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"Toby," a sculpture of a T. rex by Ricardo Breceda, will be added to a public park in the La Mesa Summit Estates housing development. (Photo by Jeff Clemetson)

Dinosaur sculpture goes up on site of future housing development

Jeff Clemetson
Editor

Jeff Phair and his wife were enjoying a Labor Day drive through the backcountry around Temecula when the dinosaur "came up."

That's the way Phair described how he came across the sculpture of a Tyrannosaurus rex that now sits atop a property he owns and will soon be developing, located off Eastridge Drive in La Mesa.

"My wife and my sons and I installed it there as a tribute

to my boys more than anything else," Phair said. "When they were little — they're now in their 30s — they loved dinosaurs."

And so do a lot of other people. After the dinosaur

See **DINOSAUR** page 12 —>

Water Festival highlights recycled wastewater project

Doug Curlee
Editor at Large

A lot of people came to the Sept. 8 East County Water Festival at Santee Lakes. Most of them were motivated by curiosity about plans to recycle wastewater for eventual use as potable (drinkable) water for the future.

The festival was created and promoted by Padre Dam Municipal Water District, which provides water and sewer services for Santee and a number of other East County systems.



East County residents take a tour of the water recycling system at Santee Lakes. (Photo by Doug Curlee)

See **WATER PROJECT** page 25 —>

NEWS BRIEFS

Chamber, Barnes & Noble team up to 'Stuff the Jeep'

The La Mesa Chamber of Commerce and Barnes & Noble at Grossmont Center invite the public to purchase a book to donate to the Chamber's annual "La Mesa Military Families Holiday Project." The books may be purchased at Barnes & Noble at Grossmont Center from Sep. 29 through Oct. 27.

La Mesa Chamber of Commerce's Military Families Holiday Project gathers new toys, diapers and other items for military families that are living in the two military housing locations in La Mesa, and family members deployed during the holidays.

This event is called "Stuff the Jeep" and there will be a Jeep — on loan from La Mesa's Carl Burger Dodge Chrysler Jeep RAM World — in Grossmont Center beginning Oct. 22. On Oct. 27 at 3:30 p.m., all of the books that have been donated will be brought out and "stuffed" in the Jeep and handed off to the La Mesa Chamber to be included in the Chamber's annual military children and families holiday enhancement project.

To participate, visit Barnes & Noble in Grossmont Center and pick a book from the stack of books available to donate to the military families. All those that donate a book will be given a raffle ticket. Raffles will be held for prizes on Oct. 27, noon-4 p.m. In addition to the raffle, there will be children's activities such as crafts, special story time and more. The day's raffle prizes are being donated by Barnes & Noble, Carl Burger Dodge Chrysler Jeep RAM World, Grossmont Center and the La Mesa Chamber of Commerce.

For more information about this project, visit lamesachamber.com.

See **NEWS BRIEFS** page 7 —>



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A new normal

La Mesan shares life in the aftermath of father’s suicide in book

Joyell Nevins

[Editor’s note: September is National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. For information about suicide prevention, visit suicidepreventionlifeline.org. If you or someone you know is contemplating suicide, call 1-800-273-8255.]

The act of suicide crosses all racial, financial, and social barriers. It doesn’t play favorites, and it always leaves people hurting in its wake. Yet, for Anna Cambria, people who take their own life or the survivors left behind was hardly ever discussed.

This lifelong La Mesa resident is trying to change that with her book “My New Normal: Surviving Suicide Loss.” Cambria’s “perfect” world was turned upside down at 22-years-old, when her father committed suicide. Cambria was unaware of any struggles he had been dealing with, and was suddenly swept up in a sea of confusion, grief, and anger.

But she didn’t know who to talk to about those emotions, who would understand. She was surrounded by people who meant well, but didn’t know what to say or how to handle the situation either.

So Cambria started journaling — writing down her emotions and letting it all out on paper. She turned those entries and her chronicle into a cohesive story, in order to bring hope and encouragement to those in similar situations.

“We, the people that are left behind, have to deal with it for the rest of our lives,” Cambria said. “I thought maybe I could share my feelings with others, so they would know they are not alone.”

The call that changed everything

Cambria is an only child, and has lived in the same house since she was 3 months old. It was her grandparents’ house before that, so her family’s connections to La Mesa go back far. Cambria loved her parents and describes her childhood as “wonderful” and herself as “spoiled with attention.”

She and her dad were both Disney fans, and some of her

best memories are day trips to Disneyland with mom and dad. The park is exactly 100 miles from their house, and they had it down to a science. Drive up in the morning, hit the big rides first, and still be home in time for bed.

Cambria remembers her dad as outgoing, optimistic, and incredibly creative. One of his paintings is now the cover of her book, showing a child filled with wonder looking up at the heavens. He was a self-employed industrial designer, even inventing a type of headphone that was sold worldwide. He was known to get up at 3 a.m. with ideas. One time when inspiration struck in the shower, he used her mom’s eyeliner pencil to write out the concept on the shower wall!

On June 24, 2016, Cambria was at home, getting ready to go the beach with her boyfriend. Then an unexpected and frantic call came from her mother: Mom told Cambria her dad was in the hospital. Her mother said physically, her dad was okay; mentally, he was not.

“It’s not an easy topic. People, especially adult men, don’t want to show weakness. I want to begin the discussion and end the stigma — because it’s important.”

—Anna Cambria

“I can clearly remember that conversation,” Cambria said, sharing the surrealness of it. “It was just a normal day.”

She found out her dad had been discovered in his office after overdosing on Valium right before an important business meeting. He had left two typed suicide notes, one for Cambria and her mother, the other for the men coming to the meeting. The notes shared the truth of investments gone sour and a business belly-up. The money was gone, and the debts were high.

But instead of the business associates finding her dad, it was her mom who walked in on him barely conscious on the floor of his lab.

The one regret

Dad was hospitalized for three days, and set up with a therapy group. He only attended two therapy sessions, telling his family he “didn’t need it ... that most people in the group had lost loved ones and they were the ones who needed to be there, not him.”

Cambria said her dad was too embarrassed to tell anyone about what happened, and didn’t want Cambria or her mother to either. The story given to friends and family was that he was in the hospital for stress.

But even at home, his attempt and the reasons behind it wasn’t a topic of conversation.



Anna Cambria and a copy of her book “My New Normal: Surviving Suicide Loss”

“We kind of avoided future discussion. I was more afraid to know the answers [than to ask tough questions],” Cambria said. “I regret not bringing it up.”

That’s one of the reasons Cambria has written and published her book now: to bring those conversations into the open.

“It’s not an easy topic. People, especially adult men, don’t want to show weakness,” Cambria said. “I want to begin the discussion and end the stigma — because it’s important.”

A ‘drastic permanent solution’

A week after he came home, Cambria said her dad seemed back to his normal self. He started a new job through a network connection, and while she was still “living in constant stress,” Cambria and her mom had lessened up on their “constant surveillance” of him.

The first clue everything was not back to normal was the afternoon of July 8, 2016. Cambria and her mom came back from a Friday morning mass, thinking dad was at work, and a neighbor told them police had been at the house that morning. The police had referenced a car found on the side of the highway registered to that address, but wouldn’t give any more information.

After finally tracking down the right police branch and department, they discovered her dad’s car had pulled off to the side of a bridge about an hour from their house. His body had been found at the bottom, identifiable only by his fingerprints.

“I didn’t even cry instantly — I was in shock,” Cambria said. The emotion that ran through her the most in the coming days was anger. How could her dad do this to her? As she wrote, he chose “a drastic, permanent solution to a temporary problem.”

The response

Suddenly, the secret was out. While Cambria said it was relief to be able to tell someone what had really happened to her dad, she also discovered many of those people felt uncomfortable when faced with the truth.

“People really didn’t know what to do,” Cambria said.

Avoidance, advice and pity were all common offerings — and of no help to Cambria and her mom.

“I hated that feeling of pity, and I was sick of ‘I’m sorry,’” Cambria recalled. “I wanted

See **NEW NORMAL** page 4 —————>

Home Owners Lose Thousands When Selling Their Homes

La Mesa - A new report has just been released which reveals 7 costly mistakes that most homeowners make when selling their home, and a 9 Step System that can help you sell your home fast and the most amount of money.

This industry report shows clearly how the traditional ways of selling homes have become increasingly less and less effective in today’s market. The fact of this matter is that fully three quarters of homesellers don’t get what they want for their homes and become disillusioned and worse financially disadvantaged when they put their homes on the market.

As this report uncovers, most homesellers make 7 deadly mistakes that cost them literally thousands of dollars. The good news is that each and every one of these mistakes is entirely preventable. In answer to this issue, industry insiders have prepared a free special report entitles “The 9 Step System to Get your Home Sold Fast and For Top Dollar”. To order your FREE copy of this report, call toll-free 1-800-270-1494 and enter 1000. You can call anytime, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

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► **New normal**, from page 3

to feel like a regular person again.”

Another reason Cambria published “My New Normal” was to give coping tools to those who are friends and family of suicide survivors.

“Just to be there with us was so important,” Cambria said. “Knowing we didn’t have to talk about it [if we don’t want to], but being able to if we do.”

She also appreciated the people who performed little kindnesses and mundane chores, like getting their dogs groomed or helping clean their house.

But the most important takeaway for Cambria from “My New Normal” — whether the reader is a survivor themselves, contemplating suicide, or hurting for a friend — is to know that they are not alone in this fight.

“You should never feel like you’re alone in this,” Cambria declared.

“My New Normal: Surviving Suicide Loss” can be purchased on Amazon in e-Book or paperback. Anna welcomes feedback and questions, and can be found on Facebook, Twitter @acam-briaauthor, or on her website annacambria.com.

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

New city program promotes walking to school

Jeff Clemetson
Editor

Parents and commuters who live near schools all know that drop-off and pick-up times are terrible for causing traffic around those locations. But a new program will hopefully alleviate the congestion in front of La Mesa Arts Academy (LMAA) and, if successful, may lead to a smoother and speedier way for parents to get their children to and from all La Mesa-Spring Valley School District (LMSVSD) schools.

The new program at LMAA will begin on Oct. 3, which is International Walk to School Day, and will divert the pick-up and drop-off zone for students from Junior High Drive to Olive Avenue, between University and Normal avenues.

“Now that we’ve opened Junior High Drive and that’s a two-way lane, we’re trying to figure out ways to allow traffic not to front the school,” said Dr. Mark Arapostathis, mayor of La Mesa and an educator at LMAA who spearheaded the program. “Olive Drive runs perpendicular to Junior High Drive. It’s a wide street that allows drivers to enter from north and south — they can enter off University Avenue or off of Normal [Avenue] and have more opportunities to leave the area.”

City employees in vests carrying stop signs will greet the dropped-off students at the drop-off location and once

there is a group of around 10, one of the city employees with chaperone them as they walk to school.

“It’s exactly 300 yards, three football fields, I measured it,” Arapostathis said.

After school, the process will work in reverse and the students will be chaperoned in groups from LMAA to the same location on Olive [Drive] to be picked up.

This new program is an expanded version of one that was tried out previously at another school.

“When I was a teacher at Rolando, we beta tested this ... we call it the ‘walking school bus,’” Arapostathis said, adding that the beta test at Rolando was once a week and that this program at LMAA will be every school day.

Traffic around schools is a problem in La Mesa “mostly because the schools were constructed — in some cases — 70 years ago and they weren’t designed to handle that kind of volume of traffic,” Arapostathis said. “30-plus years ago, when I attended La Mesa Junior High, 95 percent of the children walked to school, 5 percent were driven to school and now that number has completely reversed.”

Because of the beta test at Rolando, Arapostathis is sure the new program will work in alleviating the traffic around LMAA in the mornings and afternoons — but that isn’t the only benefit to the program.

“In addition, through our Climate Action Plan, we are trying to mitigate as much carbon emissions through cars idling — and, obviously, as cars are waiting [to drop off or pick up students], they’re idling.”

In addition to showing that the walking school bus program works to reduce traffic and drop-off and pick-up times, the Rolando beta test program also informed the new program where there could be improvements.

“One of the problems we had when we beta tested it at Rolando was we had volunteers, and occasionally a volunteer wouldn’t show up. So this time, the city is going to invest,” Arapostathis said.

Initially, the program will only be at LMAA “to see how it works,” but Arapostathis said he is working with LMSVSD superintendent David Feliciano to increase the program one school per year.

“My goal is to get all 21 [LMSVSD] schools on board,” Arapostathis said.

For LMSVSD schools outside the city of La Mesa, Arapostathis wants to work with County Supervisor Dianne Jacob to fund the schools in the county and with the city of El Cajon to fund Fletcher Hills.

The LMAA program is “funded by a state-funded grant through the Cycle 2 Active Transportation Program (ATP),” said La Mesa City Manager Yvonne Garret.

