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La Mesa COURIER



Village divided

La Mesa Friday Farmers Market has been a boon for residents, but a bust for some brick and mortar businesses since it moved to La Mesa Boulevard. (Photo by Jeff Clemetson)

Farmers market causes rift between downtown businesses

Jeff Clemetson
Editor

"We can't have 'The Civil War of the Village!'"

That was an exclamation from a clearly frustrated Councilmember Kristine Alessio during a discussion on the future of Friday farmers markets at the Nov. 27 La Mesa City Council meeting. "Civil war" may be a bit hyperbolic, but moving the farmers market to La Mesa Boulevard has clearly caused a rift between residents and a business association who both support the new location, and some long-time Village businesses

that say they are losing customers because of it.

The city report

When the City Council voted to move the market into the Village back in March, it agreed to review its decision after six months of operating the market in the new location. The review was in response to initial opposition to the move — mostly from established restaurants worried about how lack of parking would affect business.

For its review, presented at the Nov. 27 meeting, the city prepared a staff report that looked at the farmers market's performance; parking around the Village during the markets;

sales tax revenue for the Village for the last six months; and surveys of businesses and residents about the market.

According to the report, the farmers market performed well in its new location. The number of market vendors doubled compared to its previous location in the Civic Center parking lot; total gross sales increased by 80 percent from May to September; and average weekly gross sales for non-farm vendors increased by 10 percent. The only downturn was a decrease of average weekly sales for farm vendors, down 20 percent.

See FARMERS MARKET page 3 →

Civic Center housing takes a step forward

Jeff Clemetson
Editor

Revamping La Mesa's Civic Center has been a priority for the city for some time — and it looks like some progress toward that goal may be happening soon.

At the Nov. 27 City Council meeting, Paul Marrow of Kaiser Marston Associates presented a financial feasibility study on the best way to convert the former La Mesa Police headquarters site into housing.



An artist rendering of a possible housing project at La Mesa Civic Center (Courtesy City of La Mesa)

See CIVIC CENTER page 11 →

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► Farmers market, from page 1

“That is probably because they added more vendors. You have ‘x’ demand that is spread out among more vendors,” said city of La Mesa Community Development Department program coordinator Chris Gonzalez, who presented the report.

The report found that the market is self-supporting and making profit for La Mesa Village Business Association (LMVBA), the local business group charged with putting on special events in the Village, and Brian’s Farmers Markets, the company hired to produce the market.

Sales tax revenue in the Village increased 2.6 percent in the second quarter of the fiscal year compared to last year’s and was the “only area [in the city of La Mesa] to achieve a positive sales tax generation over the previous period,” Gonzalez said.

A parking study conducted on May 18 concluded that “definitely the market is bringing visitors to the Village,” Gonzalez said, because the non-permit parking spaces were being mostly used. The report showed that 30 parking spaces were still available during the market’s peak hours and there had been no complaints by residents with parking permits who were unable to find parking.

The results of the surveys, however, highlighted a divide between residents and newer businesses, which view the market favorably, and more established businesses — mostly restaurants — that want the market moved from Fridays or off La Mesa Boulevard entirely.

Overall, survey results show support for the Friday market in the Village at 73 percent. However, among dining businesses, 70 percent are opposed.

The report also found that 56.7 percent of businesses reported no change in income on Fridays since the market moved to the Village; 13.4 percent reported improved sales; and 32.8 percent reported declining sales. Among dining establishments, 25 percent reported no change; 12.5 percent reported improved sales; and 56.3 percent reported a decline in sales.

The report also included a survey of people visiting the Village during the market. That survey found that 65 percent of the visitors were La Mesans

and the rest were mostly from neighboring cities; 72 percent of those surveyed said they were in the Village specifically for the farmers market; 81 percent of market visitors said they patronize businesses in the Village before, after or during the farmers market; 71 percent said they dine at a Village restaurant; 25.5 percent shop at a retail store; and very few frequent a professional or personal service during the market.

The survey also asked businesses for ideas to improve the market. The most popular suggestion, mostly from restaurants, was moving the market to a different location or holding it on another day. Other ideas included moving booths to face toward the businesses; changing or reducing the hours of the market; adding more vendors in general; closing La Mesa Boulevard from Spring Street to Palm Avenue; improving parking for employees; and adding more farm vendors and fewer hot food vendors.

For and against

The divide on how businesses and residents view the Friday market, evident in the city report, was on full display during the Nov. 27 meeting.

Peter Soutowood, who co-chairs the La Mesa Village Business Association (LMVBA), pointed to the survey results as reason to support keeping the market in the Village and on Fridays.

“Looking at the survey results, we have three-quarters of our constituency, whether or not they are members of the [LMVBA], look to be quite in favor of the market,” he said.

Soutowood, who is owner of the Fourpenny restaurant in the Village, added that he wanted to make sure that the voices of businesses other than restaurants “matter” in determining what to do about the market.

The LMVBA rejected the idea of moving the location or the day, Soutowood said, because it would “halt this event entirely – killing it, stopping it, probably taking a lengthy pause to regroup and find new vendors to restart the event in whatever form it takes.”

Soutowood suggested that the council vote to have the booths realigned during the market to set up back-to-back in order to face the businesses.

“What we’re doing is making 50 percent of the attention



A staff report by the City of La Mesa concluded that parking was still available in the Village even during peak hours of the farmers market. (Photo by Jeff Clemetson)

focused on those brick-and-mortar establishments that run along the street,” he said. “Without making that major change of changing the day or the [location], our proposal is to reverse the stalls, have them face out. We won’t have some the issues that I have heard from businesses that their businesses are blocked by the back of the tent or there is no visibility to the signage, no access to their storefront. We want to open that up.”

Soutowood also pointed to the revenue the market brings in for the LMVBA — revenue he said the association needs to continue putting on events like Holiday in the Village that do not pay for themselves and cost more than association fees bring in.

“I would have the council consider that unless it wants to get back into the event-planning business, ... that there needs to be a source of income like the farmers market that can keep the Village Association afloat,” he said. “That is not an ultimatum, it’s just simply a fact of how we as an association need to operate. We require some revenue for events we put on and almost all of them cost quite a bit of money.”

Councilmember Alessio retorted that she found the claim that Holiday in the Village and other events needing revenue to continue “bizarre” because the events had been held in the past without needing funds from a farmers market.

Market operator Brian Beevers also made the case

See FARMERS MARKET page 10 →

How to Avoid Costly Housing Mistakes Before and After a Divorce

La Mesa - Divorce is rarely easy and often means a lot of difficult decisions. One of the most important decisions is what to do about the house.

In the midst of the heavy emotional and financial turmoil, what you need most is some non-emotional, straightforward, specific information and answers. Once you know how a divorce affects your home, your mortgage and taxes, critical decisions are easier. Neutral, third party information can help you make logical, rather than emotional, decisions.

Probably the first decision is whether you want to continue living in the house. Will the familiar surroundings bring you comfort and emotional security, or unpleasant memories? Do you want to minimize change by staying where you are, or sell your home and move to a new place that offers a new start? Only you can answer those questions, but there will almost certainly be some financial repercussions to your decision process. What can you afford? Can you manage the old house on your new budget? Is refinancing possible? Or is it better to sell and buy? How much house can buy on your new budget?

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Mending through mentorship

Programs offer support for Gold Star families and wounded vets

Jeff Clemetson
Editor

Cory and Jessica Merritt know a lot about service to community and country. Cory is an active duty senior chief petty officer in the Navy and for the last several years Jessica has spearheaded programs started by the couple to help wounded veterans and Gold Star families — the families of servicemen or women killed in combat.

Cory began serving the veteran community after he had an opportunity to work with some other local organizations, taking wounded vets out on outdoor adventures. But he felt like something was missing from the experience with those other groups.

“I noticed it wasn’t as much of a personal feel, but I did notice the impact it was having,” he said. Soon thereafter, Cory talked with Jessica and introduced the idea of starting their own organization. “I told her, ‘We can do this, and we can do it better and it’s making a difference. We can make an impact with this.’”

The couple then started Special Liberty Project, which brings wounded veterans together on hiking, camping, hunting and fishing excursions. And it was on one of these trips that the idea for the couple’s second organization came into focus.

“[Cory] was sent on deployment and I still hosted all the [Special Liberty Project] events while he was away, and we have 8-year-old twins who help me with all our events,” Jessica said. “We were up in Julian on a turkey hunt and I had 11 veterans up there and I noticed throughout the day during the event that my kids were naturally drawn to this group of



Mentor Kaleb Weakly (right) talks with Gold Star child Mekhi Sutton during a Gold Star Corps outing at Mission Trails Park. (Photo courtesy Jessica Merritt)

veterans that we were serving, and I realized that my own kids need something more in their life than what only I can provide while their dad is deployed — they need a mentor.”

And in thinking of her own children’s needs, she realized that Gold Star children — those who lost their fathers or mothers in combat — would need mentoring even more.

The Merritts then founded Gold Star Corps — a program that fosters positive relationships for Gold Star kids and mentors with military backgrounds — some of whom are active duty, some retired and some are even wounded vets from the Special Liberty Project.

“Which is really cool for the kids because it’s very special to be a military child [but] once their parent passes away who was in the military, they don’t have that aspect anymore,” Jessica said.

The Gold Star families and mentors meet up at quarterly events, which also revolve

around outdoor activities — the kind that a father would traditionally take his children on.

“There are just certain things that men take care of and sometimes [military moms] don’t have that around,” Jessica added.

Mark Kirkland has attended four Gold Star Corps events as a mentor. He is now retired but got involved with the group through Cory, who he served with in the Navy. In the most recent event — a hiking trip to Mission Trails Regional Park on Dec. 1 — he mentored two siblings, a boy and a girl. During the event, he took the children on a scavenger hunt that featured a military theme with questions about the military, the flag, the Pledge of Allegiance, and the mentors and children even did pushups together at one station.

