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San Diego Community News Network



NCPI board chair David Smith addresses flooding along Alvarado Creek at the Jan. 29 City Council meeting. (City of San Diego)

Ratcheting up the pressure

Grantville stakeholders want action on Alvarado Creek

Jeff Clemetson
Editor

At the January meeting of the Navajo Community Planners, Inc., board chair David Smith announced that he intends to be "very vocal and persistent" throughout 2019 in pressuring the city to fix the flooding problem along

Alvarado Creek in Grantville — and so far it seems he is sticking to that goal.

On Jan. 29, Smith addressed the City Council during public comments with a presentation laying out the case for fixing the flooding problem.

"The Alvarado Creek storm channel is averting the city's vision, state mandates and developer interests to build

affordable and transit-oriented housing around the Grantville Trolley Station," he said.

Despite a rezoning effort for Grantville in 2015 that allows the highest density development the city allows, developers are still unable to build, Smith added.

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An angelic view

Foundation brings peace to families with babies in NICU

Cassidy Klein

San Carlos resident Jill Pankow knows the pain of not being with a baby right after birth. Pankow's daughter, Nicole, was rushed to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at Rady's Children's Hospital after she was born in 1991. Pankow and her husband did not know what was going on with her for two days and could not see her.



Angels Above founder Jill Pankow (second from right) and her family (Courtesy Jill Pankow)

"Being away from your child immediately, it's very difficult," Pankow said.

Pankow started Angel's Above Foundation with her husband and two grown children last year with the intent

to "help others not go through that pain." Angel's Above partners with Rady's to supply their NICU with "Niview" cameras, which allow families to view

See ANGELS ABOVE page 3

NEWS BRIEFS

Navajo Planners to hold board elections

The Navajo Community Planners, Inc. (NCPI), the local planning group authorized to review and provide recommendations on land use issues to the City Council, will hold its annual elections for board members on March 13.

All residents, business owners and property owners in the communities of Allied Gardens, Grantville, Del Cerro and San Carlos are eligible to vote in the elections. Proof of residency or business or property ownership is required.

Currently there are two candidates for the two seats per community, but nominations can be made from the floor on election night for write-in candidates. Candidates are eligible if they have attended one NCPI meeting in the past year.

New candidates include Shain Haug and Spencer Tuck of Allied Gardens and Jay Wilson is running to return to the NCPI board representing Del Cerro. Incumbent board members include John LaRaia and David Smith of Grantville; Justine Neilson of Del Cerro; and Terry Cords and Matt Adams of San Carlos.

The election will be held on March 13, 6:30 to 7 p.m. at Tifereth Israel Synagogue, 6660 Cowles Mountain Blvd. For more information, visit navajoplanners.org.

Ridership climbs on MTS for first seven months of FY19

Ridership on the Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) bus and trolley network has climbed by more than 200,000 trips in the first seven months of fiscal year 2019, which began on July 1, 2018. The gains have been led by the trolley, which

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Difference maker: Ryan Bowcott

Jeff Clemetson
Editor

San Carlos resident Ryan Bowcott is a life-long difference maker who has generously given his time and energy to charitable work since high school. His current role as a member of the board of directors for the nonprofit Options For All was, in part, inspired by his mother who taught special education.

Options For All is holding its annual fundraising event Taste of Our Community on March 14 in Liberty Station. For more information about the event and the organization, visit optionsforall.org.



Ryan Bowcott serves on the board of directors of Options For All. (Courtesy Options For All)

Tell me about Options For All. What is its history? What does it do? How did you become associated with the organization?

Founded in 1985, Options For All serves individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, helping empower them to become fully participating members of their communities. Options For All provides services in San Diego, San Bernardino, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz and Riverside counties. The organization is a leader in helping people get and keep a job and live as independently as possible and serves as many as 1,300 individuals annually who face the challenges of autism, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, hearing and vision impairments, learning and intellectual disabilities, and severe behavioral disorders.

Each year, thousands of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities need a helping hand to get by. Without community support, they are destined to live isolated, unproductive lives, at great societal and human cost. This is why the organization seeks to create and support opportunities for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in making choices to live and enjoy life in their community with dignity and respect.