“When we applied for the West La Mesa infrastructure project, which included Junior High Drive and bike lanes on University Avenue, we also included a non-infrastructure component, which is where the funding is from.”

ATP-funded projects are meant to encourage using active modes of transportation



Traffic on Junior High Drive will soon be alleviated with a new program that moves the drop-off and pick-up zone to Olive Drive. (Photo by Jeff Clemetson)

like walking and biking and making sure that it is safe to do so. During the beta testing at Rolando, Arapostathis said safety was the main impediment to parents allowing their children to walk to school.

“The biggest concern of parents, we met with them, wasn’t necessarily pedestrian safety, but they were afraid for their children that someone was going to take their children, some kind of abduction,” he said.

The guided walks to school alleviate that concern, and the part-time employees that will carry out the program will all be hired through the La Mesa Police Department, Arapostathis said.

“They’ll be LiveScanned, obviously, and background-checked because they’re going to be working with kids,” he said. People interested in one of the part-time positions should contact Misty Thompson through the city of La Mesa website, cityoflamesa.us.

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



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Early Christmas celebrated at Grossmont Center Hallmark shop

B.J. Coleman

What could be more precious than treasured Christmas memories?

On Aug. 25, collectors of specialty Christmas keepsakes gathered at Elam's Hallmark in Grossmont Center to meet two artist designers of collectible ornaments and grab up some of the precious Christmas treasures they create.

Hallmark artists Tammy Haddix and Matt Johnson traveled from Hallmark's corporate headquarters in Kansas City to sign the limited-edition keepsake ornament called "Santa's Sweet Treat Cart." Haddix and Johnson collaborated with other Hallmark Keepsake Studio artists in designing the ornament, which was available

only at this signing event. Purchases were limited to one each until noon. Shoppers and collectors filled the La Mesa store, purchasing from the 300 ornaments created, as some tried their luck with tickets for silent auction raffle baskets on display outside the store.

The collector hobbyists noted that they often partner their pastime with fundraising for local charities at special events like the Hallmark artists' ornament signing that day. Proceeds from the ticket sales were slated for the San Diego Fisher House, providing lodging for families of military undergoing medical crises and being treated at the Navy Medical Center San Diego.

Scott Elam, vice president of operations for Elam's Hallmark, was pleased with the

turnout, observing that the ornaments had nearly sold out by mid-afternoon. Members of the local Keepsake Ornament Club (KOC) were there in force. The group, which boasts more than 100 members, is named more specifically as Elam's Magical Hallmark Memories Club. The club meets monthly and rotates fundraising to benefit the Women's Resource Center in Oceanside and the Helen Woodward Animal Center in San Diego, in addition to the Fisher House Foundation. The Hallmark shop raises money on behalf of cystic fibrosis and Rady Children's Hospital toy drives, as well.

"We're thrilled," Mary Elam said of the community's turnout for the artist visit. "This is a very successful event. You just don't often see customers turning out like this in retail stores anymore."

Another thing not often seen these days is a very successful, longtime family business. All of the Elam family members on hand during the afternoon agreed that Grossmont Center mall managers had delivered remarkable support for the event. (Father in the family, Guy Elam, attended morning hours of the event.) The Elam's opened their first Hallmark store in Spring Valley during 1979, with operations since then growing to nine locations. Four Elam family members form the ownership group. The Grossmont Center store opened two years ago.

"I'd like to give a big shout out to Grossmont Center," Christie Elam said. "They have done a lot for us, with social media and overall publicity outreach. We could have held this event at any of our stores, but we chose this one because of the incredible support we've gotten from mall management here."

Scott Elam elaborated: "The center has been phenomenal, adding to the marketing," he said.

Renee Micallef has been president of the Elam's Magical Hallmark Memories Club for over 10 years. "Club members are very passionate about this," she said. "We have made lasting friendships and lasting memories, including family memories for many members."

Another limited-edition companion ornament was available until noon, exclusively for KOC members. Titled "Sweet Sweet," the KOC exclusive featured chef Santa Claus hoisting aloft a platter of cookies stacked like a Christmas tree in one hand, while holding a frosting-topped bundt cake in the other.

The collectors mainly focus on keepsake Christmas ornaments, although some club members also have special events ornaments in their collections. Club member Megan Casey-Jones said that each holiday season she creates a Christmas village from the ornaments in her collection.

Collectors traveled from as far away as Phoenix, Arizona for the day. Chris Ryan arrived



Renee Micallef, president of Elam's Magical Hallmark Memories Club, holds up two of her favorite keepsake Hallmark Christmas ornaments during ornament signing at Elam's Hallmark in Grossmont Center.



Matt Johnson, at left, Hallmark Keepsake Ornament artist, with assistant, at center, and fellow Kansas City-based ornament artist Tammy Haddix, waiting to sign limited-edition Christmas ornaments at Elam's Hallmark. (Photos by B.J. Coleman)

late, after four hours on the freeway driving from Yorba Linda. Ryan said that he has been a collector for more than 30 years, dating to the 1980s. His personal collection features motion series ornaments, window ornaments, and "Star Trek" and "Star Wars" collectible ornaments.

More information about Elam's Hallmark and the affiliated Keepsake Ornament Club can be found online at elamshallmark.com.

—B.J. Coleman is a local freelance journalist and editor/staff reporter with 22nd District Legionnaire. B.J. can be reached at bjcjournalist@gmail.com. ■

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Guest Editorial

Here out West, 'smoke season' keeps getting worse

Addressing climate change costs money, but wildfires gobbling up our country — and seas swallowing up our shores — costs more.

Jill Richardson

[Editor's note: This op-ed courtesy of OtherWords.org.]

Right now, much of the West is affected by wildfires. An unlucky minority will have to evacuate their homes, and some will lose their homes altogether — or even their lives. But for millions more across the West, "smoke season" is a real thing.

Vast swaths of the West can be covered in smoke for extended periods, and inhaling the fine particles in the smoke is deleterious to one's health.

This year, fires resulted in the closing of Yosemite National Park and part of Glacier National Park. The Ferguson Fire in Yosemite is just one of many recent fires within the park, including the enormous Rim Fire in 2013, the fifth largest fire in California history.

As a Californian, fires are a regular part of life.

The Cedar Fire of 2003 in San Diego was so massive that the smoke interfered with air traffic. I canceled a backpacking trip in 2015 due to the Rough Fire in King's Canyon National Park.

I went on a road trip that summer and the sky was hazy with smoke in Utah, Idaho, Wyoming, and

Colorado. I was told the smoke came from fires in Washington.

In 2016, I spent a few weeks staying with a friend in rural San Diego County. I loved the area, and thought I might like to live there. Then, I thought, "This place looks like it could go up in smoke." Within the month, it did. The aptly named Border Fire broke out in Campo, and my friend had to evacuate.

All of that is nothing compared to what a friend went through last summer in Montana. She and her family (including a toddler) were cooped up in their home for ages, trying to avoid inhaling the smoke. She had to install air filters in an attempt to keep at least the indoor air clean.

The increase in wildfires is linked to the climate crisis.

The equation is simple. When it's hotter outside, water evaporates faster, so the "fuel" (trees, vegetation) is drier and more flammable. The many trees killed by drought and bark beetles also contribute to the dryness of the fuel.

As the effects of climate change get worse, they're also going to get more costly — in dollars, lives, and in quality of life. It would be far cheaper to prevent and mitigate the climate crisis.

Cheaper and better.

We're going to end up spending money either way: whether we pay to develop non-polluting energy sources, restore forests, and take other steps to prevent catastrophic climate change, or we don't, and then we have to pay for the consequences.

The costs of inaction? More wildfires and more hurricanes destroy more homes and take more human lives. Inhaled smoke from wildfires leads to increased respiratory illnesses. Sea levels rise and some parts of the world end up under water.

Unfortunately, simply leaving it all up to individuals and to the market isn't enough to prevent this outcome. We need to act collectively — as a nation and as a world. We've already pulled out of the Paris climate agreement, which was inadequate but at least it was something.

Climate change is real — ask anyone living through smoke season. With midterm elections coming up, candidates should be pressed to clarify just what they're going to do about it.

—OtherWords columnist Jill Richardson is pursuing a Ph.D. in sociology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She lives in San Diego. Distributed by OtherWords.org.■

Correction

In last month's issue of La Mesa Courier, a photo used to depict Briana Garza in the article "Grassroots group aims to change school board" was incorrect. The photo printed in the article was an image used with campaign materials related to Garza's bid for school board, but is not her. We sincerely regret the error.■

Letters

Popular project

Re: "Project aims to bring back La Mesa Emporium" [Volume 8, Issue 8 or bit.ly/2Q3o5o8]

I just read your article about the possibility of the Emporium being brought back and I'm excited about that. I only remember the Emporium as being the nice, homey coffee shop that was open in the evenings with live music, before it closed in the '90s. Anyway, this sounds like a wonderful idea that will be useful for many people and the city. It's wonderful how people love La Mesa and are reviving it!

—Lorie Moreno, La Mesa

Plastic problems

It is distressing to see that the osprey at Lake Murray is using plastic for its nest. I thought that you might want to share this picture with your readers. Maybe someone can do something to alleviate this ugly situation.

—Carlos Quiros■



Internet access already being limited

Rep. **Susan Davis**

It certainly did not take long for internet service providers (ISP) to take advantage of the end of net neutrality. New research from Northeastern University and the University of Massachusetts Amherst shows that telecom companies are slowing internet access to and from popular online applications. Apps for YouTube, Netflix and Amazon's Prime Video have all experienced slowdowns in data speeds. Unless we restore net neutrality, the future could hold even more changes that restrict consumers' access to the internet.

Congress needs to step up and pass legislation to protect consumers and restore net neutrality. I have joined my colleagues to make this happen.

What actually is net neutrality? It was a policy created under President Barack Obama to ensure all Americans have free and unfettered access to the internet. It means that providers cannot slow data speeds to certain apps or websites, and that providers cannot charge extra to access certain sites.

In June, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) under the Trump administration overturned the Obama

policy and put an end to net neutrality.

With slower internet speeds now a reality, what other changes could we see? For one, you could be charged to get faster online speeds.

Consumers could also be charged extra to use some apps and websites. This is a reality in other countries.

Imagine being charged an extra monthly fee — on top of what you're already paying for the internet — to be able to use Twitter, Facebook, Instagram or Snapchat. Consumers could be charged more to access messaging, music and video services.

In Portugal, the country's wireless carrier Meo offers separate packages for the kind of data and apps consumers use. There's an extra charge for using social media, email, music or video apps and websites.

We could see internet services become similar to cable services for consumers. Most cable plans start with a basic package with just a few channels; if you want premium channels, that's a whole different package and it's going to cost a lot more.

Without net neutrality, the ability of ISPs to nickel-and-dime consumers is endless.

Worst-case scenarios could include ISPs blocking access to websites altogether.

A provider could restrict access because the CEO doesn't like the politics of a website or because it could be a competitor. This would severely limit the American people's access to information or the ability to express their First Amendment rights.

What does this mean for small businesses? If you're a business that uses technology or a website to reach and service your customers, equal access to the internet could be the difference between success or failure.

As the FCC was working to undo net neutrality, an effort in Congress was underway to preserve it. I joined with 168 of my colleagues to introduce legislation to overturn the FCC's decision and restore net neutrality.

We didn't stop there. We moved to force a vote in the House of Representatives through a rare parliamentary procedure known as a discharge petition. If 218 members of the House sign the petition, House leadership must bring the bill up for a vote.

California is also leading the way to protect consumer access to the internet. The state legislature passed legislation similar to the net neutrality policy put in place by President Obama.

When California's bill passed, the head of a telecommunications industry group responded to its

passage: "The internet must be governed by a single, uniform and consistent national policy framework, not state-by-state piecemeal approaches."

I agree. It should be a national policy and that national policy should be net neutrality. My constituents also agree; I surveyed them recently and 86 percent support net neutrality.

However, right now California is our best bet to reverse the misguided policies of the Trump administration. We've seen it on climate change and now on consumer protections as it relates to the internet.

The free flow of information is vital to a vibrant democracy — so much so that the framers of our constitution enshrined it in the First Amendment.

The internet has provided people with the unprecedented ability to communicate and access information. We have a responsibility to protect that access.

—Congresswoman Davis represents central San Diego, including the communities of Old Town, Kensington, Mission Hills, University Heights, Hillcrest, Bankers Hill, North Park, South Park, Talmadge, Normal Heights, as well as La Mesa, Lemon Grove, Spring Valley, Bonita, and parts of El Cajon and Chula Vista.■

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Artist rendering of proposed event center at Grossmont High (Courtesy GUHSD)

GUHSD hosts contractor outreach for Grossmont High event center

On Sept. 26, the Grossmont Union High School District (GUHSD) and Erickson-Hall Construction Company (EHCC) held a contractor outreach event that brought together the GUHSD's construction management team and local general contractors, subcontractors, and small and/or historically underutilized businesses looking for opportunities on the upcoming construction of the new Event Center at Grossmont High School. The \$19.9 million project is funded through Proposition U, approved by East County voters in November 2008, and Measure BB, approved in November 2016.