“We also built a tool box,” Kirkland said. “On the scavenger hunt, you were getting pieces and in the very end, we helped them build a toolbox and even got tools to go in that toolbox.”

Jewel Carruth said her son was especially excited by the toolbox project at the Mission Trails trip.

“He said he wanted to do it all by himself,” she said adding

See GOLD STAR CORPS page 5 —>

City of La Mesa, Rides4Neighbors Seeks Drivers

What are you doing to positively impact your community? The City of La Mesa offers a great opportunity to do just that by volunteering for the Rides4Neighbors program. The program is funded by grants awarded by San Diego Association of Governments and fueled by volunteer drivers. Rides4Neighbors provides transportation services for East County seniors and/or people living with a disability that inhibits their mobility. Drivers use their personal vehicles to assist enrolled riders in performing duties essential to their lives, such as, doctor appointments and grocery shopping. Monthly mileage reimbursement is offered, in addition to the opportunity to explore the beautiful county of San Diego. For non-ambulatory riders, the City contracts with a transportation company for wheelchair van services.

The Rides4Neighbors program has operated for over ten years. Mike Higdon, a volunteer since 2010 when the program began explains “I enjoy paying it forward. I also feel the need to do something productive. I may need this service in the future and I would hope that there would be somebody to help me.”

The riders are not the only people who benefit from Rides4Neighbors, volunteers are able to meet new people, feel a sense of purpose by contributing their time to the community, and earn extra cash.

While the median age of the population grows upward, the demand for transportation increases. As can be imagined, there is a disproportionate amount of those in need in comparison to those who provide help for those needs. Volunteers are the driving force behind the program, but currently there are approximately 650 enrolled consumers and only 30 drivers. If you or anyone you know would be interested in participating as a volunteer with the program call **619.667.1321** for more information. Volunteers are required to go through a DMV screening and fingerprinting for a background check at no cost.

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Sudoku & Crossword
puzzle answers from page 17

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► Gold Star Corps, from page 4

that he did the drilling and screwed together pieces with just a little guidance from his mentor.

Carruth lost her husband Gary, a Marine, to a car accident that also took the life of her second oldest daughter. Before that, Gary suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder.

“The year it all started, I was reluctant to do anything in getting help for the kids and myself and it turns out once I started looking into different organizations, I met other widows who went through the same thing I went through,” she said. “As we meet [other Gold Star] wives and we start sharing our stories, we realize we’re not alone in what we feel — how we feel in what we went through.”

Part of the Gold Star Corps program, in addition to providing activities for the kids, is providing the mothers a chance to relax and do activities of their own. At the Mission Trails event, the moms made ornaments with Polaroid pictures of the families with their mentors.

“I always provide something really special for the moms,” Jessica said. “At our first event, we did manicures and massages in the park while their kids were off with their mentor and they knew their kids were safe and doing something productive.”

The whole family approach of Gold Star Corps is what keeps Carruth making the trip from Riverside County to participate in the quarterly events.

“It’s our time where we can get away from the normal day-in-day-out activities of stress



Mentor Zach Webb (right) helps Makaylin Gibson build a tool box at a Gold Star Corps event on Dec. 1 at Mission Trails Park. (Photo by Jessica Merritt)

and school and work and be able to just relax and enjoy a fun-filled day of family involvement,” she said. “And having the mentors is great because my son, who was barely 4 years old at the time [of his father’s death], internalizes everything. But by having the mentors, he’s slowly but surely coming out of that and starting to open up a little.”

It’s that connection, as well as the fun outdoor activities, that motivates Cory’s dedication to the organizations and has him looking forward to spending more time with them when he retires in two years.

“It’s the most emotional and rewarding thing I’ve ever experienced,” he said. “It’s incredible to be able to see the impact and the feedback firsthand. When a child opens up to you and starts engaging with you and participating in whatever activity with you and you get that response and feedback, it’s incredibly rewarding. You notice you’re making a difference right away. And its validated when the Gold Star spouses come up and say, ‘My son or daughter hasn’t opened up like that to somebody in a very long time.’”

Kirkland is also motivated by the rewards of helping his fellow servicemen and their families.

“For most of the guys who do this, it’s almost like a privilege, I think — that they let us do this,” he said.

“I served for a long time and I have friends who didn’t come home — they paid the ultimate sacrifice. So I guess I feel like I’m paying it for them. And I guess I always hoped that if I was one of those guys who didn’t [come home], that someone would do this for my kids. And it’s stuff I like to do anyhow, so it’s great.”

For the Merritts, growing and expanding the Special Liberty Project and Gold Star Corps programs is what they have decided on for their future. The couple is looking to purchase a ranch in San Diego’s back county — somewhere near Julian, they hope — and offer weekend retreats for the growing number of vets and families they serve. Currently, there are around 40 families in the Special Liberty Project and 35 families in the Gold Star Corps program.

“It’s grown really fast and we’ve been able to serve a lot of people,” Jessica said, adding that they had only planned on holding four events this year, but instead held 20, due to an outpouring of support from sponsors and donors. The new year already looks like it will be busy with a spa day for Gold Star wives planned for January, and a kayaking trip and tour of the Living Coast Discovery Museum planned for March.

For more information about the Special Liberty Project and Gold Star Corps programs or to make a donation, visit their websites at speciallibertyproject.org and goldstarcops.org.

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



Cory and Jessica Merritt (Courtesy Jessica Merritt)

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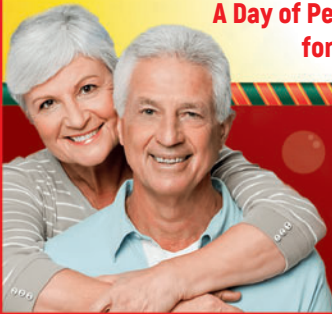
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Guest Editorial

Buyer beware: Automatic renewal scams

Summer **Stephan**

As your District Attorney, I'm committed to increasing communication and accessibility between the DA's Office and you, the community. One way I have been doing that is through newspaper columns, where I provide consumer tips on public safety matters.

Many of us are enticed by introductory rates for services such as online dating sites, software products or technical services. But, just when we start taking advantage of the service, a month has gone by and the tempting rate is no longer so low. At this point, consumers should be able to make a choice about whether to opt out of the service or allow the service to continue at the higher rate. But, that's not always the case.

Online subscriptions and other automatically recurring charges have proliferated in the U.S. in recent years. Some renewals come after free trials, where consumers need to cancel in time to avoid charges. Federal and state law requires businesses to make these auto-renewals clear to consumers, and to get their "express, affirmative consent" before they collect any money. However, many businesses still don't follow this law.

Consumers should know that automatically renewing customer payments, without the consumer's express prior consent, is against the law. These laws are in place

so consumers know what they're getting when they sign up with a company. The company needs to make it clear that transactions will renew automatically and they should not hide that information in the fine print.

The District Attorney's Office has a Consumer Protection Unit that works to protect people and their hard-earned money from unfair business practices like this and make sure companies are following California laws.

Here's what businesses are supposed to do:

- Clearly and conspicuously disclose the renewal terms.
- Get consumers' express consent – which should be through a separate check-box (or similar mechanism) that does not include other terms and conditions.
- Send a clear summary of the renewal terms and cancellation policy, including how to cancel, after consumers pay.
- Allow consumers to cancel easily. (And if the consumer signed-up online, the consumer must be allowed to cancel online).

When businesses do not follow the law, they can be held liable for civil penalties and restitution. In September, for example, my office along with other prosecuting agencies across California, settled a consumer protection case against Spark Networks USA, LLC, the parent company of niche dating sites Jdate and Christian Mingle. The

Los Angeles-based company agreed to change its website and sales practices to better protect California consumers. The company agreed to pay \$500,000 in civil penalties and up to \$985,000 in restitution to customers whose subscriptions automatically renewed or who were denied refunds when requested.

Our office has settled similar cases in recent years including against Dropbox – a file sharing site, and Active – an online event service. And we continue to look at other businesses which offer automatically renewing products or services in order to ensure that San Diego consumers are protected.

The DA's Consumer Protection Unit is composed of deputy district attorneys, investigators and paralegals dedicated to protecting consumers and law-abiding businesses from fraudulent or unfair business practices. To report a consumer complaint, you can call 619-531-3507 or email consumer@sdcca.org.

—District Attorney
Summer Stephan has dedicated more than 28 years to serving justice and victims of crime as prosecutor. She is a national leader in fighting sex crimes and human trafficking and in creating smart and fair criminal justice solutions and restorative justice practices that treat the underlying causes of addiction and mental illness and that keep young people from being incarcerated. ■

News and notes from your County Supervisor

DIANNE'S CORNER

Dianne
Jacob



Helping seniors in crisis: Medical experts, social workers, law enforcement officers and others recently joined me in La Mesa to put a spotlight on our new Alzheimer's Response Team, a pilot program in East County that is off to an encouraging start.

It aims to make sure that those with dementia are directed to the most appropriate services during a crisis.

The early numbers are solid enough — more than 50 referrals and over 20 cases in only a few months — that we're already talking about ways to expand it to other parts of the county.

Thank you to Grossmont Healthcare District, Sharp HealthCare, Alzheimer's San Diego and others for teaming up with the county on this groundbreaking effort!

Booming backcountry biz: The latest annual report from the San Diego County Vintners Association showed continued growth in our wine industry.

Vintners had a \$50 million economic impact on the region in 2017, a \$19.6 million increase over 2016.

Our wine industry is going gangbusters and has emerged as a significant player in our economy. I see a real can-do spirit among our vintners and the county will continue to do all it can to encourage this growth.