We work as a team to achieve positive perceptions in the community and among employers about the value and abilities of these remarkable individuals. Options For All offers its participants programs to enhance life skills, employment and independence. These include assistance with banking, budgeting, and money management; computer and writing skills; job interview techniques; nutrition, cooking, meal planning, and exercise, and learning personal responsibility such as taking directions and social skills. Options For All offers supported employment services that have achieved placement for more than 175 individuals in approximately 500 businesses in the last five years. More than a third of these individuals have remained on the job each year.

I became associated with Options For All through a former colleague, and the Taste of Our Community event. I was invited and attended without knowing much about the organization but knew the event would be fun. The event did not

disappoint, and I immediately put it on my calendar for the following year. When I attended the second time, I began to know a few of the employees and board members. At this point I knew the mission and connected with it and was happy to serve on a committee when asked.

What is the Taste of Our Community event about? Why should people attend and support it?

The 10th annual Taste of Our Community will be held on Thursday, March 14, from 6–9 p.m. at Brick in Liberty Station, located at 2863 Historic Decatur Road. The event celebrates a decade of fundraising for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in San Diego. The event will feature tastings from local top tier restaurants, specialty cocktails, wine and beer tasting, live entertainment, live & silent auctions, an opportunity drawing, raise the paddle, and special guest Steve Cassarino (Chef Roc).

The event is an amazingly fun that also happens to serve as our annual fundraising party. This will be my seventh time attending, and I am more excited than last year. The event is networking style and attendees are free to mingle at will. We always have a broad selection of food, wine, beer, etc. for everyone to enjoy. Also, the silent auction gift baskets are always thoughtfully put together and many of them by the population we serve. Anyone should attend if they like fun, food, people, drinking, auctions, or just want to support a great organization. We are a very friendly bunch and would be happy to meet all of the new faces we are hoping to see there.

Your support would allow us to expand our services and provide better, alternative, different programs for our 1,200-plus participant population. Tickets and sponsorship opportunities are available. Individual tickets are priced at \$100, and day-of tickets are \$115 and can be purchased online at bit.ly/2GYdHO2.

For more information, please contact Philanthropy Outreach Manager, Kellye Buchanan, by email: kbuchanan@optionsforall.org or phone: 858-565-9870 ext. 226.

—Reach Jeff Clemetson at jeff@sdccnn.com ■

Can you share a little bit about your background: Where did you grow up? If not from San Diego, when did you move here? What did you study in school? What do you do?

I grew up in Poway and graduated from Poway High School before heading to the East Coast and studying at Duke University. After graduation, I moved back to San Diego and began a career in banking, which is something I still love to this day. I am currently a private banking officer for Comerica Bank and am now in my 19th year in the industry. After meeting my wife nine years ago, we were fortunate to settle in San Carlos and have enjoyed Lake Murray, meeting new neighbors and exploring East County.

What other kinds of volunteer work have you done in your life, other than Options For All?

I began volunteering in high school for the Key Club and have been fortunate to work in an industry that encourages volunteerism. Over the last 20 years in San Diego, I have been involved with Junior Achievement, American Heart Association, American Cancer Society, and of course, Options for All. I also fully support the San Diego Symphony because my wife plays violin for the orchestra and therefore works for a nonprofit.

When and why did you become interested in helping developmentally disabled adults?

My mom was a teacher while I was growing up and taught special education classes for several years. At the time, almost all development disabilities were lumped into special education and it didn't seem there was any specialized care. It always stood out to me that her classes were supposed to be for one population of children, but it was clear that each individual had unique abilities. When I began volunteering as an adult, I felt like I was only sticking my toe into the water. When I discovered Options For All and their amazing population of adults with developmental disabilities, my childhood memories came back. I felt a connection with the mission and could finally jump head first into the organization and joined the board.



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Fireworks and family fun

Stage is set for another Lake Murray Fireworks & MusicFest

Tracy Dahlkamp

The ensemble Republic of Music will headline the 2019 Lake Murray Fireworks & MusicFest, bringing top-40 dance music to the patriotic crowds set to pack Lake Murray Community Park this Fourth of July.

Event organizers have so far raised more than 20 percent of the \$85,000 in funds needed to hold the annual family-friendly event. Stormberg Orthodontics is, once again, the title sponsor and additional business sponsorships are being sought at levels priced from \$500 to \$7,500. Individual \$50 donations from neighboring households are also being sought.

"The fireworks show and the music festival really brings together the local community like no other event can," said Dr. Kurt Stormberg, who practices in La Mesa and lives in the Del Cerro community.