The GUHSD team discussed the new project, project schedule, pre-qualification process, bonding, insurance, and other forthcoming projects and staff helped contractors register to bid for contracts. There will be approximately 18 bid packages associated with the project, expected to be advertised in mid-October 2018.

The project site is roughly 105,000 square feet with extensive new concrete paving, retaining walls, landscaping and asphalt paving. The project is all new construction that

See NEWS BRIEFS page 9

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Local candidates featured at next Dem Club meeting



Tina Rynberg and
Jeff Benesch



Dr. Akilah Weber



Dave Myers



Susan Davis

La Mesa Foothills Democratic Club shifts in to gear with the last of our Candidates Forums before the most important midterm election of our lifetimes.

On Wednesday, Oct. 3, at La Mesa Community Center, we expect to hear from a host of impressive progressives, including the candidates for the San Diego County congressional delegation, Susan Davis, Scott Peters, Mike Levin, and the fast-rising star of East County, Ammar Campa Najjar. With the recent many-count indictment of crooked bunny-shipper Duncan D. Hunter and his wife/accomplice Margaret, the prospects of the race for the 50th tightening up look promising. (Even local Republicans think it's wrong to embezzle \$250,000 from your campaign funds and use them repeatedly for self-aggrandizement, family travel and moral interpetude.)

We've invited Sacramento stars Assembly members Shirley Weber and Lorena Gonzalez Fletcher, and state Senator Toni Atkins. Let's not forget club-favorite San Diego County District 4 Supervisor candidate Nathan Fletcher, as

well as Superior Court judge candidate Matt Brower.

In La Mesa, Dr. Akilah Weber and Dave Myers make a formidable slate of City Council candidates, aptly named "The Doc and the Cop." Our goal is to work hard enough to have these two outstanding community leaders join Colin Parent on the council to form a Democratic majority. Let's move La Mesa forward, shall we?

We've invited back impressive San Diego City Council candidates Tommy Hough and Dr. Jen Campbell, both with great campaigns against incumbent Republicans in their respective council districts. There's a chance for them to be part of a super-majority of Dems on the San Diego City Council. And Kevin Beiser will be sure to be part of our program to talk about his candidacy for San Diego Unified School Board.

We're also hoping to hear from Rebecca McRae and Charda Fontenot, outstanding candidates for the La Mesa-Spring Valley School Board. Also invited: Linda Cartwright, Debbie Justeson and Brad

Monroe in the race for Grossmont-Cuyamaca College Trustees, Liz Weaver for Grossmont Union High School Area 3 Trustee, and Gloria Chadwick and Ed Martinez in the race for the Grossmont Healthcare District.

There's more seats and candidates in San Diego and East County, and we hope to have Democratic candidates in every race join us for a real evening of politics and politicking. Our club represents the communities of San Carlos, Allied Gardens, Del Cerro, La Mesa, College Area, Santee, Mt. Helix, Casa de Oro and Spring Valley and other close-by areas. We meet the first Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. Please join us as a guest or become a new member, with our modest dues pro-rated for the rest of the year. Like us on Facebook and check out our new website, bit.ly/2N3Kksw.

—Tina Rynberg is president and Jeff Benesch is vice president of programming for La Mesa Foothills Democratic Club. Reach them at jeffbenesch@gmail.com. ■

Republican Women plan vintage patriotism fashion show



Pat Boerner

Navajo Canyon Republican Women are once again looking forward to their annual fundraiser fashion show on Oct. 9 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Social hour and check-in begin at 10 a.m. A delicious buffet lunch will be served and the setting will be the beautiful outdoor pavilion at the Bali Hai on Shelter Island.

Cost is \$40 per ticket and a portion of the proceeds will be donated to Canine Companions for Independence/Veterans in Oceanside. We are proud to support this organization, as the work they do training companion dogs for our disabled veterans is so important and appreciated. The dogs they train can make a life-changing difference in the lives of our heroes.

Fashions will be provided by Glamour Girls of El Cajon. Beautiful gift baskets, gift cards and vintage patriotic items will be offered as part of our always popular opportunity drawing and silent auction. Everyone attending will be included in a drawing for a \$100 cash prize. For reservations,

which are required, please contact ncrwf@gmail.com. (Fashion Show on the subject line).

We will be easy to find at the La Mesa Oktoberfest held Sept. 28–30. Our volunteers will be ready and waiting to register voters and share important election information. Please stop by the Republican voter registration booth and update your registration, ask questions or just chat about political issues. If you have changed parties, are a new citizen, moved or had a change in your name, you need to register. We want every eligible voter to vote!

We were all invigorated by the presentation from Steve Frank, founder of Political News and Views, at our Sept. 11 meeting. It was a great kick-off to the fall season and soon to be primary.

At our Nov. 13 meeting at the La Mesa Brigantine, Sen. Mike Morrell will be our speaker. Sen. Morrell now represents the 23rd District in the California Senate. He currently serves as vice chair for the following committees: Legislative Ethics; Energy, Utilities and Communications; and Public Employment and Retirement. In 2016, the Military Officers Association of America named him its Legislator of the Year. We know that he will be



Sen. Mike Morrell

informative and that we will have a chance to ask questions. Based on his extensive experience and background, this is an opportunity not to be missed!

Check-in at the Brigantine begins at 10:30 a.m. and the meeting begins at 11 a.m. Lunch is served at noon followed by our program. Cost of the lunch is \$25 and reservations are mandatory. RSVP at ncrwf@gmail.com (please put luncheon in subject line) or call 619-990-2791. Guests are always welcome, make your reservation now.

The Nov. 6 primary is right around the corner and this is a perfect time to get involved and learn what you can do to make a difference. Visit us at navajo-canyonrnf.org and check us out on Facebook.

—Reach Pat Boerner at pboerner@cox.net. ■

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News and notes from your County Supervisor

DIANNE'S CORNER



Dianne Jacob

Don't pull the plug: SDG&E recently claimed it was stepping up its efforts to improve fire safety in our region, but if the monopoly was truly serious it would abandon its dangerous shut-off plan.

Backcountry residents last year pounded the utility with complaints when their power was cut, leaving them and public safety personnel vulnerable during a disaster.

While I welcome measures to improve fire protection, the

fact remains that SDG&E should be doing far more to keep the region out of harm's way. Some of our deadliest firestorms have been sparked by SDG&E equipment, yet the company has failed to fully harden its infrastructure.

Helping hand: Your county government continues to expand initiatives aimed at helping those with critical needs.

The Board of Supervisors recently agreed to spend an additional \$19 million in state funds to assist those dealing with mental health issues and homelessness.

The money will help those at risk of becoming involved in the justice system. It will also be used to expand shelter and

service options in the unincorporated areas of the county.

Community superstars: There are so many great folks in our community who doing so many great things.

Among the East County residents and groups that have recently received county proclamations for their contributions: Natalie Romano of Julian, for her academic excellence and volunteer work; Jacob Gertonson of Lakeside, a volunteer with Lakeside Christian Helps Center; and Poway OnStage, an arts program that works with kids.

—Dianne Jacob is San Diego County Supervisor for District 2. For more District 2 news, visit diannejacob.com or follow her on Facebook and Twitter. For assistance with a county issue, call 619-531-5522 or email dianne.jacob@sdcounty.ca.gov.■

Anderson honors local youth soccer organization

Michael Botello

The American Youth Soccer Organization (ASYO) is a world class soccer program that builds communities around the nation to support youth development in leadership and social skills. California state Senator Joel Anderson recently provided certificates to the board members and volunteers from the La Mesa Region 89 branch of ASYO for their commitment to community values and uplifting the human spirit.

"I am thankful for the La Mesa ASYO's dedication to our children," Anderson said. "Region 89 is laser focused on providing opportunities for positive development and success in the lives of the kids they coach."

ASYO's "Six Philosophies" — Everyone Plays, Balanced Teams, Open Registration, Positive Coaching, Good Sportsmanship and Player



Board members and volunteers of La Mesa ASYO. (Courtesy Sen. Anderson's office)

Development — have given La Mesa more than a soccer team, but a support system that builds a fun, family-friendly environment.

Hard-working volunteers of ASYO shared the importance of community and what it means to them. Nicole Ciokiewicz, Region 89's board commissioner, said, "I love ASYO — it's a family environment, we have fun. I think by us board members are having fun, it shows our kids that it's OK to have fun with everybody."

ASYO gives plenty of opportunity for encouraging youth development through leadership and connecting communities to build a better and brighter future and invites all to be a part of their organization in doing so. You can get involved by reaching out to the La Mesa American Youth Soccer Organization by finding them on their website at lamesaayso.org.

—Michael Botello is deputy communications assistant for Sen. Joel Anderson.■

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includes modern technology for audio, video and lighting systems. Virtually all construction trades will be required to complete the project. GUHSD had announced that it is especially interested in engaging local contractors and those with certifications as a small, disadvantaged, woman-owned, minority-owned, or disabled veteran-owned business enterprise.

Designed by Sprotte Watson Architects, the \$19.9 million project is scheduled to start construction in January 2019. It will consist of three masonry and structural steel structures joined at oblique angles to create a new 25,670-square-foot Event Center building, including:

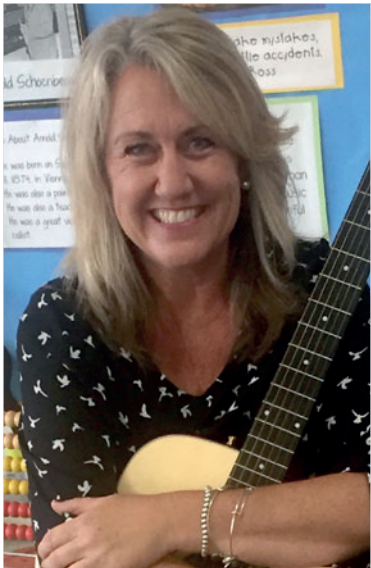
- A 9,985-square-foot auditorium with seating for 475.
- A 7,450-square-foot wing with dance classroom, locker rooms, and a scene shop.

A 8,235-square-foot "black box" drama classroom and green rooms, a digital music classroom, and a choral classroom.

Voya Financial honors La Mesa teacher with grant

On Sept. 6, Voya Financial, Inc. — a provider of workplace retirement solutions, including savings plans for K-12 educators — awarded Julia Cole, a teacher at La Mesa's Murray Manor Elementary School, a \$2,000 grant as part of the company's 2018 Voya Unsung Heroes awards competition.

Through the Voya Unsung Heroes program, Voya Financial awards grants to K-12 educators nationwide to honor their innovative teaching methods, creative educational projects, and ability to positively influence their students. For more than 20 years, the program has awarded over \$5 million in grants to more than



Julia Cole (Courtesy Voya Financial)

2,000 educators across the United States.

"Our Unsung Heroes program continues to recognize teachers who go above and beyond to inspire today's

See NEWS BRIEFS page 11 —>

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‘The Doc and The Cop’ run for La Mesa City Council

Jeff Clemetson
Editor

[Editor's note: This is part one of a two-part series on the La Mesa City Council races. Next month La Mesa Courier will feature a sit-down interview with the incumbent candidates. Election coverage in La Mesa Courier does not constitute an endorsement. The Courier, like all newspapers in the San Diego Community Newspaper Network, does not endorse political campaigns.]

As the November election draws near, Democrats across the nation are campaigning for what they hope will be a “blue wave” to take back Congress and rebuke the Trump administration. Locally, the mid-terms could also bring a blue wave to La Mesa’s city council.

Dr. Akilah Weber and former San Diego County Sheriff Commander David Meyers — together nicknamed “The Doc and The Cop” — hope to unseat incumbents Bill Baber and Guy McWhirter, joining fellow Democrat Coin Parent to make the first Democratic majority on the La Mesa City Council in several decades. Also, Dr. Weber would be the only African-American woman, and Meyers the only openly-gay man on the council.

On Sept. 23, the two candidates met with supporters at Parent’s home to introduce themselves, discuss

their campaigns and answer questions.

Dave Meyers

Meyers — who recently lost a bid to unseat San Diego County Sheriff Bill Gore — told the audience that he jumped into the race for city council after learning from Parent that, although he had lost the countywide vote, he had beat Gore in La Mesa.

“I’m not done getting involved,” Meyers said, adding that he retired from his 35 years in law enforcement after running against his boss and losing. “I’m not done providing government service. I think, like a lot of you, the reason we’re here is because we cannot sit back and watch what is happening nationally, that’s trickling down to local elections, continue. I can’t sit back and do that.”

Meyers said he hopes to change the narrative of today’s politics that ignores the concerns of people.

“Whether that’s local government, whether its school districts, healthcare districts, water districts — we have to pay attention to the people that say something.”