See DIANNE'S CORNER page 8 →

A look back at Republican Women's 2018



Pat Boerner

Navajo Canyon Republican Women, Federated (NCRWF) kicked off the holiday season on Dec. 11 by celebrating with a festive party at the home of Ginny Wisley. A generous amount of toys and gifts were collected and donated to Military Outreach Ministries (MOM) to make the holidays a little bit merrier for our local young military families. It has been our pleasure to donate to this group for several years and it is always rewarding to know how much these gifts are appreciated.

We took the opportunity at this holiday gathering to review some of the activities and accomplishments of 2018. At our January meeting at the Brigantine in La Mesa, San Diego GOP Chairman Tony Kravaric spoke and got us all fired up for a great political year. In February, Kirby Horrell from Saved In America told how his organization rescued children being held in foreign countries. In March, Jason Roe, top political consultant and strategist, brought us up to date on the happenings in Washington.

April was special as we held an evening event where popular radio talk show host Mike Slater emceed the evening and even held a live auction. Mark Larson and Sherri Gore came to the Brigantine in May and enlightened us with what is going on in our very own San Diego County. As part of the effort to repeal the gas tax, Carl DeMaio was our featured speaker in June.

After our summer break, Steven Frank, well-known political activist and consultant, kept us focused on the California political climate. October was our very successful annual fundraising Fashion Show at Bali Hai and we also participated in the La Mesa Oktoberfest. November was our final regular meeting of the year and Senator Mike Morrell did an excellent job of giving us reasons to be optimistic for the future of our conservative principles.

All that plus the precinct walking, the phone calling, the voter registration effort, the sign waving, the poll watching and the tireless effort throughout the year to spread the word about the principles that Republicans hold dear.

Our president Kat Culkin guided us through a productive, fun-filled and educational 2018 and we all appreciate her leadership. We were so proud when she was awarded the Louisa Akins Woman of the Year award last March.

Please join us Jan. 8, 2019 at the Brigantine Restaurant in La Mesa as we welcome two-time Emmy Award-winning newsman Graham Ledger as



Graham Ledger (Courtesy NCRWF)

our speaker. Ledger, now hosting "The Daily Ledger," is a well-known, well-respected television newsman in Southern California.

Check-in begins at 10:30 a.m. for the 11 a.m. meeting. A full-course lunch is served with the speaker to follow. Cost is \$25 and reservations are required. Cash and checks are accepted, but sorry, no credit cards. Please RSVP to ncrwf99@gmail.com or call Marjie at 619-990-2791 and she will confirm your reservation.

2019 will be a year of announcements and exciting plans, so please come get involved and learn what we are all about. For more information on our activities, please visit our website at navajo-canyon-rwf.org and check us out on Facebook.

—Pat Boerner writes on behalf of the Navajo Canyon Republican Women, Federated.■

Atkins to headline next Dems meeting



Tina Rynberg and Jeff Benesch

Most of the nearly 500 members of the large and influential La Mesa Foothills Democratic Club live within the boundaries of the 39th State Senatorial District and are represented by State Senate President pro Tempore Toni Atkins. We are thrilled to be hosting Atkins at our 2019 kick-off meeting on Wednesday night, Jan. 2.

We'll be starting with a year in review and hear the senator talk about initiatives that she put forward in 2018. She'll be concentrating on issues that directly impact the 39th. Her take on the future of the stadium property, and SDSU's future expansion into Mission Valley should be fascinating. All of us will be affected in some way by major developments in Mission Valley East, especially the river park, campus expansion, traffic and housing challenges and a new sports stadium.

This past year, we've had meetings touching on women's health and breast cancer, affordable housing, human trafficking, San Diego River conservancy (and the stadium measures), women

empowerment in corporate institutions, global climate action, and the homelessness crisis. Atkins has had bills passed and signed on most of these important issues, so to have her discuss her initiatives will be a great follow-up to our previous discussions in these important and relevant areas.

And lastly, she'll look into 2019, what's in store legislatively and politically, and what her role will be in countering the Trump agenda and it's destructive policies at the border, on trade, global warming, women's rights, and immigration reform. It should be highly instructive and interesting given that Democrats hold a super majority in both houses, and every statewide elected office, including new Governor Gavin Newsom. How exactly will the "blue wave" manifest itself in California's legislature in 2019? Bring your questions as Atkins will conduct an extensive Q&A session after her remarks.

Atkins served as an aide to San Diego City Councilmember and LGBT trailblazer Christine Kehoe, and, in 2000, was elected to replace Kehoe as the council's District 3 representative. During her eight-year tenure, Atkins provided steady leadership as interim Mayor of San Diego amid a challenging and tumultuous time at City Hall.

Elected by voters to the state Assembly in 2010,



Sen. Toni Atkins (Courtesy LMFDC)

Atkins served there for six years. In 2014, her colleagues selected her to be the Speaker of the Assembly – she became the first San Diegan and the first lesbian to hold the position. Atkins counts a major \$7.5-billion water bond, creation of the state's first Earned Income Tax Credit, and passage of two on-time, balanced budgets among her proudest accomplishments.

In 2016, Atkins was elected to represent the 39th District in the state Senate and was appointed to the prestigious Rules Committee, in addition to the committees on Transportation and Housing, Health, Labor and Industrial Relations, and Natural Resources and Water. Among the bills she got passed and signed was SB 2, which created a permanent source of funding for affordable housing,

See DEMS MEETING page 8 —>

6 SMART HOME ESSENTIALS

With so many devices and home automation available these days, turning your house into a smart home is easier than you might think. But, there are some things to keep in mind when deciding which devices are essential - and what kind of internet service you'll need to maximize your smart home experience.



- **A home speaker that doubles as a virtual assistant.** Current models can answer questions, turn on lights, play video, access virtual assistants like Siri or Alexa, share weather and news updates, act as a timer, and play music on demand. Some models even help you shop online.
- **Home cameras.** The latest in home monitoring such as Cox Homelife allows for remote live video viewing from your smartphone, video recording and customizable notifications.
- **Smart lights.** Replace existing light bulbs with energy efficient bulbs that can be controlled remotely with a few taps on your smartphone or tablet. Cox Homelife has an automation feature to control indoor and outdoor lights, bringing you (and your pet) peace of mind while you're away from home, as well as saving energy and money.
- **Smart locks.** Remotely control doors in your home. Features can include voice commands, customized chimes, activity logs, integration with other smart devices, and special codes for friends, dog walkers, and deliveries.
- **Smart thermostats.** Programmable thermostats allow you to remotely turn the air and heat in your home up and down, and on and off. Save money and energy, and arrive to a warm or cool home.

- **Smart Search entertainment.** There are many options to watch TV and stream content online, and Cox's Contour TV service brings smart search options, Netflix integration, a voice-controlled remote, and cool apps together into one service that is easy to navigate. Speak into the remote to find the programming you want to watch - use a famous movie quote, the title of a show, a genre, or the name of an actor. You can even say "free movies," and available titles in the On Demand library will pop up.

Just as important as the devices you select is the internet service you choose.

In San Diego, Cox Communications recently doubled internet download speeds automatically for the majority of its customers at no additional charge. Preferred, the company's most popular tier of service, is now up to 100 Mbps, while Essential and Starter, which are ideal for lighter users with one to five devices connected to the home network, doubled to 30 Mbps and 10 Mbps, respectively.

For households with multiple family members who want to connect dozens of devices simultaneously, are heavy gamers or have the need for the fastest speeds around, Cox's Gigablast service offers download speeds of 1 gigabit (1,000 Mbps).

Take a short quiz on the speed advisor at www.cox.com to determine which speed is right for your household.

Cox is also improving the in-home internet experience with Panoramic WiFi, which provides "wall-to-wall" WiFi coverage so you have a connection wherever you may roam in your smart home.



► Dianne's Corner, from page 6

Stop the bleed: At the urging of emergency room doctors, first responders and others, the county has started installing bleeding control kits at its facilities. Medical experts say the kits are critical in boosting survival rates after a traumatic event.

I want to thank my colleagues on the Board of Supervisors for joining me in supporting this initiative.

—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.

► Dems meeting, from page 7

a signature piece of legislation she had worked on for seven years.

In January 2018, after just one year in the Senate, she was elected by her colleagues to be the next Senate President pro Tempore. In March 2018, she was sworn in, becoming the first woman and the first openly LGBTQ person to lead the Legislature's upper house.

The Jan. 2 meeting starts at 6:30 p.m. at the La Mesa Community Center, 4975 Memorial Drive, La Mesa. Please view our website at Lamesafoothillsdemocraticclub.com and like us on Facebook.

—Tina Rynberg is president and Jeff Benesch is vice president of programming for the La Mesa Foothills Democratic Club.

Owner pens book about 'miracle' horse

Cynthia Robertson

Jackson Day, a sweet Arabian horse in Lakeside, has had health problems since he was born in 2001. He has had pneumonia, colic and as a foal even had his stomach pumped. He has had a bone infection in neck and ongoing respiratory and eye infections, along with endless bouts of colic, ulcers and peritonitis of the stomach. It's enough to make a horse just want to give up, much more his owner.

But his human "mom" Jackie Day has poured love on him since the beginning, even though his own veterinarian recommended euthanasia.

"He was given six months to live and he is now 17 years old," Day said.

Jackson has never acted sick, Day explained, even with an ongoing fever of 107 and his many conditions.

"He always greeted everyone with a happy whinny and

enjoyed life. How could you end the life of something that did that?" she asked.

Jackson Day has a full life now working with children and challenged individuals.

"All horses need to have a job. Jackson can't be ridden, but he pulls a cart, leads the neighborhood Christmas caroling and provides the music and gives the rides. He does tricks and wears costumes to entertain both children and adults.

