,...,n\right\}$ to see me.

I tell you all of this in the hope of making you realize, if you don't already, how incredibly blessed we are as pet parents to have these fantastic companions in our lives. They love you unconditionally. Please don't take them for granted during the holidays, or any other time.

—Sari Reis is a Certified Humane Educator and the owner of Mission Valley Pet Sitting Services. For more information you can contact her at 760-644-0289 or www.missionvall eypets itting.com.

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FEATURED EVENTS

La Mesa Shimmer Thursday, Dec. 1

This event will feature holiday window displays around La Mesa Village, a hot chocolate bar, live music and a lighting ceremony at Legacy Park. The event will be held from 4:30–6:30 p.m. with the lighting at 5 p.m. Visit cityoflamesa.us/shimmer for more info.



'Coping with Grief During the Holiday Season' Thursday, Dec. 1

This free program will provide insight and identify strategies for coping with grief during the holidays. Randye Golden-Grant, LCSW, Sharp HospiceCare Bereavement Counselor will lead this event from 2–3 p.m. at the Grossmont Health Care District Conference Center (9001 Wakarusa St., La Mesa). Reservations required. Call 800-827-4277 or visit sharp.com to register.



2016 Teen Service Summit Sunday, Dec. 4

Motiv San Diego is hosting this summit and inviting high school teen artists, athletes, techies, entrepreneurs and leaders. The summit will show attendees how to connect their interests with volunteering with hands-on workshops, service projects and a "nonprofit expo." Use code MyMotivIs for free registration. The summit will be from 11:45 a.m.—5 p.m. at SDSU's Montezuma Hall (6075 Aztec Circle Drive). Visit bit.ly/2fiYAfO to register.

La Mesa Chamber holiday mixer and toy drive Tuesday, Dec. 6

The La Mesa Chamber of Commerce is hosting a holiday mixer at BJ's Restaurant & Brewhouse (5500 Grossmont Center Drive, La Mesa) from 5:30–7 p.m. Attendees are invited to enjoy food and fun while donating new, unwrapped toys to be distributed to military children ages 2–13 years old living in La Mesa. Admission is free for chamber members, \$10 for guests and \$20 at the door. Bringing a new, unwrapped toy will entitle you to two drink tickets. Toys can also be dropped off at Uneeke Boutique (4674 Nebo Drive) and Westside Automotive (7227 University Ave.). Visit bit.ly/2fj9imh for more information.



The Boulevard Stroll Wednesday, Dec. 7

Join neighbors and friends at this monthly stroll along La Mesa Boulevard from 5–8 p.m. There will be deals and special guests featured at participating businesses; activities for kids; local artists on hand; and music and entertainment. This month's stroll will feature a visit from Santa Claus. Attendees can also vote on their favorite holiday storefront. Visit lamesaboulevardstroll.com for more details.

'Holiday Open House' Wednesday, Dec. 14

The La Mesa Adult Enrichment Center (8450 La Mesa Blvd.) is hosting an open house from 9:30–11:30 a.m. to showcase the programs and services of the center. There will be food, fun and entertainment. Visit cityoflamesa.com for more information and call 619-667-1322 to RSVP.

MUSIC NOTES

Live music: California Note Catchers Saturday, Dec. 3

This women's four-part harmony chorus will perform a free show at the La Mesa Library (8074 Allison Ave., La Mesa) at noon. The chorus will perform classic, traditional and international holiday music. Visit californianotecatchers.com for more information.

Carolers on Mt. Helix

11 Sunday, Dec. 11

The Full Measure carolers will lead participants in the annual free, family-friendly sing-along at Helix Park from 4 to 7 p.m. The caroling portion of the event will begin at 5:15 p.m., but the pre-caroling entertainment will be provided by Da Capa Al Fine, a quintet composed of members from the Mainly Mozart Youth Advanced Orchestra. The evening also features a visit from Santa, complimentary cocoa, hot apple cider, coffee and cookies. Free parking and shuttles begin at 3 p.m. in the lots next to the San Miguel Fire Station at the corner of Mt. Helix Drive and Vivera Drive. For more information visit mthelixpark.org.