While door-to-door campaigning, Meyers said he has learned that a lot of people’s concerns are not being addressed — especially on the west end of La Mesa, where he and his partner have lived for 15 years.

“The west end of La Mesa, quite frankly, has been



Former San Diego County Sheriff Commander and candidate for La Mesa City Council Dave Meyers (Courtesy photo)

neglected both in development and housing,” he said.

On the issue of cannabis, Meyers said that because of his experience in law enforcement, he is in favor of safe access and regulation. Illegal dispensaries “popped up over the years because the city of La Mesa has failed to do what the citizens wanted them to do,” he said.

Homelessness and housing was the issue most discussed at the campaign event. Meyers urged supporters to back Prop 1, which provides housing for veterans with a \$4 billion bond, and Prop 2, a \$2 billion bond measure for homelessness prevention.

Locally, Meyers supports providing a homeless navigation center in La Mesa that directs homeless to services. He also said the current practice of handing out citations for trespassing “is not a law enforcement strategy.”



Dr. Akilah Weber is an OB-GYN and a candidate for La Mesa City Council. (Courtesy photo)

“The strategy they are employing right now is displacement,” he said. “And jail is not the answer. Arrest is not the answer to create that sense of community around homelessness.”

Dr. Akilah Weber

Dr. Weber moved to La Mesa in 2014. She grew up in Oak Park, San Diego before attending college in Louisiana, medical school in New York to study gynecology, a residency in Chicago, a pediatric gynecology fellowship program in Cincinnati, and work at a hospital in Dallas where she met her husband.

The Webers moved back to San Diego in 2013 when Akilah was 36 weeks pregnant.

“[I moved back] not only so my kids could be raised around family in the same area I was raised, but also so that I could start to give back to the

community that gave me so much,” she said. “We chose La Mesa because one of the things we noticed about La Mesa, is it’s not just a city, it’s an actual community where people know each other, kids grow up together, you see each other out at dinner, while shopping. ... But when I look at the City Council as a whole, I don’t see that it really represents all of La Mesa very well, so that’s why I decided to run.”

Part of that imbalanced representation, Weber said, is an overrepresentation of Downtown Village at the expense of other areas.

“We need to go out into the La Mesa community and promote the other area of La Mesa, the other businesses in La Mesa,” she said.

Weber works as an OB-GYN at UC San Diego. She also implemented a pediatric gynecology division at Rady’s Children’s Hospital, despite that hospital’s reluctance to start one when she first proposed it.

“Now they can’t imagine what it would be like to not have a gynecologist there,” she said. “So that just shows that I can see what we need; I’m a visionary and I can plan into the future.”

Weber’s plans for the future include three priorities, with public safety as the top one.

“I want my family to be raised in a very safe environment ... so we need to make sure that we continue to support our public safety officers, but that we as a community also have a say in that.”

Weber said she supports some citizen oversight of La Mesa Police Department to help ease concerns of residents following an incident at Helix High School where a student was body slammed by an officer.

Housing affordability is another priority for Weber.

“When my husband and I moved back from Dallas there was a huge sticker shock when we went to purchase our home here. And it really shouldn’t be that way for people who want to come into a community and live and grow and develop in a community.”

Being a doctor, she said health and wellness is also a top priority. She cited her support for the city’s passage of a Climate Action Plan but added that the council needs to make sure it is implemented. “Not just something put on paper but put into action,” she said.

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► **News Briefs**, from page 9

students in the classroom,” said president of tax-exempt markets at Voya Financial, Heather Lavalley, in a press release. “We are proud to honor teachers like Julia Cole, whose inspiring program is making a difference in the lives of young people. This commitment and passion for teaching closely aligns with our focus at Voya on helping all Americans prepare for their unique financial futures.”

Cole’s innovative teaching idea, “Literacy Through Music,” focuses on involving young students physically by providing

them with musical instruments to expand their knowledge, learning and memory skills. With the Voya grant, Cole will be able to purchase the necessary tools to distribute equally among all grade levels at Murray Manor Elementary as well as provide teacher training for the program.

Students involved in the project will find that music can be a force for good in their elementary years, as it can increase their literacy in all academic subjects. At the beginning and end of the school year, students will be assessed on their reading level. Throughout the year, students will be taught how to play instruments,

write songs and will perform for the community. Through the power of music, collaboration and engagement, Cole hopes that the students will be able to increase their reading levels and create a stronger sense of self.

Selected from a group of more than 1,200 applicants, Cole is one of only 100 winners across the country who received this award to help fund and bring her program to life. In addition, she will now compete with other finalists for one of the top three prizes — an additional \$5,000, \$10,000 or \$25,000 from Voya Financial.

To learn more about this year’s winning projects, as

well as those from previous years, visit the Unsung Heroes website at Voya.com/UnsungHeroes. Applications for the 2019 Voya Unsung Heroes awards are currently being accepted through the website until April 30, 2019.

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La Mesa helps foster youth

The Building Owners & Managers Association (BOMA) has been a long supporter of Promises2Kids and foster care hits close to home for one of the BOMA Community Service Committee’s co-chairs, Dennis Dubert.

Dubert, who currently resides in La Mesa, was raised



Dennis Dupert (Courtesy Promises2Kids)

in a home that served as a foster home to many of San Diego’s foster youth. His mother, Pat Dubert, who is still a foster parent, has been a selfless provider for over 45 years, fostering more than 600 children and adopting three.

See NEWS BRIEFS page 23 —>

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► **Dinosaur**, from page 1

was installed at the property, news organizations reported on the sculpture that appeared somewhat mysteriously on the vacant lot. La Mesa Courier received a letter and photo from nearby resident Alice Hobson requesting “some investigative reporting” on her new neighbor the dinosaur.

As news about the recent sculpture got out, curious people came to visit the new art piece.

“We saw this on the news and I thought it would be cool to come see it,” said Julie Good, who visited the prehistoric display on Sept. 23. “I have some friends coming to visit next weekend who are really big dinosaur fans so I wanted to send them a picture and will come show them when they get here.”

Nancy Faulkner saw an article about the T. rex in the Union-Tribune. She said the sculpture reminded her of others she had seen in the desert.

“I love stuff like this,” she said. “We’ve been out there and seen those and it does look similar.”

And she is right. Phair and his family purchased the T. rex, which they named “Toby,” from artist Ricardo Breceda, known for his metal sculptures of animals and dinosaurs. Many of these are displayed in places like Borrego Springs.

The Breceda dinosaur sculpture is the first structure to be placed on the 10-acre property that Phair’s company is transforming into La Mesa Summit Estates, a new subdivision project of around 30 high-end homes that was given its final green light by the City Council on Sept. 11.

The project will be a mix of four- and five-bedroom houses — mostly single story — with porches that highlight the views.

“Every single house has a view of either the ocean, Downtown San Diego, Point Loma, Cowles Mountain, the backcountry mountains or Mexico — every lot has a view,” Phair said.

The homes will be in a private community on a gated street. There will also be a park built in the neighborhood, where the dinosaur sculpture will be installed permanently.



An artist rendering of a La Mesa Summit Estates home (Courtesy Phair Company)



The dinosaur sculpture brought curious onlookers after its sudden appearance. (Photo by Jeff Clemetson)

But fans of Toby the T. rex do not have to worry about being shut out from enjoying him — the project calls for the park to have an access point that is open to the public.

In addition to building a park for the neighborhood, the Summit Estates project includes money for improving pedestrian safety at the intersection of Eastridge Drive, Yale Avenue and Murray Hill Road through enhancements that include parallel curb ramps, rapid rectangular beacon signage and continental crosswalks.

“There are multiple schools in the area, including Helix High School, and a significant amount of pedestrian traffic is walking to and from school and that was noted as a needed enhancement in the area,” said La Mesa senior planner

Allyson Kinnard at the Sept. 11 meeting.

Mayor Mark Arapostathis thanked Phair for including the enhancements to the Summit Estates project, even though the development site is several blocks away from that intersection.

In addition to the pedestrian enhancements down the street, Phair also plans on donating some resources on another project that is off site of the Summit Estates development.

He and Julie, his wife and partner in the Phair Company, have been meeting with the committee tasked with developing MacArthur Park about how to contribute to building a community garden there.

“My hobby happens to be organic vegetable growing,” Phair said. “And I have a little horse

ranch here in Bonita. I board about 50 horses for other people, so I have an ongoing, very productive source of mulch for a garden. And what I’ve done in the past on projects like this for local elementary schools where I’ve planted organic gardens is I get the Boy Scouts — for their Eagle Scout projects they need to do a community service, so I get a bunch of them to volunteer to do all the labor and I provide all the lumber and materials and the mulch and we have an organic vegetable party.”

The Phair Company’s community-minded approach to developing Summit Estates was praised by City Council members as they voted to approve the project.

“Often, new development can be a controversial, scary thing — people worry what’s going to happen,” said Councilmember Kristine Alessio. “But this developer went so out of his way to keep his new community neighbors in the loop, including making improvements down the road. I am so impressed.”

Colin Parent expressed his gratitude to Phair for involving the community and making concessions on the project to address neighbors’ concerns.

“We received an enormous amount of correspondence related to this project reflecting the tremendous amount of community outreach,” he said.

Phair also had praise for the city of La Mesa.

“I have developed a lot of projects around San Diego County, probably 40 or 50, in probably most jurisdictions and municipalities and I want to thank the planning staff. They have been very professional, very cooperative, very responsive and that makes it easier for us as developers,” he said.

Phair said the experience with the city in developing the Summit Estates project has made him interested in future projects in La Mesa. And the city planning department is not the only reason he may want to build here again.

“In many ways, La Mesa reminds me of kind of a Norman Rockwell-type feeling — small town, community events, a main street that is emerging as a really neat place to go shopping and eat and go visit,” he said. “So, I like it. One of my sons is going to move into this project.”

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

Cox adds YouTube Kids and NPR One apps to Contour TV



Cox Communications has launched YouTube Kids and NPR One apps on its Contour TV service, once again bringing more innovative television programming choices to customers of all ages.

Cox Contour customers can now use their voice remote control to easily and quickly access YouTube Kids videos and NPR One audio directly on their televisions.

“There’s no need for a secondary device or input switch,” said Suzanne Schlundt, Vice President of Field Marketing. “Similar to Contour’s other integrated apps, Netflix, YouTube and iHeart Radio, all you have to do is speak into your voice remote control to access the apps. Just say things like “YouTube Kids,” “NPR One” or “National Public Radio,” and Cox Contour will take you to all the fun and informative video and audio programming that YouTube Kids and NPR One have to offer.”

YouTube Kids and NPR One can also be accessed in the “Apps” section of the Contour guide.

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- Monitor what your children are watching through the “watch history” function.

With NPR One, Cox Contour customers have access to a stream of local and national news, stories and podcasts from National Public Radio (NPR) to help keep listeners informed, engaged and inspired.

“Contour has become one of the most innovative platforms in cable,” said Schlundt. “By adding YouTube Kids and NPR One to Contour, Cox continues to make it incredibly easy for customers to access all the programming they love in one place.”



To access YouTube Kids and NPR One on Cox Contour, customers simply need a compatible Contour receiver and Cox High Speed Internet service. **For more information about YouTube Kids and NPR One on Cox Contour, visit www.cox.com.**

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(Photos courtesy MacFarlane Promotions)

La Mesa Oktoberfest returns in style

SDCNN Staff

Now in its 45th year, La Mesa Oktoberfest once again returns to the downtown Village with a Bavarian celebration complete with lederhosen, chicken dances, polka music, German cuisine and, of course, beer.

Oktoberfest, sponsored by Bob Stall Chevrolet, will also feature two stages of nonstop music featuring everything from traditional Bavarian and German music, live oompah bands, traditional rock bands, DJs, tribute groups and more.

La Mesa Oktoberfest is a free event and is expected to bring more than 100,000 people from across Southern California for what has become San Diego's largest Oktoberfest event. This year's event is held Sept. 28–30, which follows

the traditional celebrations in Munich that kick off in mid-September.

For visitors interested in traditional German music, both local and regional polka bands will be performing throughout the weekend, including Snake Oil Oompah Band, The Bavarian Beer Garden Band and Polka Party Band. The music stages will also feature local bands The Smokin Cobras, Slower, and Rising Star. Country music fans will enjoy sets by Rio Peligroso and rock fans will be entertained by cover and tribute acts such as i90, Lies 'n Roses, Gypsy, Way Cool Jr. and Electric Light Overture.

Beer lovers will be served at two locations this year. The Hofbrauhaus Biergarten will be serving pints of traditional German beer and the Oktoberfest Craft Beer &

Spirits Garten will be serving craft beers from Karl Strauss, Green Flash, Stone Brewing Co. and Modern Times Beer, as well as cocktails.

La Mesa Oktoberfest is offering a way to save on steins with its Hofbrauhaus Biergarten Passes. Prices range \$5 to \$45 and depending on what level of pass, can include VIP entry and restrooms, front-of-line privileges, two complimentary beers, a commemorative stein, a chicken hat or flower crown, German beverages, juicy bratwurst, snitzel, a huge pretzel and more.