"He loves attention," said Day, who has written a children's book called, "I'm Jackson Day, and I'm Here to Stay," about Jackson's experiences.

Jackson boards at Selah Ranch. Day said that they have been fortunate that Lynda Schaefer, the ranch owner, gives him special care and attention and considers him family.

"He is truly a one-of-a-kind horse," Schaefer said. "He is our ranch mascot. Out front, for our sign, is a picture of

Jackson bowing to the American flag. It is really a miracle he is alive and doing so well.

"Not only has he survived, he has brought joy to so many," Schaefer said.

The book Day has written intends to get the message across to children that life's limitations can lead to new achievements and that what you can't do can be overcome by what you can do.

"The story depicts the many medical challenges Jackson has had but also all the fun, friends and fame he has found," Day said.

For Day, another important message to pass on to horse owners is that even if they cannot ride the horse, it does not have to be "discarded."

Jackson's life and challenges have been explained to groups of challenged children and they are then amazed at his tricks. He dances, smiles, shakes his head no. He gives hugs, counts, and bows, picks up things and gives them to Day and to the amazed people watching.

Betty Patterson, who boards her horse Ginger, also at Selah Ranch, said that it has been an honor to know Day and Jackson.

"Jacki Day is one of the most tenacious, creative and



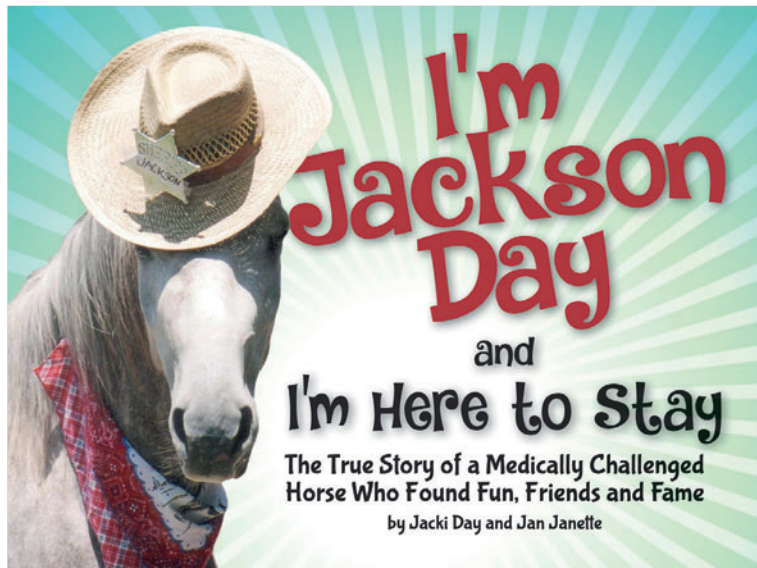
Jackie Day with her horse Jackson (Photo by Cynthia Robertson)

caring horse owners I have ever met and it has been a tremendous privilege to know her and her sweet horse. Watching them interact with each other reveals a deep connection that has been an inspiration and encouragement to me," Patterson said.

"It takes a village," Day said.

The book is available on Amazon. For more information about Jackson and what he is doing these days, go to his Facebook page at [facebook.com/imjacksonday](https://www.facebook.com/imjacksonday).

—Cynthia Robertson is a San Diego-based freelance writer. Reach her at c1g2robertson@gmail.com.



The cover of the book Jackie Day wrote inspired by Jackson



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Adventures of old aviators

Local cable access show features stories of pilots

Doug Curlee
Editor at Large

If it has wings — or rotor blades — Fred Province has probably flown it. He has video that backs up that claim, and he talks about it every Sunday evening on “Captain Fred’s Aviation Theater,” carried on Spectrum Cable’s public access channel.

If aviation is your thing, this is the place to go to see it, and hear about it.

Fred has interviewed some of the world’s great pilots over the years — Joe Foss, Jim Stockdale, John McCain — the list goes on and on.

He also happens to be married to one of the world’s better-known woman aviators, Ana Camberos Province. She’s in The Ninety-Nines, the international sorority for female pilots. She’s received an Amelia Earhart medal, and a number of other prizes and recognition.

Fred isn’t just a pilot and TV host — he has two advanced college degrees, and has in the past been a schoolteacher and school principal. But it’s flying that really flips his switch.



Fred Province in a Fokker Dr1 Dreidecker (Photos courtesy Fred Province)

He always knew he wanted to fly, and started by building his own glider at his home in rural Missouri when he was only 14 years old.

“I was about to try to fly it, when the local county sheriff showed up and ordered it broken up and burned. When I asked him why, he said ‘We’ll think of a reason.’”

Fred finally was taught to fly a glider by, of all people, Hans Busch. Busch was actually a former German Luftwaffe pilot who made it to the United States after World War II.

Thus was born the lifelong addiction to flight.

It wasn’t all an easy education.

“There was one plane crash where I was really lucky. I’d fractured my skull in five places, and I was actually pronounced dead at the hospital. Two guys were taking me to the morgue, but I woke up and said, ‘pain ...’ The two guys were shocked, but decided the morgue wasn’t the best place for me right then. Real glad they made that decision.”

Fred met Ana in college, and she decided she wanted to try flying. She ended up soloing in an Ercoupe — a tiny two-seat plane that’s very easy to fly. From there, she and Fred pursued time in the air whenever possible — and it was possible a lot.

We wanted to talk with Ana for this story, but Fred said she didn’t want to be interviewed.



Fred and Anna Province

“Ana is just painfully shy,” Fred said. “She doesn’t mind me talking about her, but would just rather not talk.”

Ana herself has a couple of degrees in accounting, both American and Mexican college degrees. She was born very poor in Tijuana, but got away from that life.

Nowadays, Ana busies herself as the producer and aerial photographer for “Captain Fred’s Aviation Theater.”

“It’s real simple. She tells me what to do, and I do it.”

Fred has a lot of “Aviation Theater” episodes in the can, but he’s always looking for new and different topics. You can contact him through Spectrum Cable, and he’ll be happy to talk to you ... and talk to you ... and talk to you ...

He has lots of stories to tell.

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

► News Briefs, from page 1

Weber assumes leadership of Legislative Black Caucus

On Dec. 3, Assembly member Shirley N. Weber, Ph.D., assumed the chair of the California Legislative Black Caucus (CLBC). The CLBC, which addresses policy and budgetary issues affecting black Californians, consists of 10 African-American members of the legislature, including two Senators and eight Assembly members.

“I am extraordinarily grateful to my CLBC colleagues for their trust and support as we launch into a new and challenging legislative session,” Weber said in a press release. “Now more than ever, the CLBC has a vital role in ensuring that the needs of the African-American community are addressed by lawmakers. Aside from tackling the persistent challenges of poverty, educational inequity, over-incarceration and underemployment, we are faced with leadership in Washington that fosters a climate of hatred and violence against minorities, woman and immigrants. This caucus will join in solidarity with our colleagues in the Latino, API, LGBT and Women’s caucuses against this destructive trend.”

Weber, who was elected by her CLBC colleagues last

fall, served as vice chair for the past two years and succeeds Assembly member Chris Holden of Pasadena in the role of caucus leader. She is joined on the CLBC leadership team by Senator Steven Bradford as vice chair; Assembly member Autumn Burke as secretary, and Assembly member Jim Cooper as treasurer.

The CLBC was successful on a number of its policy priorities during the 2017-2018 legislative session, including leave for parenting students, prohibiting unnecessary prosecution of children under 12 and securing \$300 million to assist under-achieving students.

In addition to coordinating legislative efforts affecting the African-American community, the CLBC makes recommendations to the governor on the annual budget proposal, sponsors forums and raises scholarship funds.

.....

SDG&E files request to end high usage charge

On Dec. 4, San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) filed a request with the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to eliminate the state-mandated high usage charge, which impacted more than 105,000 customers this past summer. Eliminating the charge for

high-energy users would minimize bill spikes during months when energy usage is high.

“It was a challenging summer for our customers, particularly for people who experienced dramatic increases in their bills due, in part, to the high usage charge,” said Scott Crider, SDG&E’s vice president of customer services, in a press statement. “We’re committed to doing everything we can to develop proposals that provide some relief to high bills, and we’re starting with requesting to eliminate this charge.”

The high usage charge led to higher bills for customers that used more than 400 percent of their baseline allowance. On average, these customers would have saved approximately \$30 per month without the high usage charge.

The company is also exploring other proposals over the coming months. Ideas include eliminating seasonal pricing to stabilize bills, shifting the timing of the climate credit into a one-month lump sum in August to create meaningful savings in a month when bills are higher due to increased energy use, and conducting a new baseline allowance study to reflect changing climate and energy choices. Eliminating the high usage

See NEWS BRIEFS page 11 —>

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► Farmers market, from page 3

that moving the market to another day would essentially kill it because vendors are already booked on other days. He also opposed moving the market's location, although he said if that is what the city decides, he would do his best to make it work. Beevers also opposed the idea of putting the booths back to back because markets lose something when they are not oriented like a grocery store.

Beevers, who in addition to managing farmers markets, also operates a brick-and-mortar store in North Park, offered suggestions for local businesses to take advantage of the "quadrupled" number of people who now attend the Friday markets by promoting their businesses with specials during the market or setting up a booth in the market itself.

Chris Conyers, operator of the new Surfrider Pizza Co., said he thinks the farmers markets bring in business and voiced his support for the LMVBA plan to re-orient the vendor booths.

"You bring [a farmers market] on a Friday night, right on the main street, it's going to be busy whatever you put there," he said. "So if we can all work together that would be nice."

John Bedlion, owner of Johnny B's Burgers Brew & Spirits, was one of the few speakers to oppose the market, although he said he had spoke with other restaurant owners in the Village who oppose the Friday market, including Centifonti's Bar & Restaurant, BO-Beau Kitchen + Garden, and Tiramisu Trattoria.