3rd annual 'An Evening of Readings & Carols'

18 Sunday, Dec. 18

St. Martin of Tours Catholic Church (7710 El Cajon Blvd., La Mesa) will host this event featuring San Diego Pro Arte Voices at 7 p.m. Musical selections will be paired with readings by guest speakers. Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$5 for students and free for children 5 and under. Visit SDproartevoices.org and stmartinoftoursparish.org for more information.

ON FILM

Movies at the city of La Mesa Adult Enrichment Center THUR Thursdays

Each Thursday, the Adult Enrichment Center (8450 La Mesa Blvd.) hosts a movie screening in its main hall. The movies start at 1 p.m. and cost \$1 to attend. Upcoming films include:

• Dec. 1: "My Fair Lady" • Dec. 8: "Christmas Story" • Dec. 15: "Love Actually" • Dec. 22: "It's a Wonderful Life" | Visit cityoflamesa.com for more information.

GALLERY VIEWS

25 PDEC 'Four of a Kind'
Through Friday, Dec. 2

Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation is presenting this exhibition featuring four award-winning photographers: Janine Free, Jill Rowe, Kirk Sullivan and Jennifer Wolf. The exhibit will be on display in Mission Trails Regional Park Visitor Center Art Gallery (1 Father Junipero Serra Trail) through Dec. 2. Visit mtrp.org for more details.

JAN DEC 'Natural Views' 10 Dec. 3-Jan. 6; re

10 Dec. 3-Jan. 6; reception Saturday, Dec. 10 The Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation

(MTRP) presents an art exhibit featuring works from student artists in the Grossmont Union High School District. The exhibit will be displayed in the MTRP Visitor Center Art Gallery Dec. 3-Jan. 6. The public is invited to attend a reception for the artists on Saturday, Dec. 10 from 1 to 4 p.m. Schools with students participating in the exhibit include Grossmont, Idea, Monte Vista, Mount Miguel, Steele Canyon, Valhalla and West Hills. The MTRP Visitor and Interpretive Center is located at 1 Father Junipero Serra Trail, and is open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, visit mtrp.org.

11



La Mesa artist honored by Watercolor Society
Sunday, Dec. 11; Showing Dec. 11-30

The San Diego Watercolor Society (SDWS) will honor La Mesa artist Jay Andrews as Plein Air Painter Extraordinaire with a showing of his work Dec. 11–30 at the SDWS Gallery in the Arts District in Liberty Station. An opening reception will be held Dec. 11 from 1 to 3 p.m. Andrews, now in his 90s, has painted scenes outdoors in San Diego for numerous years. Andrews practiced architecture from his one-man office in La Mesa for 50 years before retiring. For more information, visit sdws.org.

TAGE CUES



'These Shining Lives'

Thursday, Dec. 1–Saturday, Dec. 3 and Thursday, Dec. 8–Saturday, Dec. 10 Grossmont College's Stagehouse Theatre (8800 Grossmont College

Drive, El Cajon) presents this play, directed by Beth Duugan, about the true story of the women who formed a bond of kinship as they fought the Radium Dial Company in their search for justice and how their sacrifice forged a legacy of better working conditions for future generations. Visit bit.ly/2efnnou for tickets and showtimes.

Jesus Christ Superstar' Thursday, Dec. 1–Sunday, Dec. 4

A concert collaboration between the SDSU Schools of Theatre, Television, and Film; and Music and Dance will be staged in the school's Don Powell Theatre (5500 Campanile Drive). The popular rock musical by Andrew Lloyd Weber and Tim Rice is known for its unique storytelling from the perspective of Judas Iscariot. Visit artsalive.sdsu.edu for showtimes and tickets.

'Rented Christmas: The Musical' 18 Friday, Dec. 2 – Sunday, Dec. 18

This holiday play at Lamplighters Community Theatre (5915 Severin Drive, La Mesa) tells the story of a middle-aged bachelor and businessman who asks a local rent shop for an unusual rental. He wants to rent a Christmas – not just a tree and carols but one with a wife and family and the happiness he is longing for. Visit lamplighterslamesa.com for tickets and showtimes.

'The Gate: A Christmas Pageant' Sunday, Dec. 18

The youth of the United Church of Christ of La Mesa (UCCLM) will perform a special Christmas pageant during Sunday worship at 10 a.m. UCCLM is an open and affirming congregation. All are welcome. 5940 Kelton Ave., La Mesa. Visit tableucc.com for more information. ■

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