New to this year's event is Bo-beau's Beer Brunch — an Oktoberfest twist on Sunday Brunch held on Sept. 30. For \$39.95 per person, festivalgoers can feast on four courses

See OKTOBERFEST page 16 —>



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Friday, Sept. 28	Saturday, Sept. 29	Sunday, Sept. 30
4 p.m. - Bavarian Beer Garden	10:30 a.m. - Snake Oil Oompah	10 a.m. - Polka Party
5 p.m. - Snake Oil Oompah	12:30 p.m. - Rio Peligroso (Country-rock)	11:30 a.m. - Fusebox (Rock Jam)
6 p.m. - Bavarian Beer Garden	1:30 p.m. - Snake Oil Oompah	12:45 p.m. - Polka Party
7 p.m. - Smokin' Cobras (Pop 50's)	2:30 p.m. - Slower (Pop-rock)	1:45 p.m. - AQUARIUS (Oldies Pop)
8 p.m. - Bavarian Beer Garden & German-inspired games for all ages	3:30 p.m. - Snake Oil Oompah	3 p.m. - Polka Party
9 p.m. - Rising Star (Pop Cover)	4:30 p.m. - i90 (Classic Rock)	4 p.m. - Electric Light Overture (Classic Rock Cover)
	5:30 p.m. - Snake Oil Oompah	5:15 p.m. - Polka Party
	6:30 p.m. - Lies 'n' Roses (Guns 'n' Roses Cover)	7 p.m. - Smokin' Cobras (Pop 50's)
	7:30 p.m. - Snake Oil Oompah	8 p.m. - Bavarian Beer Garden
	8:45 p.m. - Way Cool Jr. (80's Hair Band)	9 p.m. - Rising Star (Pop Cover)



(Photos courtesy MacFarlane Promotions)





► Oktoberfest, from page 14

of delicious offerings while exploring four different flavors of Modern Times beer that come paired with each course.

In addition to music, beer and food offerings, La Mesa Oktoberfest is a chance for visitors to find authentic

homemade treasures and explore authentic art and German-style craft pieces from over 30 local artisans in the Craft Faire tent.

Back again this year are family-friendly activities at the German Kinder Karneval, featuring a towering Ferris wheel, rock-climbing wall, massive inflatable slides, interactive

art, brat-eating competitions, scavenger hunts and more.

Other fun activities like wiener dog races and howl-deling contests will be held in the Dackeldorf Dachshund Village.

For a complete list of all the free German fun and to purchase VIP passes, visit LaMesaOktoberfest.org. ■



(Photos courtesy MacFarlane Promotions)



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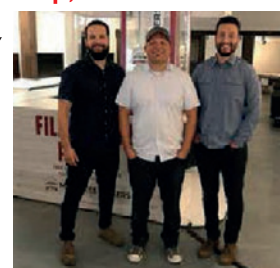
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Banned Books Week and 2018's 'challenged' books



Jake Sexton

Every September, libraries celebrate a yearly event called "Banned Books Week." It is meant to highlight the efforts that library workers make to preserve the public's right to read whatever they like, despite pressures to ban and censor by individuals, organizations or governments. It's something that we take very seriously. To highlight the importance of "intellectual freedom" (our term), libraries highlight various books that people have attempted to have removed from library shelves over the years. But frankly, very few of these attempts are successful, which makes the "banned" part kind of inaccurate. Still, a look at what various people are trying to say that you can't read is usually illuminating.

One of the most surprising books, which was challenged many times during the 1990s, is "Where's Waldo?" by Martin Handford. On one double-page spread depicting a beach scene with 200 tiny people, you can see what looks like the side of a breast of a woman whose swimsuit top has fallen off. You might give yourself eyestrain trying to find it, but apparently some people felt that this warranted removing the book from library shelves altogether.



For the most part, banned and challenged books are titles aimed at teen and juvenile audiences. Not surprisingly, people have strong feelings about what kids and teens should and should not be reading, and sometimes they fear that if young people read the wrong book with the wrong message, it could skew their morality for life. For example, the most frequently challenged book this year was the young adult title "Thirteen Reasons Why" by Jay Asher. The book is about a teenage girl who committed suicide, and a series of audiotapes she left to

people who tormented her. The reason people have given for wanting the book eliminated was due to its theme of suicide, presumably fearing that teen readers might choose to emulate the character and take their own lives. And while people can copy the actions they see of any character in any medium, reading about a topic like this can help people

understand, cope with similar situations in their own lives, or help overcome difficulties that they may one day face.

Four of the most frequently challenged titles this year had themes of sexual and gender identity, a topic which some people apparently feel should remain in the closet. The popular teen comic "Drama" by Raina Telgemeier was one of these titles; although focused on the awkward coming-of-age antics of a heterosexual girl, it does feature two gay characters who share a kiss at one point. Alex Gino's "George" and "I Am

Jazz" by Jessica Herthel and Jazz Jennings are both about transgender children, the first being a fictional novel, the latter being an autobiographical picture book.

Another frequently challenged book this year was "The Hate U Give" by Angie Thomas. It is a fictional story of an African-American teen who becomes a political activist after a friend is killed by a police officer. The book was challenged for its depiction of drug use and profanity, but given the politically divided times we live in, I have to wonder if those were reasons that people gave when they were really upset about the book's politics. This title was actually banned from a school district in Texas in 2017.

Upcoming events

October at the library will usher in all manner of Halloween-themed events. We will feature an after-hours program for adults featuring local horror writers reading frightful original stories on Friday, Oct. 5 at 6:30 p.m. And for the whole family, come to "Star Wars" Reads Day on Saturday, Oct. 20 at 10 a.m. for a costume contest, crafts, and snacks from a galaxy far, far away.

—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 Allison Ave., or visit online at sdcl.org.■

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CURRY CRAVINGS

A new Thai restaurant fills a niche in north La Mesa

Restaurant Review
Frank Sabatini Jr.

A customer waiting for his to-go order in the foyer of Signature Thai Cuisine declared excitedly to an employee: “I can’t get enough of this food!” His words echoed straight into the dining room and into the ears of patrons taking advantage of the weekday lunch deals.

Based on the northern-Thai egg noodle dish I was madly consuming at the moment, I considered rising from my chair to second him.

Known as khao soi, it’s one of the more non-pedestrian items on the regular menu in which the noodles are paired to a goldmine of tender chicken (sliced breast meat and a bone-in leg) and served in an orange-colored pond of yellow and red curries. Listed under “specialties,” it sells for \$12.95 and proves there is luscious life beyond drunken noodles and pad Thai.

The 2-month-old restaurant replaces a donut shop in a Big

Lots plaza devoid of ethnic kitchens. Tinted windows give the impression of a shuttered business. But just inside is a clean, nicely decorated space with fresh-cut flowers adorning sparkly black tables.

Intent on leaving with a weighty doggy bag of leftovers for dinner that evening, I opted also for two of the \$8.95 lunch specials: hot basil with mock duck, and yellow curry with the above-mentioned chicken breast. Each meal included a cup of vegetable soup, a basic green salad with sweetish peanut dressing, an egg roll, and rice. I accepted doubles on everything.

The soup flaunted a medley of cabbage, zucchini, carrots and leafy greens in a lovely, clear broth that tasted a little like Lipton Cup-A-Soup, although not as salty and not at all a bad thing. My exceptionally friendly waiter said it is house-made.

The egg rolls turned up cold in the middle. I sent them back and received crisp, piping hot replacements with a gracious apology.

In the hot basil stir fry, I loved the zesty brown sauce and shredded pieces of vegan duck, which actually resembled succulent beef. The dish’s downside, however, was copious amounts of undercooked green beans and bell peppers. I had wished they matched in texture the soft “meat” or that they were cut as thin as the carrots also comprising the dish.

If you’re a fan of traditional yellow curry made with coconut

milk and draped over potatoes, carrots, onions and a protein of choice, you won’t be disappointed with this full-flavored recipe.

Here, the veggies were tender, and the chicken breast was plentiful. Nary a drop of the precious liquid went to waste, as I dredged everything



Chicken breast and veggies in yellow curry

through it afterwards — the rice, a leftover egg roll and even some of the lettuce leaves from my salads. Draw me a bath of this stuff and I’ll soak in it all day.

Kudos to the kitchen for getting the spice level right. In all cases, I opted for “2” on a 10-level scale. I normally go a few notches higher, but when sharing Thai leftovers with my spouse, anything spicier results in fits and screeches.



Hot basil stir fry with mock duck



Maps of Thailand’s various regions serve as wall art. (Photos by Frank Sabatini Jr.)

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—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.■



Saucy khao soi contains egg noodles and chicken.



What's Cooking with Julie

Julie White

SPICED FALL MUFFINS

Packed with veggies, this is a very easy, nutritious recipe to try in the autumn season that brings us that chilly snap in the evenings, pumpkins, sweaters and Halloween. My favorite time of year!

Ingredients:
● 1 1/2 cups of whole wheat flour (you can use white flour)



(Flickr)

- 4 tablespoons melted butter
- 1 zucchini, grated
- 1 apple, grated
- 2 carrots, grated
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 eggs, slightly beaten
- 1 tablespoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/2 teaspoon ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder

Directions:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

Blend all ingredients until well mixed. Fill 12 muffin tins that have been lined with paper muffin cup liners.

Bake for 20-25 minutes until golden and done.■



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Foothiller Footsteps

Connie Baer and Lynn Baer

Since 1921, with the graduation of its first senior class, Grossmont High School alumni have returned to their school to show their gratitude. Today, we have two generous alumni leaving their footprints on Grossmont's physical campus: Gene Chubb, Class of 1948, and Bill Woolman, Class of 1962.

Campus monument

In 2012, Woolman funded the creation of a two-sided, gray-columned monument in front of the 2013 Humanities Building on the east side of campus. Woolman's vision was for a sign that celebrated Grossmont High. The sign's front side proudly proclaims, "Grossmont High School, Established 1920." The back side affirms, "Foothillers Forever." The style of the monument echoes the original gray "castle" seen across the lower and uppers quads. For five years, it has been a favored spot for photographs on campus.

Big G on the Hill

Woolman and Chubb's first project together was the restoration of the Big G on the Hill below the original school, which has been in that location since the 1940s when it was first made of blue and gold blooming shrubs planted by the Hi-Y Club, of which, not surprisingly, Chubb was a member. Then, in 1993, thanks to Chubb's generosity as co-owner of RCP Brick and Block, the big "G" we now see on the hill in front of the original granite "castle" was created from 770 gold painted bricks and gravel by crews of parents and band members over nine Saturdays.

In 2016, the big "G" was again showing its age and was renovated this time due to the generosity of both Chubb and Woolman.

With Chubb donating the materials and Woolman funding the installation, the "G" was repaired and painted, the frame of the "G" redone in stone to match the 1922 granite of the original school, and the gravel replenished! The Big G on the Hill is now a beautiful symbol of the original granite school visible above it.

Class of 1989 sign

Located at the front of the school near the senior lawn is a sign donated 30 years ago by a senior class. In 2016, it was also showing its age with its red brick pillars and the illegibility of the face of the sign. Again, Chubb came to the rescue by

donating the concrete block and materials as well as the mason's labor to renovate the pillars and the face of the sign. The historic face of the sign, lettering, and image of our mascot "Grossmont Gus" were also replaced thanks to a generous donation to the GHS Educational Foundation from the Gerald Fackler Charitable Remainder Trust.

Paver Path

Most students and staff on campus tolerated the muddy shoes and footprints caused by a pathway adjacent to the Math Building that flooded during irrigation or rain. However, in 2017, looking for another project, Woolman and Chubb again joined forces to create a pathway out of gray pavers and gravel, with Chubb donating the materials and Woolman funding the labor for a landscaper to create the pathway, much to the delight of the teachers and students in the Math Building.

Front monument

The most recent project of these two wonderful Foothillers is the beautiful and striking front monument, which is adjacent to the



(l to r) Bill Woolman and Gene Chubb stand by the front monument they donated to Grossmont High School. (Courtesy GHS Museum)

school's 2016 two-story office. As usual, Chubb donated the materials and the labor of the mason while Woolman funded the letters, the two bronze plaques, and their installation. The sign beautifully complements the school office in style, but echoes the historic nature of the rear monument, with the substitution of a favorite Foothiller student proclamation, "It's Great to Be Young and a Foothiller."

As Principal Dan Barnes told Woolman and Chubb, "These kinds of projects help keep our community proud of our school, staff, and students. These kinds of things would never get done if it weren't for your efforts and care of Grossmont High School."

The generosity of Chubb and Woolman is never-ending. Not surprisingly, once the front monument was completed, Chubb asked, "What's our next project?"

Visit the GHS Museum on Wednesdays: noon-3:30 p.m.