"Since the market had opened, on Friday, my daytime business has dropped considerably," Bedlion said, reporting that his sales have been down between \$1,200 and \$2,000 on Fridays. "We don't need a farmers market on Friday, we're busy anyway."

Craig Maxwell, owner of Maxwell's House of Books, also said the market has caused a downturn in business.

"We knew our businesses would suffer but no one guessed how much," he said. "Friday afternoon went from my best day to my worst day."

Additionally, a representative for Por Favor spoke against the farmers market, citing a loss of customers for lunch and dinner on Fridays.

At the meeting, La Mesa residents overwhelmingly were in favor of the Friday markets, with some saying they would be in the Village less if the market moves; others vowed to eat at restaurants more often during the market. Some even offered their own suggestions like reducing the number of vendors who sell prepared foods.

Forced consensus

After public comments, it was the City Council's turn to debate whether to renew the special permit for the Friday market, modify it or cancel it altogether.

"Something has got to be done ... I really cannot put my stamp of approval on something that's costing a 20-year business and a lot of other businesses \$100,000 in loss," said

Councilmember Alessio, and suggested shutting down the market for three months in order to find a better location.

Councilmember Guy McWhirter pointed out that the city received 104 emails about the farmers market and only seven of them were opposed. He said the residents' enthusiasm and the Village's vibrancy is "evident" at the markets and threw his support behind the LMVBA idea of re-orienting the booths.

Vice Mayor Colin Parent also supported the market and cited the Village's many successful events like Oktoberfest, summer car shows and Holiday in the Village as reasons for downtown La Mesa's popularity.

"These are all things that take the street and return it for a broader use," he said. "Those are things that have made us successful and we're making us more successful today with this farmers market."

Mayor Mark Arapostathis noted that moving the market to a new location could take anywhere between six months and two years, and suggested the city could start looking at Allison Avenue, Lemon Avenue or the west side of La Mesa Boulevard as possible future locations. However, he said he felt the city should keep the market where it is while the city arbitrates a consensus or compromise between both sides.

"Not everyone is going to be happy," he said. "We don't want the businesses to go out of business. We don't want the residents to be without this. We've got to come to some consensus."

Alessio motioned to give the market 90 days at its current time and location while the city arbitrates with "all options discussed," including moving the market to a new day or location. Alessio's motion also included a provision that would essentially end the market if no consensus was reached, but Parent pointed out that the provision would give those opposed to the market an unfair position to bargain from, since they could essentially kill the market after 90 days if they simply did not agree to anything. The provision was removed from the motion.

The final motion extended the permit for the Friday markets another six months with a staff report on the arbitration between the stakeholders where every option and possible solution is discussed and addressed within 90 days.

"Anyone who thinks, 'I can dig in and hold my ground and not compromise in the next 90 days and win' is making a terrible mistake," said Councilmember Bill Baber, directing his comments at the two sides. "This is the time to work together and bring us a consensus. Because that's how judges get settlements. They tell both sides they have a good chance of losing if you don't go talk to the other side."

After the discussion, the council voted unanimously to approve the motion. As the residents and Village business owners walked out of the council chamber, Councilmember Baber voiced a half-joking observation: "And everyone is unhappy."

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

► Civic Center, from page 1

Citing the study, Marrow said that the “highest and best usage” for the 1.2-acre site is a multi-family housing complex. The study envisioned a project with 104 units averaging 873 square feet each in a four-story building and 138 parking spaces.

The Kaiser Marston study looked at five possible scenarios for developers to finance a project at the site. Scenario one would be to have the project be 100 percent market rate housing; scenario two would be 80 percent market rate and 20 percent moderate-income housing; scenario three would be 80 percent market and 20 percent low-income housing; scenario four would be 100 percent affordable housing using a 9 percent tax credit; and the final scenario would be 100 percent affordable using a 4 percent tax credit and funding from the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities program.

Marrow said the cost to build the project for all five scenarios would be nearly the same, between \$34.5 and \$34.7 million. However, developers would only make money on the first two scenarios — \$2 million for the 100 percent market rate scenario and under \$500,000 for the 80 percent market and 20 percent moderate income housing. On the last three scenarios, diminished land values would require the



A map of the Civic Center site shows where future development will take place. (Courtesy City of La Mesa)

city to subsidize the housing projects. According to the report, the first two scenarios would also increase the residual value of the land, and the developer would be able to offer more than 20 percent of the housing to moderate-income residents.

During discussion, Vice Mayor Colin Parent offered a different idea for what developers can do with the added savings from the increased value to the property.

“The developer comes along and says ‘We need to figure out how to incorporate this \$2.6 million, and so we’re going to 40 percent moderate.’ OK, that’s one option,” Parent said. “I want to also design [any deal with developers] in such a way that if someone says, ‘We still only want to have only 20 percent of the units as deed

restricted, but we want a certain number of them to be more deeply affordable.’ I want them to be able to propose that for our consideration.”

Parent also said the property should only be offered as a long-term lease because of its proximity to city offices and the trolley station. Mayor Mark Arapostathis agreed and pointed to the recent long-term lease of another city-owned property on Murray Drive that is being developed as senior housing as a blueprint for successful lease developments.

After the report and discussion, the City Council voted unanimously to direct staff to issue requests for proposals to developers using the scenario two option.

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

► News Briefs, from page 9

charge along with the other proposals would create real utility cost savings for families.

Pending approval by the CPUC, SDG&E hopes to eliminate the charge prior to the start of summer pricing, which begins June 1. Residents can also avoid the high usage charge by enrolling in one of several Time-of-Use (TOU) pricing plans, which are not subject to the charge. More information about TOU plans can be found at sdge.com/whenmatters.



San Diego County Board of Supervisors Chairwoman Kristin Gaspar (right) greets Mt. Miguel High School student Angelica Romero (left) of the East County Youth for Change. (Courtesy IPS)

December 2018 proclaimed Drugged Driving Awareness Month

The San Diego County Board of Supervisors issued a proclamation honoring the month of December 2018 as Drugged Driving Awareness Month throughout the county.

It is illegal to operate a motor vehicle while under the influence of any substance if

it causes physical or mental impairment that makes a person unable to drive safely, according to the California Vehicle Code. It does not matter if the substance is lawfully possessed or not.

Alcohol, marijuana and other drugs affect drivers’ coordination, reaction time, judgement, tracking ability, situational awareness, perception, attention and/or ability to focus, the County Proclamation said.

Members of the East County Youth Coalition (ECYC) were among several teenagers who met with Board Chairwoman Kristin Gaspar to discuss why youth get involved with tobacco, alcohol and drugs.

“If you don’t smoke, if you don’t drink, if you don’t do drugs, if you don’t drink alcohol, you’re not considered cool,” said Angelica Romero, a junior at Mt. Miguel High School in Spring Valley and a member of the ECYC. “So, that’s become an issue.”

The teens met with Gaspar Nov. 20, 2018 in her office at the San Diego County Administration Center.

“People (students) witness their friends do it, especially their closer friends, they witness family do it and I think that just plays a role and changes a person’s mentality,” Romero said.

ECYC youth members work to prevent underage drinking by asking adults to stop making it too easy to obtain alcohol and marijuana, both in the home and through retail stores.■

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A fall full of achievements



Foothiller Footsteps

Connie Baer and Lynn Baer

As first semester ends, we pause to reflect on some of the amazing accomplishments of Foothiller students and staff achieved over the past four months.

Athletics

Boys cross country:

Grossmont's Jonathon Rodriguez-Gomez finished



Inspirational student Israel Davis

20th at the California state finals, running the second-fastest 5K time in school history. He ran 15:42, second in the school record book behind Dave McQuitty, who ran 15:31 in 1995. Rodriguez-Gomez is one of only six Foothillers to ever compete at the California State Cross Country Finals more than once.

Boys water polo:

Congratulations to 2018 Hills League Water Polo Champions with their league record of nine wins and one loss. After competing in the CIF Open Division, they competed in the Southern California Championships, first defeating Santa Monica High School and then losing the semi-final match to La Jolla High School by a score of 10-9.

Reflecting on the season, coach Clint McLaughlin said, "What really made this team special was how they bonded and worked so hard over the years to achieve this success. They were incredibly resilient. Many times we had our backs against the wall, and they would just push even harder and battle. This team represented Grossmont High School well, in and out of the pool."

Girls golf: Freshman Carissa Freeman is our first lady golfer in 15 years to make interleague finals between the Valley and Hill Leagues. Freeman also qualified for CIF Finals.

Football: The varsity football team received multiple All Hills League honors:

- First Team All-League: linebacker James Bond and linebacker Alex Golojuch
- Second Team All-League: wide receiver/running back Desmond Carter, quarterback Jaime Odom, linebacker Chris Alba and wide receiver Skip Waltower
- Honorable mention: defensive back Connor Sanchez, returner Thomas Mangum, wide receiver/punter Zak Farris, and wide receiver Brody Schicker.

Congratulations to teacher Jeremy Hersch

On Sept. 15, five local educators were named 2018-19 San Diego County Teachers of the Year during the 28th annual "Cox Presents: A Salute to Teachers," sponsored by San Diego County Credit Union in partnership with the San Diego County Office of Education. From a field of 41 teachers, 10 finalists were selected.

Grossmont High School teacher Jeremy Hersch was one of those 10. Reflecting on the experience, Hersch said, "Representing Grossmont and the GUHSD as Teacher of the Year was a huge honor. I feel blessed to work with amazing students and staff every day!"

NJROTC

In September, Grossmont was one of three high schools in San Diego County to host members of the Blue Angels. Team members spoke in an assembly about how they use humility to become great at what they do. It was a thoughtful, motivating lesson.