Upcoming Foothiller Reunions*

- **Class of 1963 55th Reunion:** Oct. 25, 2018
Contact: Karen Templeton at karen-snailartistry@gmail.com or 509-336-3561.
- **Class of 1978:** Oct. 13, 2018
Contact: Theresa Annear at Theresa@kaviani.com or visit Classmates.com.

*More information available on the reunion page at foothillermuseum.com.

Oct. 3 or Saturday, Oct. 27 from 10 a.m.-noon or by appointment on other Wednesdays. To learn more about Foothiller history, visit foothillermuseum.com, email ghsmuseum@guhsd.net or call 619-668-6140.

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

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Helix honor society inducts new members



Helix Highlights

Jennifer Osborn

Helix’s chapter of the National Honor Society (NHS) inducted 105 new members for the 2018-19 school year. The students applied to become members, and using both Helix’s and NHS membership criteria, the students were selected for their academic success, as well as their excellence in leadership, service, and character.

Part of NHS membership is community service and Helix’s chapter is no different. NHS members will sit with young children and read with them at the La Mesa Oktoberfest in the “Read with a Scottie” booth. Anyone with new or gently used books appropriate for young children is invited to drop their donations at the booth. They hope to send each child home with the book they read!

Homecoming 2018

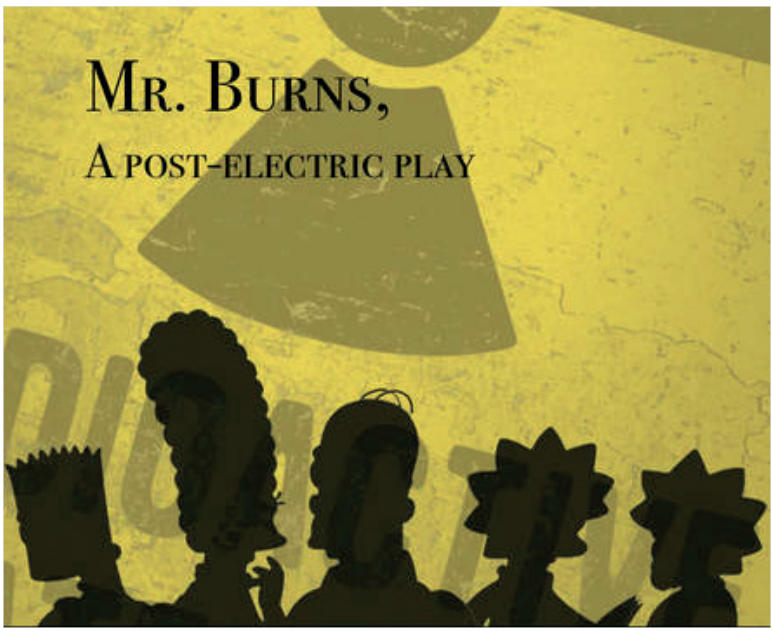
Helix Homecoming 2018 is on Friday, Oct. 5. Come see Helix take on Valhalla. Kickoff is 7 p.m. Join the festivities!

Helix High School Foundation and Alumni Association activities

The Helix High School Foundation is pleased to announce the 2nd annual Wine Tasting FUNdraiser, held at Koi Zen Cellars (Rancho Bernardo). The event will take place on Sunday, Oct. 21, 12:30–4 p.m. Tickets are \$42 and include five tastings, table snacks, five raffle tickets, and barbecue by Helix’s very own Brett McKinney. Tickets can be purchased at helixfoundation.com. Koi Zen will donate \$6 from each ticket and 20 percent of all wine sales, which will be used for scholarships for Helix seniors. The Foundation granted more than \$50,000 in scholarships to the class of 2018.

The All-Class Picnic will be held on the Helix campus on Sunday, Oct. 14, 11 a.m.–3 p.m. Alumni are welcome to set up with their classmates, and participate in a contest for Best Class Tent. The event will feature performances by student and alumni groups, a car show, food, music and more!

Planning has begun for the 50th reunion for the Helix class of 1969. The date will be July 27, 2019, and the reunion will be held at the La Mesa Community Center at the main building. More info to follow. Please contact Donna Hodges Cole at dcandthecaptain@hotmail.com or call 619-464-5269.



Tickets are on sale for The Highland Players upcoming production of “Mr. Burns, a Post-Electric Play” (Courtesy Helix Charter High School)

Performing arts calendar

The Helix Dance Department presents Dance Lab on Oct. 16 and 17 at 7 p.m. in the Helix Mainstage Theater. Tickets are \$7 for presale or \$10 at the door. Visit helixdancers.weebly.com for more information.

The Helix Vocal Music Department presents the “Haunted Helix” concert on Oct. 29 and 30 at 7 p.m. in the Helix Mainstage Theater. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children. Presale tickets are offered at a discount of \$8 for adults and \$4 for children at ticketleap.com.

The Highland Players present “Mr. Burns, a Post-Electric Play” Nov. 7–10, 16 and 17. Performances begin at 7 p.m. in the Helix Blackbox Theater.

Tickets are \$10. Visit helix-drama.weebly.com for more information.

Excellence in Education Tours

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 October tours are Oct. 4 at 5:30 p.m. and Oct. 19 at 8:10 a.m. Reserve your spot using our website, helixcharter.net.

As always, we welcome your input. Please don’t hesitate to contact me at josborn@helix-charter.net.

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

► Candidates, from page 10

Weber also shared her thoughts on the homeless issue in the city.

“I don’t think that the council, in the past, has addressed [homelessness] very well or even really acknowledged it as a problem in La Mesa,” she said. “When I look at the issue of homelessness, I look at it in two folds. One is people who might not be on the street but do not have a home. Leaders need to have a vision for dealing with affordable housing, low and middle income.”

The other focus is medical, psychological issues leading to homelessness, she said, and offered a potential solution.

“We pay into the Grossmont Healthcare District so we need to go to them as representatives of La Mesa and say, ‘Hey are residents are paying into this Grossmont Healthcare District, you’ve got a hospital here. What kind of free services are you offering for the medically and psychologically unstable so that they can then get off the street and start providing for themselves?’”

For more information about City Council candidate Dave Meyers, visit daveforlamesa.com.

Learn more about Dr. Akilah Weber’s campaign at drweber4lamesa.com.

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



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Sudoku & Crossword puzzle answers from page 23

4	S	L	I	6	8	E	9	2
1	7	6	E	9	S	7	4	8
8	E	9	4	7	2	6	1	5
2	9	4	7	8	1	5	E	6
E	8	1	6	S	4	2	7	9
6	7	S	2	E	9	4	8	1
7	4	2	9	1	6	8	S	E
S	1	E	8	2	7	9	6	4
9	6	8	S	4	E	1	2	7

N	S	S	A	N	E	D	T	E	S	V	B
E	E	R	I	V	I	A	E	I	N	N	A
S	N	I	V	I	B	U	C	S	N	I	B
L	V	A	R	O	B	A	R	E	S	T	E
O	B	H	E	B	A	B	L	S	V	O	
I	B	S	F	I	B	E	S	O	S	E	P
N	E	R	O	G	S	T	O	H	S	S	D
U	N	E	M	W	S	V	H	C	I	N	O
I	E	A	T	V	E	R	G	S	V	O	L
S	V	A	O	S	H	R	O	D	O	H	
E	V	A	L	E	S	E	S	E	I	V	E
S	T	E	O	U	A	V	E	S	T	E	C
S	E	R	L	O	R	L	A	P	O	R	A
E	Z	O	R	E	F	E	H	A	H	A	H

The dragon fire of summer

Nancy Johnson



In summer, I like to sip margaritas and watch our gardens grow. But unfortunately, there has been a dragon in my yard for most of the summer seriously getting in the way of my relaxation mojo. That dragon was a long heat wave.

At first, that dragon just spit his fire in general gusts all over my husband and I as we began xeriscaping in the hottest months of summer. He burned our skin, gave us blisters, and sent heat into our knees and backs. He was there laughing as we dug out 50 feet of grass, sifted rocks, clay and weeds out of said clumps, and then shoveled huge mounds of dirt into small mountain ranges all over the front yard. He settled down on the mountain ranges each evening and waited for us to limp out the following day.

My husband built a large plant bed all along our front porch and then we moved one of the mountains into the bed. We used picks, shovels, rakes, and even a roto-tiller. We shoveled sifted dirt into two more plant beds and hired a contractor to build a brick walkway between the beds. We sweat and drank water and sweat some more. The dust of our work stuck to

our sunscreen, until our entire bodies looked as if we had been breathed on by a you-know-what.

The good news is we eventually began to plant. I want to talk about some new plants we added, and one very old knightly plant that brought us a different kind of dragon fire.

Sunflowers

As one would expect in the summer, sunflowers still bloom in the fiery days of August and September. I bought five 3-foot-high plants for the new plant bed in front of the porch because I *sorely* needed some joy and some *watching*. I watched and enjoyed for a couple of weeks, and then began to notice that many buds on the plants were no longer blooming.

Tip: Little gray/white moths like to hide their eggs in the buds before the flower blooms. The baby critters that hatch are tiny green worms that eat the leaves and the buds, so overnight the flowers stop blooming — and the plant looks like our dragon gave a tiny exhale and burnt the tips of all the leaves. If your buds and leaves begin to look unhealthy, spray with a friendly insecticide and they will start to bloom again.

Dragon fruit cactus (Hylocereus undatus)

This scraggly cactus plant represents everything good



A dragon fruit cactus in bloom (Courtesy Nancy Johnson)

about dragons. We planted him several years ago, and he's limped along like old knights do. I had ignored him, giving him a bit of water with the rest of the plants, but really thinking, "What an ugly little fellow."

I had other dragons to fight. He had never bloomed before, but as if knowing that I needed a more passionate kind of fire, he lit up one night with a huge, white bloom. In the morning, I was greeted by the knight's fiery bloom, and the dragon was nowhere to be found.

Tip: If you create a wooden stand for this plant, you can train it to grow high (as high as 33 feet!), and then it will grow over the top of the stand, billowing fiery blossoms and flowers — and passion dragon fruit if you're lucky.

—Nancy Johnson writes on behalf of La Mesa Beautiful, of which she is a member.■

► News Briefs, from page 11

"It was difficult for me to share my mother," said Dubert in a press release. "As I got older, I better understood the impact that she was having in the lives of children. I'm deeply honored to follow in my mother's footsteps and serve as co-chair of the annual Back-to-School Drive for Promises2Kids."

BOMA donated 937 backpacks, as well as lunch bags and other school supplies to Promises2Kids. BOMA has partnered with Promises2Kids for more than 25 years on the organization's annual Back-to-School Drive and the Give From Your Heart holiday gift drive.

Promises2Kids provides more than 3,300 current and former foster youth in San Diego County with the tools, opportunities and guidance they need to address the circumstances that brought them into foster care, overcome the difficulties of their past, and grow into healthy, happy and successful adults.

East County Herald ends publication

On Sept. 6, local paper The East County Herald printed its last edition. The publication, which featured mostly photojournalism of local events and people, had been in print for 20 years.

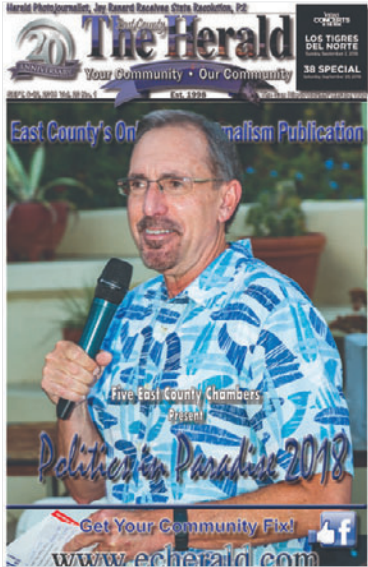
In a letter to community partners, contributors and supporters of the paper, publisher Dee Dean explained that she was shuttering the popular local publication due to her ongoing battle with multiple sclerosis.

"I know I should have retired a couple years ago, however, as

some of you may know, I can be stubborn," she wrote.

In addition to thanking the advertisers and contributors to the paper by name, her letter touched on the uniqueness of The Herald's approach to covering local news in the East County area.

"I'm very proud of the beautiful photojournalism publication that has become a staple in our community," she wrote. "My goal has always been to give coverage and bring recognition to the nonprofits, charity organizations, service clubs, chambers of commerce and all



The final issue of the EC Herald (eastcountyherald.com)

the pageants in East County that went severely under-recognized for years. I think I have achieved that."

Dean also thanked the readers and fans of The Herald for "rocking her world" for 20 years.

"It is my hope that you will remember The Herald fondly and smile," she concluded.■

Bid adieu



Heather Pisani-Kristl (Photo by Jeff Clemetson)

La Mesa Library Branch Manager Heather Pisani-Kristl is moving on to newer pastures. Oct. 11 will be her last day in La Mesa before taking over managing the newly-constructed San Diego County Library in Alpine.

Pisani-Kristl has served as branch manager of La Mesa since 2012. Some of the programs she started at the library that she is most fond of include the Saturday concerts, which she implemented with the help of La Mesa Friends of the Library, and The Human Library, where people gather to talk about difficult and controversial subjects in a respectful and meaningful way.

Pisani-Kristl said she will miss the active community involvement and the "curious minds" of the La Mesa patrons.■

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PUZZLES

ANSWERS ON PAGE 22

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.

7	2	1		4		8		
4					8		1	
	5			1				7
1	8					5		
			4		9			
		5					6	2
5				7			3	
	4		5					1
		3		9		7	5	4

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CROSSWORD Sounds Alike

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38					39							40			
41				42							43				
				44											
					</										

- CREATORS NEWS SERVICE
- By Charles Preston
- ACROSS**

1 Belly laugh

5 Perennial entertainer

9 Converted to ice

14 Cupid

15 Translucent gem

16 Traditions

17 Farrah's fixtures

20 Entertainment centers: Brit.

21 Roman matrons' robes

22 Recruitment agcy.

23 Coal scuttle

24 Modish

25 Thomas or Robin

27 Bobby's paddles

31 Greek porticoes

33 Large

34 Still

35 Oaf

36 Deep fissure

37 Bill of fare

38 Commercial come-ons

39 Injections

40 Bridge expert

41 Edgar's posture

43 Small prevarications

44 Kiln

45 Capture

46 Movie channel, briefly

49 Author of *Tristram Shandy*

52 Tree-related

54 Jane's drapes

56 Alice Ghostley vehicle

57 Sills' trills

58 Corner

59 City of northern Switzerland

60 Disavow

61 Org.
- DOWN**

1 Handles

2 Oriental maids

3 Sally Ann's residence

4 Reliquary

5 Highway menace

6 Chose

7 Freebie

8 North Pole employee

9 Galway, e.g.

10 Ornate

11 City on the Oka

12 Greek letter

13 Being: L.

18 Cultural values

19 Religious retreat

24 Salad garnish

26 Cereal grain

27 Speechify

28 Sir Alfred's

29 Descartes

30 Strike dumb

31 Stinging rebuff

32 Disturbance

33 Scrooge's visitant

36 Korea, formerly

37 Rabble

39 Canine breed

40 Leg of lamb

42 Armed attack

43 Actress Nanette

45 Boston hockey player

47 Poisonous elements

48 Sportscaster Merlin

49 Strikebreaker

50 Sandwich filler

51 Seabirds

52 Land unit

53 Pro ____

55 Dejected

A local to idolize

Gen-X in a
millennial world

Genevieve
Suzuki



When I was a kid, I had several idols I wanted to emulate. There was first lady Nancy Reagan, who ran the “Just Say No” campaign; Grace Van Owen, the cool female attorney from “L.A. Law”; glamorous Miss America; and any one of the Dallas Cowboy cheerleaders.

As I grew up — thankfully — my idols changed in regard to proximity.

Currently, one of my favorite people is La Mesa Fair Trade co-founder Anne Pacheco. A board member of the Global Solidarity Commission, Interfaith Council of La Mesa, Fair Trade San Diego County and a CRS Ethical Trade Ambassador, Anne has the kind of heart with which I wish we were all born.

When I first met Anne several years ago, I was editor of La Mesa Courier. She and Nancy Ryan, her partner in Fair Trade, were seeking publicity for their efforts to spread the news about fair trade.

For those of us who don’t understand fair trade, it is a movement that promotes paying people around the world a fair, living wage for their work. Many people in developing

countries struggle daily to provide for their families, working to make ends meet by accepting low-paying jobs with unhealthy working conditions. People in these countries often contend with forced child labor or human trafficking, circumstances that have the greatest impact on women.

Thanks to Anne and Nancy’s efforts, St. Martin of Tours Academy, where Anne works as an administrative assistant, was designated a Fair Trade School, making it the first elementary school to achieve such a designation. Fair Trade Schools promote social justice, environmental sustainability and economic empowerment for fair trade producers, workers, artisans and their families, according to the academy’s website.

If you know Anne, it’s no surprise this cause is near and dear to her. She is the first to ask after a person’s well-being and the last to say anything hurtful. She is also always looking for ways to help.

After she read my column on purchasing a gift card for a mother and her two children, she gave me several copies of a small flyer to keep in my purse for those kinds of moments. The paper offered information about where people can go for food, showers and shelter.

“I try to always hand these out when I meet people in need,” she said.

Another good Samaritan project with which Anne is involved is Build a Miracle, a



(l to r) Anne Pacheco and Genevieve Suzuki (Courtesy Genevieve Suzuki)

ministry that gives parishioners a chance to live out their faith by doing something for others. Specifically, she and her husband, Mark, have helped Miracle workers build three homes in Tijuana.

“We are making sure the children are in school and all is well with the family and their homes,” Anne said. “We are committed to making sure they all succeed.”

When I was a kid, my idols were celebrities seen only on TV. As an adult, I’m happy to count Anne as one of my inspirations for how to live in La Mesa, the United States and the world.

Heaven knows this world could certainly do with more Annes living in it.

Join Anne and Nancy at the annual Fair Trade Gift Faire in La Mesa Oct. 14 from 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at St. Martin of Tours Parish Hall. The largest gift fair of its kind south of Los Angeles, the event features handmade baskets, jewelry, purses, bags,

See IDOLIZE page 25 —————>

October featured artist: Nora Sanders



FOOTHILLS ART ASSOCIATION

Linda Michael

Nora Sanders Curran fell in love with Chinese brush painting (better known as Sumi-e in the U.S.) while living in China. Then, while living in London, she studied with Chinese masters Qu Lei Lei, Cao Xiao Li and Xu Jongming. Now a resident of La Mesa, she will be the October featured artist at the Foothills Gallery in La Mesa.

The former Londoner came to the U.S. 12 years ago to marry John Curran. Nora jokes that John is from New England and she is from Old England. At the time, John lived in New Mexico, and Nora soon immersed herself in the art and cultural scene of her community. She joined the New Mexico Art League and the Rio Grande Art Association. She edited and published the Art League’s monthly newsletter The Palette. She also served on Rio Rancho’s Cultural Task Force.

Nora gave talks and demonstrations on Chinese brush painting at local libraries and was the featured artist at the Blue Lily Atelier for Chinese New Year. She also



A Chinese brush painting by Nora Sanders Curran (Courtesy Foothills Art Association)

taught her mix of Western and Asian art she calls “East meets West” at the local Hobby Lobby and from home.

“It takes years to master Chinese brush painting and get those calligraphy strokes just right,” she says. “My Chinese teacher would not let us use color for three years. We had to use only ink, Chinese brushes and rice paper.”

See FOOTHILLS ART page 25 —————>



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► **Water project**, from page 1

Currently, the East County advanced water purification demonstration facility, located at the north end of Santee Lakes, can provide 100,000 gallons of purified water daily — but the goal is much larger. Padre Dam has proposed building a new water recycling facility that would have a greater impact on the local water supply. By the time the proposed system is completed by the end of 2024 — if it is completed — Padre Dam would provide 18 million gallons per day, which figures out to be about 30 percent of East County’s water needs at that time. “If it is completed” is used advisedly. In the preliminary cost studies, the whole system computes out to cost about \$500 million, all told. That is by any measure a lot of money. How much of that will come from ratepayers? That’s a good question.



A section of the water recycling system at Santee Lakes (Photos by Doug Curlee)

“We hope to shield rate-payers as much as possible,” said Padre Dam spokesperson Melissa McChesney. “But there may be higher costs down the line. We still hope it’ll cost ratepayers less than what we have to pay, and charge, for water now.” (Not everyone knows that Padre Dam, alone among county water agencies, has to buy every single drop of water it sells to customers. Padre Dam has no independent water source — no wells, no aquifer, nothing). And yes, this water starts out as what is often derided as “Toilet to Tap.” That phrase alone caused the city of San Diego years of grief trying to start up its own system. Opponents made that proposal into a frankly political fight with serious racial overtones. It took years to overcome that and kick-start San Diego’s efforts, which are now well underway. The technology has advanced by leaps and bounds over the years, and people



Eat County Water festival served recycled water for people to taste.

seldom refer to it negatively anymore, because we all now realize that water is a finite resource. What we have now, in whatever form, is all this planet is ever going to get. People at the Water Festival didn’t seem to have any trouble with the source of the water to be treated. “I have no problem with it” said Jim Crampton. “We’re gonna need water, no doubt about it.” “We’re absolutely big fans,” said Frank and Lisa Hunter. “I can get my mind around that.” Rofee Two says it’s caused a little debate at his house. “I have no problem with it, but my wife says we’re gonna buy bottled water,” he said. “I don’t want to do that because water in plastic bottles has its own problems.” So how will this work, assuming it’s actually done? Wastewater from all the areas Padre Dam serves will be treated at the new plant to be built — all solids and pollutants will be filtered out and disposed of.

The purified water — and it will be tested constantly — will either be placed in an empty aquifer under Santee along with some imported treated water, and allowed to naturally exist as it does in wells everywhere, or it will be transported through an above-ground pipe system to Lake Jennings in Lakeside. From there, it will go through the Helix Water District’s water treatment plant for further treatment before going out to customers. The first thing that needs to happen is that a Joint Powers Agreement will have to be set up consisting of Padre Dam, Helix Water, San Diego County and the city of San Diego. So everyone is playing from the same rule book. Then, it’s time to start looking for money. So far, Padre Dam has acquired about \$30 million in grants and loans. Only \$470 million to go.

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

► **Idolize**, from page 24

scarves, toys, Christmas ornaments, coffee, tea and chocolate. Vendors include All Across Africa, Around the World Gifts, Ben & Jerry’s Fair Trade Ice Cream, Café Moto, Equal Exchange, Divine Chocolates, Fair Trade Décor, Dr. Bronners, Genesis Fair Trade, The Golden Rule, The Guatemala Project, Malia Designs and Threads Worldwide. —Genevieve A. Suzuki is a local attorney who lives and works in La Mesa.■

► **Foothills Art**, from page 24

By combining Asian art techniques, brushstrokes and philosophy, she has expanded her portfolio to include a more Western style in watercolor and acrylics — hence the meeting of East and West. Nora, who paints under the name Nora Sanders, moved to La Mesa in 2017 with her husband John and is now a member of the Foothills Art Association and the San Diego Watercolor Society. The public is invited to her artist’s reception on Saturday, Oct. 20, 2–4 p.m. at the Foothills Gallery at Porter Hall, 4910 Memorial Drive, La Mesa. —Linda Michael is the editor of the Foothills Art Association newsletter Footnotes. Reach her at linda.michael@cox.net.■

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Thu 10/25/2018	3:00PM
Thu 11/08/2018	1:00PM
Thu 11/15/2018	4:00PM

Five must-see attractions of Taos

Travel Tales

Nancy Stern



Ask a local what brought them to live in Taos, New Mexico and they would likely answer, “I think I was called to be here.”

The area’s art and culture, serene mountain views, eclectic food scene, early history, and unique architecture will keep visitors busy exploring all of the various attractions that make this city a magical place. Here are some of the best must-see wonders of Taos.

Millicent Rogers Museum

The Millicent Rogers Museum is based on the life of a New York socialite who visited Taos in order to gain peace of mind. She fell in love with the thriving, edgy and artistic town. Over time, the fashion icon contributed her own sense of style and made an impact on the popular culture of her day.

Millicent Rogers’ unique chic style blends Native American turquoise and silver jewelry



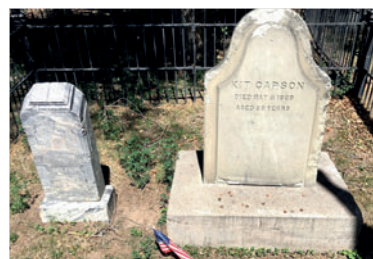
San Francisco de Asis Church

with high couture fashion. Along with a collection of her personal jewelry, there are displays of priceless Southwestern pottery, textile blankets and sarapes. More than 7,000 objects of art are rotated in the well-designed museum that was established as a memorial to her.

Taos Pueblo

Many Americans may not be aware that there are 19 Pueblo communities between Albuquerque and Taos. The northernmost of these, the Taos Pueblo, is believed to have been established nearly 1,000 years ago. It is the only living Native American community that has been given both the World Heritage Site designation by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and National Historic Landmark status.

For an admission fee, tourists can visit the walled-in city and hear resident guides speak about the historical culture and traditions. About 150 Pueblo inhabitants still live in their



Kit Carson’s gravesite alongside his wife Jesefa

adobe homes with no electricity or running water — as simply as their ancestors did long ago.

Many who live there set up little shops outside their homes selling jewelry, Indian fry bread, pastries and crafts. As one young local said, “We don’t want to sell out to modernism; we want to keep it authentic.”