The cast of "Nickel and Dime" (Photos courtesy GHS Museum)

In November, 33 hard working cadets were hosted by the USS Carl Vinson, CVN-70. Cadets received a tour of the ship and had a brief appearance with the ship's commanding officer. It made more than a few cadets very interested in naval aviation.

The NJROTC Marksmanship Team finished in the top three in five out of six matches, with Cadet Jocelyn Brown-Hill, Cadet Calista Zaenger, and Cadet Summer Orahia each placing in the top three.

Performing arts

Theater arts: The cast and crew of "Nickel and Dime," the GHS Foothiller Players' fall show, had a very successful run over a two-week period. They are preparing for their spring production of "Mamma Mia" on March 13-16 and 20-23 at 7 p.m.

Instrumental music: The Royal Blue Regiment qualified for championships for the first time in several years. The growing young band (only four musicians are seniors) demonstrated uncanny musical and marching maturity and skill.

Grossmont orchestra: The Grossmont Strings have grown in size to almost 40 students, under the direction of Dr. Karen Evans, artistic director for orchestra at Grossmont High School. The three groups, the Footnotes (the advanced string quintet), the Celli Angels (cello section), and Take 2 (intermediate strings) have performed throughout the county.

Art department

On Dec. 12, GHS Visual Arts presented the grand

See FOOTHILLER page 17 —————>

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Helix enrollment process explained



Jennifer Osborn

As 2018 comes to a close, Helix staff are hard at work planning for the 2019-20 school year. The enrollment process is about to begin, and we are excited to welcome a new group of Highlanders to our campus.

As a charter school, enrollment at Helix is open to

any resident of the state of California. However, there is a priority system set up for our lottery. Acceptance into Helix is based on the following:

- **First priority acceptance:** Siblings of current Helix students in grades nine, 10, 11.
- **Second priority acceptance:** Residents of the former attendance area of Helix High School (refer to the searchable boundary map on the school website).

Third priority: Children of Helix employees.

Fourth priority: Students who make a two-year commitment to be in the bagpipe program (limited spaces available).

Fifth priority: Residents of the Grossmont Union High School District (GUHSD).

Sixth priority: All other applicants.

Regardless of what your attendance area is, as determined by your local school district, families can choose to apply to Helix. To apply, you must attend an information meeting where you will receive directions and an access code for the online “Intent to Enroll/ Application” form.

Information Nights will provide prospective students and parents/guardians with the opportunity to meet the Class of 2023 Grade Level Team and discuss the following important topics:

- Helix Charter High School’s Mission and Vision.
 - The five As: Academics, Athletics, Arts, Activities, and Attitude.
 - The application process/priority enrollment.
- All interested families are required to attend one of the evenings offered. No reservation is necessary. Due to the importance of the information being shared, all meetings will begin promptly at the indicated start time. Families arriving late may not be admitted. Please plan to arrive at least 15 minutes early.

Please note: Lottery position is not determined by which meeting is attended.

Meeting dates and locations are as follows:

Thursday, Jan. 17, 6 p.m. and 7 p.m. — Helix Charter High School Performing Arts Complex

Thursday, Jan. 24, 7 p.m. — Helix Charter High School Performing Arts Complex

Thursday, Jan. 31, 6 p.m. — Lemon Grove Academy Auditorium

Thursday, Feb. 7, 6 p.m. — Vista La Mesa Auditorium

Thursday, Feb. 14, 6 p.m. — La Mesa Arts Academy Auditorium

Wednesday, Feb. 20, 6 p.m. — Parkway Middle School Auditorium

Saturday, Feb. 23, 10 a.m. — Helix Charter High School Performing Arts Complex
Applications are due by 3 p.m. on Feb. 27.



Investigative reporter Cathy Scott (center) with the staff of The Highland Fling (Photos courtesy Helix Charter High School)

Journalism students telling stories

This month, the staff of the campus online newspaper, The Highland Fling, learned about the inverted pyramid structure of a news story, which is a method of writing that allows the basics of the story to be included at the beginning of the story, then more detailed as the story progresses.

A visit from Cathy Scott — investigative reporter, bestselling author and Helix alumnus — helped cement this learning. She shared her tales from the field, including being the first to break the story of rapper Tupac Shakur’s murder, her work with Shakur biographer Kevin Powell, and many others that had the journalism students on the edge of their seats.

The Highland Fling staff are also creating podcast content on WeVideo. These are short, 5-minute podcast episodes, which allow staff writers to

discuss current headlines based on newspaper sections. These podcasts allow readers to get to know the writers in a more personalized way. The most recent edition of the Highland Fling, along with staff podcasts, can be found on the publication’s website, highlandfling.helix-charter.net.

Community member tour

If you are interested in finding out more about Helix Charter High School, please attend one of our Excellence in Education Tours, held monthly. Upcoming tours will be Jan. 17 at 5:30 p.m., and Feb. 1 at 8:10 a.m. Reserve your spot using our website, www.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.■



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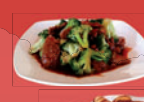
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The cafe with a little bit of everything

Restaurant Review

Frank Sabatini Jr.



If you're expecting a wild, simulated ride through the cosmos when stepping into @Spacebar, you'll be disappointed. There are no maps of the galaxy plastered on the walls or twinkling pin lights stretched across the ceiling.

But if you're on the hunt for beer, wine, coffee, healthy foods, fried foods, Spanish tapas, burgers, cake, comedy, live music, or you name it — the cafe's owner, Frank Moody, has you covered.

An information technology specialist, Moody combined his computer career with a long-time dream of opening a cafe 10 years ago. He named it after the space bar on a keyboard, preceding it with the Internet's reliance of the "at" symbol.

Naturally, the cafe offers free Wi-Fi and plenty of tabletops for customers to settle upon with their laptops and iPads. The main dining area features a small stage for evening performances by local comedians on the fourth Friday of every month, starting at 7 p.m. Singers and songwriters take to an open



The hummus-veggie plate

mic on the remaining Friday nights of the month, while poetry readings occur the second Sunday of every month.

Even when visiting on a quiet midday, and sitting near two young men discussing a business project with their laptops deployed, there's a creative energy in the air that attracts an inspired and ethnically diverse patronage.



Albacore tuna panini

Moody is also a retired Air Force master sergeant. He lived in Spain for two years while serving, and took a strong liking to the country's tapas. Hence the hot and cold tapas he offers such as the divine tortilla Espanola, a Spanish potato-egg omelet of sorts served in clean-cut wedges. Pair it with a salad and you've scored yourself a highly satisfying meal.

Gambas al ajillo particularly blew me away. It's a traditional Spanish dish of shrimp cooked in butter, garlic and white wine. Much like scampi, Moody kicks up the recipe with generous pinches of crushed chili peppers. Served with warm crusty bread for mopping up the precious liquid, you'd pay almost double the price in fussier restaurants for these five plump crustaceans. Here the cost is \$9.50.

Moody admits his menu needs streamlining. There are actually three of them, with two of the menus somewhat overlapping the main one. Though a bit confusing, the findings cover many bases.

There are burgers, loaded fries and chicken wings for student types; smoothies, acai bowls, hummus-veggie plates and quinoa-stuffed peppers for health fanatics; and Champagne, house-made sangria, artisan cheeses, crafty paninis and a few entrees for culinary sophisticates.

In addition to the tortilla Espanola and buttery shrimp, I also tried the "green monster"

smoothie served with an environmentally friendly paper straw. Thick, icy and made to order, it featured a nourishing whip of spinach, celery, carrots, mango and pineapple.

A colorful arrangement of baby carrots, bell peppers and celery came on a plate of warm pita bread and two types of house-made hummus: basil and red pepper. It's an ideal shareable item priced fairly at \$7.50.

Most of the tuna-melt panini I ordered came home with me because of its jumbo size. Made with albacore strewn with sliced green olives — and dressed moderately in mayo — the sandwich layered in cheddar, juicy tomatoes and crisp romaine lettuce (now safe to eat after last month's recall). The ridged bread, supposedly sourdough, resembled in texture and flavor a thin, soft waffle. Though light and pleasing, it predictably became soggy by the time I boxed it up.



Spanish-inspired gambas al ajillo

My finale was fried cheese-cake, which shouldn't be compared to the wicked deep-fried vittles you'd find at a county fair. Served as two rectangular logs, the dessert is rather refined with its outer veneers



Owner and retired Air Force Master Sergeant Frank Moody (Photos by Frank Sabatini Jr.)

of glassy caramelized sugar, and hot gooey centers of sweetened cream cheese beneath. It reminded me of crème brulee, though possibly better.

Moody has a good thing going with his colorful cafe, a space you'd more likely see in an urban center rather than tucked away in a generic strip plaza on a suburban street. For those who assume @Spacebar is merely a coffeehouse that serves only pastries and trendy acai bowls, some good surprises await.

—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. You can reach him at fsabatini@san.rr.com.■

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What's Cooking with Julie

Julie White

PEANUT BUTTER BALLS

Chocolate and peanut butter are such a treat favorite. They make a great holiday goodie or a sweet gift to give for the holidays. They are pretty easily made — if you have a bit of patience. Happy holidays!

Ingredients:

- 1 stick butter, melted
- 1 1/2 cups smooth peanut butter
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 3 1/2 cups powdered sugar
- 3 cups semi-sweet chocolate chips



(commons.wikimedia.org)

Directions:

In a bowl, mix the peanut butter, melted butter, salt and vanilla until well blended. Sift the powdered sugar, using a strainer, into the mixture and combine until well blended and it forms a paste. Form the mixture into 1-inch balls, rolling in your palms.

Place on a cookie sheet until all are rolled. Chill until firm.