Taos Plaza

Located in the heart of downtown, Taos Plaza previously held a reputation of being a “wild and wooly West” hotspot. Shootings, hangings, excessive drinking and human trafficking all contributed to its notorious past.

Throughout the years, repeated fires burnt down the surrounding wood buildings until adobe construction put a halt to the destructive cycle. The Hotel La Fonda de Taos is testament to this as it has stood since 1820. Many celebrities and notable citizens have stayed here, including Judy Garland, Georgia O’ Keefe and Dennis Hopper.

The plaza is also a central meeting place for festivities. Throughout the summer on Thursday evenings, various local musicians are featured; tourists can also visit shops in the plaza that offer candles, jewelry, fine art and souvenirs. From May to October, a thriving farmers market on Saturdays sells fresh juices, produce, honey, homemade cheeses, breads and ethnic pastries.



The Taos Pueblo is a World Heritage site. (Photos by Ron Stern)

Kit Carson Home and Museum

Kit Carson is a household name and part of American West folklore. Visit his original Taos home — now a museum — to learn about this legendary frontiersman who was highly respected among the people of his time. Tragically, his wife Josefa died 10 days after giving birth to her last child, and Carson passed away one month to the day after that. Their gravesite is a short distance away in the Kit Carson Cemetery.

An award-winning History Channel video accompanied with exhibits, story boards, and a well-stocked bookstore all impart information about this colorful period of history.

San Francisco de Asis Church

This popular tourist attraction is also an active church since its completion in about 1815. Recognized as a National Historic Landmark in 1970, it is considered the oldest existing Catholic Church adobe structure in the Taos Valley and one of the finest examples of a Spanish Colonial New Mexican church. Georgia O’Keefe found its twin

towers to be an inspiration for several of her famous paintings.

Parishioners and volunteers gather each year for the “enjarre” during the first two weeks of June. This is when the mudding (restoring the outside walls) occurs in the traditional way of mixing clay, straw, sand, and water.

Inside the hall hangs the 19th-century painting by artist Henri Ault, “The Shadow of the Cross,” which glows in the dark. Tourists can view it for a \$3 donation to the church.

“There are no straight lines in Taos!” according to one guide. This can be found in the round curves of the adobe architecture, the cobblestones, and the many celestial symbols of the sun and moon in the local decor. Here, the relaxed attitude of the locals and shopkeepers slows down the pace of a once hurried tourist. The warm hues and bright colors happily stimulate the senses, compelling many to pull up stakes and make Taos their permanent home.

—Nancy Stern is a travel writer with her husband Ron Stern. This was a sponsored trip; however, all opinions herein are the author’s. ■

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LA MESA COURIER

COMMUNITY AND ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT CALENDAR

FEATURED EVENTS

SATURDAY

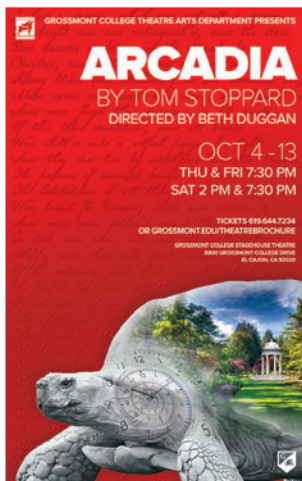
Sept. 29

Great Pumpkin Festival Through Oct. 31

The Children's Nature Retreat animal sanctuary in Alpine will hold its annual great pumpkin festival through Oct. 31. Retreat staff invite you to get in the Halloween mood, wander the pumpkin patch, and meet their family of over 130 animals. Tickets to visit the sanctuary are \$15 for kids and \$25 for adults. For tickets and information about the retreat, visit bit.ly/20SuiTB.

THURSDAY

Oct. 4



'Arcadia'

Through Oct. 13

Tom Stoppard's stage-play "Arcadia" will be presented at the Grossmont College Stagehouse Theatre in six shows between Oct. 4–13. An original production by prolific British dramatist Tom Stoppard, the story follows two time-lines that begin to converge as past and present grow increasingly blurred. Tickets to the critically acclaimed play are \$15 for general admission, and \$10 for students. For tickets and showtimes, visit bit.ly/2PQ6CPJ.

SATURDAY

Oct. 6



Architecture lecture

The La Mesa Historical Society will discuss the architectural history of La Mesa's Mt. Nebo and Eastridge neighborhoods as part of its roundtable lecture series. The discussion, titled "Classic Craftsman to Modern Mud," will be held Saturday, Oct. 6, 10 a.m.–noon. Located in the Grossmont Healthcare District Conference Center Auditorium,

9001 Wakarusa St. Space is limited, contact Jim Newland at info@lamesahistory.com to reserve a seat.



Casa de Oro Fall Fest

The Casa de Oro Alliance is celebrating its third annual community fall festival on Saturday, Oct. 6, 10 a.m.–3 p.m. This free event will host games, food trucks, music and more. Located at the Spring Valley Academy, 3900 Conrad Drive, Spring Valley.

Stockzilla

Santee Lakes invites fishing aces and families to come cast a line as it restocks all seven lakes with over 3,500 pounds of catfish. For anglers who catch a tagged fish, the event will feature prizes including fishing poles, bicycles, camping gear, and free passes to the lakes. Stockzilla runs Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 6–7, 6 a.m.–6 p.m. \$6 per car. Fishing permits are required and are available at the general store, 9310 Fanita Pkwy. For permit and event information, visit santeelakes.com.

SUNDAY

Oct. 7

La Mesa Beautiful Spirit Awards

La Mesa Beautiful has announced its annual spirit awards which it presents to La Mesa residents who have been selected for their stand-out landscaping. The awards ceremony is free and runs 5–7 p.m. Refreshments will be served. To RSVP, email lamesabeautiful@gmail.com.

WEDNESDAY

Oct. 10

Red Lobster welcome party

La Mesa Chamber of Commerce welcomes new member Red Lobster with a soiree featuring happy hour drinks and samples. The party runs 5:30–7 p.m. with an official ribbon cutting at 6:15 p.m. Free. Red Lobster, 8703 Murray Drive.

FRIDAY

Oct. 12

Transportation Expo

The city of La Mesa and its Rides 4 Neighbors program present a transportation expo designed to highlight transportation options and safety resources in the community.

Expo will feature dozens of exhibitors, speakers, access to transportation resources, a complimentary breakfast bar and more. Sharp Grossmont health services will be in attendance providing flu shots to those who need them. Free. Held at the La Mesa Community Center, 4975 Memorial Drive. Oct. 12, 8:30–noon.

'Butterflies are Free' Through Nov. 11

The Lamplighter Theatre presents its rendition of Leonard Gershe's 1969 play about a blind aspiring songwriter who falls in love with a free spirit in Manhattan. "Butterflies are Free," winner of the 1970 Tony for best stage actress, is a touching and entertaining drama about finding one's way in the world. Directed by George Bailey. Tickets are \$22, students and military \$19. 5915 Severin Dr. For tickets and showtime, visit bit.ly/20QsSsF.

SATURDAY

Oct. 13

Golden Spoon anniversary celebration

The La Mesa Chamber of Commerce and Golden Spoon are celebrating the ice cream shop's one-year anniversary. Come congratulate owners Chris and Dionne Cather and sample some frozen treats starting at 11 a.m. with a ribbon cutting and lasting through the day. 5640 Lake Murray Blvd.

SUNDAY

Oct. 14

Fair Trade Market

The St. Martin of Tours Catholic church will host its annual fair-trade gift market. Held in the parish hall, this event features local and national vendors who are committed to creating and selling fair-trade goods. Cash only. Sunday Oct. 14, 8 a.m.–1:30 p.m. at 7710 El Cajon Blvd. For more information and a list of vendors, call 619-446-3241.

WEDNESDAY

Oct. 17



Chamber of Commerce breakfast with Dr. Hornbrook

Join the La Mesa Chamber of Commerce for their final breakfast meeting of the year. Enjoy a hearty breakfast of eggs, bacon, sausage, potatoes,

fresh fruit, coffee, juice and more and hear from guest speaker, Dr. David Hornbrook. Dr. Hornbrook is one of the world's top three cosmetic dentists and has been transforming smiles for over 30 years. Tickets are \$15 for members, \$20 for non-members. Wednesday, Oct. 17, 7:30–9 a.m. Marie Callender's, 6950 Alvarado Road.

SATURDAY

Oct. 20

Rummage sale

The La Mesa branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) will hold its semi-annual rummage sale fundraiser. Proceeds will go on to support educational scholarship programs for women and girls. Clothing, household goods, craft supplies, appliances, toys, books and more will be available at low prices. Saturday, Oct. 20, 7 a.m.–5 p.m. at St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church, 6556 Park Ridge Blvd.

Lions Tigers & Bears! Casino Night

Big cat and exotic animal sanctuary, Lions Tigers & Bears animal rescue will hold a casino night fundraiser Saturday, Oct. 20, at the home of Ms. Sharon Blanchet in Pacific Beach. The event offers guests the opportunity to learn more about the history and mission of the sanctuary and be a part of supporting their program. Admission is split between \$200 for general admission, and \$250 for VIP. All admission includes dinner, bar access, a silent auction, and casino-style games with the chance for prizes. To reserve tickets, call 619-659-8078.

SUNDAY

Oct. 21



Community art show

A pop-up art show and garden party will take place on Oct. 21 with 10 local artists displaying and selling their works. Refreshments will be served while guests browse at this free event. Noon–4 p.m. 6378 Lake Athabaska Place, San Diego.

MONDAY

Oct. 22

Open Studio Painting

Bring your unfinished works or start something new to an open studio painting class at Nainsook Framing + Art. Held 6–8:30 p.m. on Monday,

Oct. 22 and 29, the workshop will cover: color, composition, the rule of thirds, choosing subject matter, taking reference shots, and more. Artists should bring their own acrylic, oil or watercolor materials. All artists will receive individual attention. Each class begins with a short lesson that can be applied to any medium. \$25. 8130 La Mesa Blvd. Find more information and reserve spots at bit.ly/2N1BzyC.

WEDNESDAY

Oct. 24



Chamber of Commerce annual meeting

The La Mesa Chamber of Commerce will hold its annual meeting at Hooleys Public House on Wednesday, Oct. 24, 5:30–7 p.m. Enjoy food and beverages from chamber partners and participate in electing board members. Admission includes two complimentary glasses of wine and is free to chamber members, \$10 for non-members. For more details, or to RSVP, visit bit.ly/2PYJN1h.

THURSDAY

Oct. 25



Reka Parker Jazz Quartet

The Reka Parker Jazz Quartet returns to the Samuel M.

Ciccatti theater at Cuyamaca College on Thursday, Oct. 25. The quartet includes Reka Bodis-Parker on piano, Taylor Smith on bass, Grossmont College Music Department Chair Derek Cannon on trumpet, and Bob Daniels on drums. Show begins at 7:30 p.m. Tickets priced at \$10 for general admission and \$5 for students and seniors. First 20 students are admitted free. Call 619-660-4288 for reservations.

SATURDAY

Oct. 27



Boo Bash

Join the Salvation Army Kroc Center and get dressed up with the family at the 16th annual Boo Bash. This year's autumn celebration will be Saturday, Oct. 27, 1–4 p.m. Admission includes inflatables, carnival games, candy and prizes, pumpkin decorating, rock climbing, family-friendly music, goody bags and more. \$1 per person. Salvation Army Kroc Center Recreation Field, 6753 University Ave.

End of Life Planning & Choices

Grossmont Health District will host an end-of-life planning workshop on Saturday, Oct. 27, at noon. Speakers will discuss: "Do Not Resuscitate" (DNR), Advance Health Care Directive (AHCD), Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST), hospice, palliative care, the End of Life Option Act, and voluntary stopping eating and drinking (VSED). Located in the James G. Stieringer Conference Center, 9001 Wakarusa St. Free. ■

RECURRING EVENTS

Mondays

Singer call-out

Ladies of all ages who love to sing are invited to four-part harmony chorus rehearsals 7–9 p.m. Located in the social hall of La Mesa First United Methodist Church, 4690 Palm Ave. Free.

Thursdays Movie matinee



The La Mesa Adult Enrichment Center shows various films on Thursdays at 1 p.m. in the center's main hall. Cost

is \$2 per ticket. 8450 La Mesa Blvd. For movie listings, visit bit.ly/2Q1qU90

Fridays

La Mesa Farmers Market
La Mesa's Friday Farmers Market features fresh local produce, food, music and crafts. 3–7 p.m. along La Mesa Blvd. Free. Visit lamesavillageassociation.org

Sundays

Traveling Stories

The Grossmont Center hosts the StoryTent on Sundays which invites kids of all ages to pick out a book, read it out loud to a volunteer, and earn cool prizes for reading. Volunteers ask engaging questions to help kids build reading comprehension and critical thinking skills. Free. 5500 Grossmont Center Drive. ■

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Mt. Helix SOLD



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