Melt the chocolate in a microwave in 30-second intervals, stirring between each short cook cycle until melted and smooth. (You can also melt the chocolate in a double boiler.)

Dip each ball in the chocolate with a toothpick, only covering half of the peanut butter ball. Chill and enjoy!

"Christmas is doing a little something extra for someone" — Charles Schulz.■

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San Diego Community News Network

New cat brings challenges for the new year

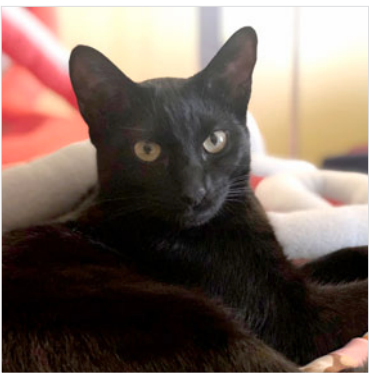
Gen-X in a millennial world

Genevieve Suzuki



I live with El Chupacabra. In August, my husband Derek and I decided to adopt a kitten for our daughter, Quinn, who had been asking for one for years. The San Diego Humane Society was hosting its “Clear the Shelter” event and waiving fees, which basically meant “free cat.” And yes, if I was going to get a cat, I wanted it to be as close to free as possible. I was surprised when Quinn said she wanted a black female cat just like my old cat, Minky, who crossed over the Rainbow Bridge when I was pregnant with my daughter. And, as though it was fate, the only kitten left at the San Diego Humane Society in Escondido during its Clear the Shelters event was a black female. The volunteers at the shelter told us “Ally” was a sweet, social cat and wished us luck. Little did we know we had actually adopted El Chupacabra. Who knew “sweet, social” was code for “menacing.” “Ally,” renamed “Minky 2” by Quinn and given the run of our home, likes to dart out from random places and scare us in what can only be an effort to train us in case we are ever mugged. She also seduces us into petting her only to be rewarded with our hands being trapped between claws and fangs.

In the very beginning, Minky 2 would slink quickly under Quinn’s bed to hide until the middle of the night, when she’d jump onto the bed to bite Quinn’s toes. I had to move into my daughter’s room and hunker down with a spray bottle so my 9-year-old could get a good night’s sleep. Eventually Minky 2 gave up and learned to slumber somewhat peacefully next to her young owner. And boy, have cats changed when it comes to their kibbles. I always thought cats ate pretty much anything. My Minky ate whatever food we bought her, and whatever food we bought her usually came from the grocery store. Minky 2, on the other hand, doesn’t like fish and beef and has a texture issue when it comes to wet food. I swear I saw her looking for a menu the other day. For his part, Derek thinks it’s hilarious that the cat could eat better than us. “When did cats become so fancy? What’s with the liver pate and the salmon mousse?” he asked before snarking that we will have to explain to the kids that their college funds went to Minky 2 so she could enjoy French cuisine. Ironically, Minky 2 actually hates the pate and mousse, and turned her nose up at each offering. “What animal has a texture issue with food?” I grumbled in the waiting room at the Lake Murray Village Veterinary Clinic while Minky 2 got her nails done. “And when did cats get so picky?” “Oh, my dog has the same problem,” said a fellow owner.



Beneath this seemingly normal cat’s appearance beats the heart of El Chupacabra. (Courtesy Genevieve Suzuki)

“But then, don’t we also have our own tastes in food?” Lucky for us, Paw Country, a “holistically focused pet supply store” located in the Lake Murray Square Shopping Center is right next to our vet. The first time I walked into the store I met Sammy, the young clerk behind the counter. She was extremely sweet and patient, offering me a handful of samples to use with the ever-selective Minky 2. Unsurprisingly, Minky 2’s favorite right now is “Taste of the Wild: Prey.” When I returned to the store to buy a big bag of the turkey formula, owner Sans Sarsilmaz was at the cash register. He was pleased to hear our family would be regular customers and made sure I again left with samples to ensure our fussy cat would find exactly the right food. And so here I am, going into the new year with a reasonably new cat who has unreasonably decided to put me through my paces. If anyone has it to spare, please pass that cup o’ kindness so I can get through 2019 with Minky 2. —Genevieve A. Suzuki is a local attorney who lives and works in La Mesa.■

► Foothiller, from page 12

opening of Gallery 97, with their Fall Student Art Show, a celebration of the some of this semester’s best student artwork. Gallery 97 was conceptualized in Grossmont’s 97th year as a space to showcase student artwork and was made possible through a grant from the GHS Educational Foundation, which funded the display furniture. To be updated with the GHS art

department, please follow them using #foothillerarts.

Inspirational student NBC 7’s Inspirational Student of November was Transition Student Israel Davis, who volunteers an hour a day as a greeter in the Grossmont UHS District Office. The news feature stresses that Israel “radiates happiness and warmth.” Transition teacher Sherrie Dixon, reaffirmed that Israel “strives to brighten everyone’s day.”

View the segment at bit.ly/2A1SzB7.

—Connie and Lynn Baer write on behalf of the GHS Museum. For more information about the wonderful things happening at Grossmont, please visit the Museum noon–3:30 on Jan. 9 or by appointment on other Wednesdays. To explore 98 years of Foothiller history, visit foothillermuseum.com. Contact: ghsmuseum@guhsd.net or 619-668-6140.■

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PUZZLES ANSWERS ON PAGE 4

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.

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

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CROSSWORD Hit the Deck

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CREATORS NEWS SERVICE

By Charles Preston

ACROSS

1 Foxiness

6 Tender, in Turkey

11 Buffalo lady

14 Gimlet kin

15 Alice Ghostley vehicle

16 Actress Meyers

17 Box office biggie

19 Kurosawa opus

20 Emulate 2 Live Crew

21 Globetrotter’s requisite

22 Fiddle_

24 Cricket team

26 Vexes

28 Hellenic vowels

30 Drained

33 Elevators, to an Etonian

36 Tintinnabulates

38 The Greatest

39 Well That...

40 Edible

41 Geek, e.g.

42 Ending for pay or gran

43 Ex_ : one-sided

44 Nobles

45 Heart contraction

47 Arboretum item

49 Whole entity view

51 Fed the kitty

55 Sometimes 11 Across

57 Emilia’s spouse

59 _-Magnon

60 Chicken-king connector

61 Library aid

64 Needlefish

65 “T”’s group

66 Sidestep

67 Plus

68 Tweak

69 Cloys

DOWN

1 Key group

2 Beyond exurban

3 Yawning

4 Hardly any

5 Cooks’ stands

6 Brings up the rear

7 Machu Picchu denizens

8 Geneticist’s concern, briefly

9 Landing strip

10 Soothers

11 Poker pro

12 Nuncupative

13 Sommelier’s offering

18 Foch or Simone

23 Calendar abbreviation

25 Animal docs

27 Mercury, for one

29 Skyline sights

31 Nobelist Wiesel

32 Brief swims

33 Vientiane’s land

34 Badly

35 Teaching aid

37 Gourmandize

40 Confirm

41 Tunesful twosome

43 Skunk

44 Indicates

46 Crag

48 Hindu melody

50 Gold man

52 Acclaim

53 Rub down

54 Venetian magistrates

55 Chronicle

56 Economist Green-span

58 Pinnacle

62 Cartoonist Gardner

63 Actress Gardner

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La Mesa's most popular books in 2018



Chelsie Harris

2018 is coming to a close, and here at the library we're celebrating a year full of reading! Wondering which books were the most popular among La Mesa residents this year? We've got the scoop:

For fiction titles, the usual big hitters took the top slots.

1. "Camino Island" by

John Grisham:

A gang of thieves stage a daring heist from a secure vault deep below Princeton University's Firestone Library. Their loot is priceless, but Princeton has insured it for \$25 million. Bruce Cable owns a popular bookstore in the sleepy resort town of Santa Rosa on Camino Island in Florida. He makes his real money, though, as a prominent dealer in rare books. Very few people know that he occasionally dabbles in the black market of stolen books and manuscripts.

2. "The Late Show"

by Michael Connelly: Assigned to the night shift after



filing a sexual harassment complaint against a supervisor, detective Renée Ballard disobeys orders by continuing to investigate an assault on a prostitute and the death of a woman in a nightclub shooting.

3. "Two Kinds of Truth"

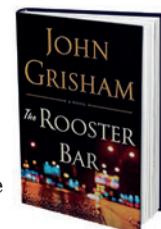
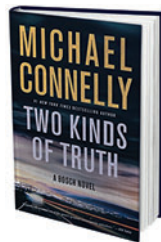
by Michael Connelly: An investigation into the murder of a young pharmacist leads Harry Bosch and San Fernando's detective squad into the big-business world of pill mills and prescription drug abuse while at the same time, an old case from Bosch's days with the LAPD returns to haunt him.

4. "Into the Water" by

Paula Hawkins: When a single mom and a teen girl are found murdered at the bottom of a river in a small town, an ensuing investigation dredges up a complicated local history involving human instincts and the damage they can inflict.

5. "The Rooster Bar" by

John Grisham: Three students, who have borrowed heavily to attend a third-rate law school, realize they have been caught in a



scam. When they discover that the school's owner also owns a bank specializing in student loans, they plot to expose him.

The following non-fiction titles were most popular with La Mesa residents in 2018:

1. "Born a Crime" by

Trevor Noah:

The host of "The Daily Show" escaped from apartheid South Africa and rose to fame despite all odds. This collection of stories is equal parts heartwarming, horrifying, and humorous.

2. "The Life Changing Magic of Tidying Up"

by Marie Kondo:

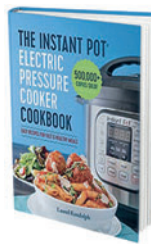
This title has developed a near cult-like following for its detailed guidance on clearing clutter and simplifying your life.

3. "Hillbilly Elegy" by

J.D. Vance:

This powerful memoir shares Vance's personal experience growing up poor in Ohio. His personal anecdotes are paired with social commentary about race and economic status.

4. "The Instant Pot Electric Pressure Cooker Cookbook" by Laurel



steps for success, and plenty of tasty results.

5. "Unqualified" by Anna

Faris:

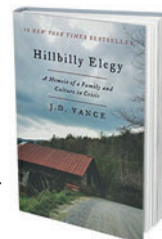
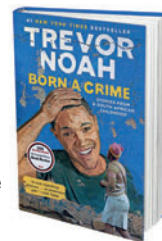
The comedic actress shares tips for laughing through life interspersed with personal stories.

Visit sdcl.org, call us at 619-469-2151, or stop by the library at 8074 Allison Ave. to request any of the above titles.

Love to read and discuss books? Join the La Mesa Library's Book Club! Our next meeting is on Wednesday, Jan. 16 at 10:30 a.m. We'll be deciding our titles for next year so bring three to four of your favorites to pitch to the group.

The library's collection and programs are supported by the Friends of the La Mesa Library. To support the Friends or find out more about their mission, visit lame-salibrary.org or stop by the library's bookstore from 1-4 p.m. each day.

—Chelsie Harris is managing librarian of 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.■



Telling a story



FOOTHILLS ART ASSOCIATION

Linda Michael

It was 1967 and the "Summer of Love" when Lisa Bebi, though born and raised in San Diego, found herself immersed in the San Francisco style of psychedelic poster art. She was influenced by the designs of Wes Wilson, known for his posters for performances at the Fillmore Auditorium in San Francisco, which are now synonymous with the peace movement and psychedelic era of the 1960s. At that time, Bebi painted with opaque watercolors and a few fluorescent poster paints, and she thinks her color sense grew from that period.



Bebi loves nostalgia, vintage snapshots, outsider art, and abstract landscapes as well as narrative art. Her paintings are understated, narrative pieces that often evoke a melancholy mood or memory. She often uses photocopies sourced from her 1950s family album as either a start of a story or as the entire story. Her technique uses a flat two-dimensional background that eliminates unwanted subtext so that personality subtleties can shine. This allows her to introduce uncommon elements, to add depth to characters, and to pinpoint exactly what she wants viewers to see.

Bebi often works in a series with a decided theme in order to examine a particular idea. She finds that working this way enables her to insert humor and sarcasm with a twist toward the unexpected.

Since 2006, Bebi's work and writings have been featured in internationally distributed magazines, several art books, radio and TV interviews, and newspaper articles. More recently, her work has been recognized in high profile national and international venues, exclusive exhibitions, and showcased in international publications.

Lisa Bebi invites you to her artist's reception on Saturday, Jan. 19, 5-7 p.m., at the Foothills Gallery, 4910 Memorial Drive. For more information, call 619-464-7167.

—Linda Michael is editor of Footnotes, the newsletter of the Foothills Art Association.■



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*Terms and conditions: Offer expires January 12. Online joins will need to pay the prorated membership dues, but will be refunded to original form of payment the next day. Valid only with monthly drafting memberships. Limit one per household. Promotional offer not redeemable for cash, is non-transferable and cannot be used in conjunction with any other coupon or discount. YMCA reserves the right to withdraw or amend this offer at its own discretion.



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Offer expires January 12.

ymca.org/join

*Terms and Conditions Apply - Visit Front Desk for More Details.

Join at ymca.org/join and enter My Y Code HEALTH at checkout

LA MESA COURIER

COMMUNITY AND ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT CALENDAR

ONGOING EVENTS



Enchanted Village Through Dec. 23
Noah Homes presents an Enchanted Village complete with lit trees, magical cottages, live performers, a snow machine, interactive exhibits and more to entertain guests of all ages. All proceeds benefit adults with developmental disabilities. Friday through Sunday, Dec. 14-16 and Dec. 21-23, 4-8 p.m. at Noah Homes, 1256 Campo Road, Spring Valley. Adult tickets \$14.99; children 3-12 \$9.99; children 3 and under free. Tickets and information at enchantedvillage.org. ■

FEATURED EVENTS



Christmas Open House
The Christian Science Reading Room will put on a Christmas Open House with special Christmas program, complete with refreshments and free gift wrapping. Public is invited. 2-4 p.m. at 8370 La Mesa Blvd. For information, call Vienna at 619-737-6093.



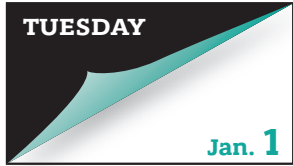
Christmas Day
Merry Christmas from your local community news team!



Kwanzaa
Happy Kwanzaa from your local community news team!



Three Chord Justice
Country rock band Three Chord Justice rocks in the new year at the Riviera Super Club, 7777 University Ave. 9 p.m. 21 and up. Free.



New Year's Day
Have a great start to your 2019 year!



First Aid Gone Wild
The Sharp Grossmont Hospital, in partnership with the American Red Cross, will hold a three-day wilderness and remote first aid class to provide individuals a foundation of first aid principles and

skills to be able to respond to emergencies and give care in areas that do not have immediate emergency medical services. This 16-hour course/class will take place Jan 4-6. Participants must possess current adult CPR/AED certification. \$155. For more information, class times, or to purchase tickets, visit bit.ly/2G5rpPk.



Artist reception: "New Beginnings"
Check out new local art and meet artists in a variety of mediums including pottery, wood working, oil, acrylic, watercolor and more. Reception will include wine and cheese. 6-8 p.m. at Nainsook Framing + Art, 8130 La Mesa Blvd. This event is free and open to the public.



Artist reception: "Natural Instincts"
The Mission Trails Regional Park Visitor Center Art Gallery is holding an artist reception for seven award-winning artists: Joey Edwards, Otto Kruse, Thia Nevius, Bill Rainer, Chris Waters and Susan Weinberg-Harter. The work of these painters, illustrators and photographers is featured in an exhibit called "Natural Instincts" and will be on display in the MTRP Art Gallery Jan. 5 through Feb. 15. The free artist

reception on Jan. 6 begins at 2 p.m. in the MTRP Visitor Center, 1 Father Junipero Serra Trail, San Diego. For more information, visit mtrp.org or call 619-668-3281.



Surf Rider Pizza Co. ribbon cutting
La Mesa Chamber of Commerce will hold a ribbon-cutting for Surf Rider Pizza Co. with food and drinks. Mingle with other local business leaders and meet Surf Rider Pizza's founder Hilary Rossi. 5:30 p.m. at Surf Rider Pizza, 8381 La Mesa Blvd. This event is free to chamber members; \$10 advance for guests (two drink tickets); and \$20 for at-door purchases. RSVP to rsvp@lamesachamber.com or call 619-465-7700.



The Dark Side: Writer Matt Coyle
Matt Coyle's mystery novels explore the dark side of San Diego and the human soul. In this interview, Coyle will share insights into his writing process, how he got an agent, and how his hero has changed throughout the series. His five books, "Wrong Light," "Blood Truth," "Dark Fissures," "Night Tremors" and "Yesterday's Echo," have won and been nominated for numerous mystery fiction awards. Coyle will have books to sell and autograph and will answer questions about his

work. 10 a.m. at San Diego Oasis, 5500 Grossmont Center Drive. Free. Registration begins Jan. 2.



Ariel Quartet
ArtPower presents the Ariel Quartet, which will perform the first of a series of concerts that will complete the Beethoven Cycle to celebrate the composer's 250th birthday by 2020. Widely considered to include some of Beethoven's greatest compositions, this cycle consists of 16 quartets divided into three periods: early, when the composer was strongly influenced by Haydn and Mozart; middle, including three quartets that honored Russian Count Razumovsky; and late, a reflection of the final years of his life. The Jan. 18 program includes Beethoven's Quartet in F Major, op.18, no. 1; Quartet in G Major, op. 18, no. 2; Quartet in F Minor, op. 95; and Quartet in F Major, op. 135. 8 p.m. in the Conrad Prebys Concert Hall, UC San Diego.

Tickets range \$45-\$59. For more information, visit bit.ly/2A4SxZc.



Valerie Victor Concert Series: Tasha Smith Godinez
Tasha Smith Godinez's work spans genres and techniques as she employs her talents in a variety of musical arenas. Known especially for her work with the Orquesta de Baja California throughout Mexico, she has appeared with Plácido Domingo, various chamber ensembles, as a member of the Garcia Godinez Duo and with jazz vocalist Leonard Patton. "The Siren Call of The Harp" begins at 2 p.m. at The Table: United Church of Christ of La Mesa, 5940 Kelton Ave. For more information, visit tableucc.com, or call 619-464-1519. ■

RECURRING EVENTS

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/2Ftogsp.

Fridays La Mesa Farmers Market
La Mesa's farmers market offers fresh local produce, food, music, and crafts. 3-7 p.m. along La Mesa Boulevard. Free. Visit lamesavillageassociation.org.

Saturdays Grossmont Mall Walkers
The Grossmont Mall Walkers is a fun exercise and social

program for seniors. The group meets every Saturday 8-9 a.m. in the food court of Grossmont Center, 5500 Grossmont Center Drive. This free program is supported by the Senior Resource Center at Sharp Grossmont Hospital. New walkers are always welcome.

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. ■

HELP WANTED

San Diego Community News Network (SDCNN.com), has an opening for an advertising sales representative to join our six-newspaper publishing company to sell print advertising and our digital products. Our newspaper group includes San Diego Downtown News, San Diego Uptown News, Mission Valley News, Mission Times Courier, La Mesa Courier and Gay San Diego.

Contact David Mannis (619) 961-1951 • david@sdCNN.com

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