The 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. music festival draws a rotating crowd of more than 3,000 people, while the 9 p.m. fireworks show can be seen by an estimated 100,000 people throughout La Mesa and San Diego's Navajo neighborhoods of Grantville, Allied Gardens, Del Cerro, and San Carlos.

Food vendors lined up for the 2019 event include Finest City Kettle Corn, Primos Mexican Food, Windmill Farms, and



Republic of Music will once again rock the Lake Murray Fireworks & MusicFest in 2019. (Photo by Brett Alan Photography)

Corbin's Q barbecue. The day's festivities also include games for the kids.

This is the third consecutive year for the Lake Murray Fireworks & MusicFest event following a six-year hiatus. The volunteer committee behind the event works all year to fundraise and promote the event on social media and with informational flyers delivered door-to-door. The next canvassing effort is set for 9 a.m. to noon Saturday, April 13, with volunteers meeting at Lake Murray Community Park.

"Last year, 4 percent of recipients of this door-to-door effort donated to the Lake Murray fireworks campaign," according to committee member Brandy Kern. "We'd like to see more contributions from the

surrounding community and double or even triple the number of donations from last year."

Business sponsors receive recognition on the Lake Murray Fireworks & MusicFest website and social media platforms, as well as prominent signage at the event, Kern said.

Funds raised cover the expense of fireworks, city permits, insurance, emergency personnel, portable toilets and sinks, entertainment, and lighting and stage components.

To donate, go to bit.ly/2Ufr4MR. For more information about the event, visit lakemurrayfireworks.org.

—Tracy Dahlkamp is event chair for the Lake Murray Fireworks & MusicFest. ■

► Angels Above, from page 1

their baby in the NICU from anywhere in the world in real time, 24/7.

So far, Angel's Above has raised \$10,000, which will provide Rady's with three Nicview cameras. There are currently 60 beds in the NICU, and Angel's Above is committed to providing each one with a camera.

Pankow said she chose to partner with Rady's because of their care for Nicole, who was born with a hypo-plastic left heart and died two days after she was born.

"[The people at Rady's] worked tirelessly trying to save her," Pankow said. "One thing they were able to do is let us say goodbye, and that means more to me than so much. It's because of the care that they took, the love they have for each individual child, each nurse, everybody that goes in there. They really treat these babies as if they were their own."

Rady's representative Kourtney King said the hospital cannot make any public statements about the partnership with Angel's Above at this

time because they are a generous donor and recent partner.

Angel's Above is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit based in San Carlos. They plan to host events throughout year to raise funds for more cameras, including a golf tournament in August. Pankow and her family are tightly knit within the San Carlos community and are grateful for the support people have shown so far.

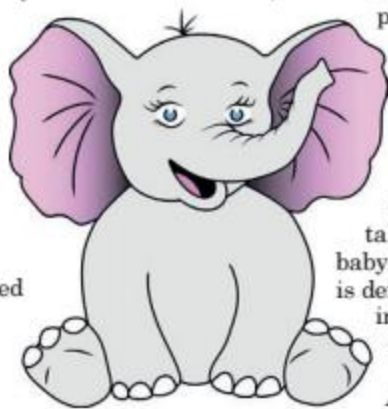
"The San Carlos area means the world to me, this is my town," Pankow said. "The

people who live across from us are the first people who saw me when my parents came back from the hospital with me as a baby. [The support] is definitely amazing, we are so grateful."

The logo for Angel's Above is an elephant, which was chosen because Nicole's room was decorated with elephants. Pankow hopes to expand their reach to more hospitals throughout the nation and continue to raise money to help families with newborns.

Everyone can make a difference, Pankow said, even in the midst of suffering. That is ultimately what Angel's Above is about.

"I hope one day to see my daughter again, and I want her to know that mom and dad, we



The Angels Above logo (Images courtesy Angels Above)



A Nicview camera

did it right," Pankow said. "And so far it's worked out beautifully. We are more than honored with the amount of trust and love people have put in us."

For more information or to donate, visit angelsabovefoundation.org.

—Cassidy Klein is a San Diego-based freelance writer. ■

How to Avoid Costly Housing Mistakes Before and After a Divorce

San Diego - 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?

To help you know what questions you should ask and how to arrive at the right answer for your specific situation, a FREE special report has been prepared by industry experts entitled "Divorce: What You Need to Know About Your House, Your Mortgage and Taxes".

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has posted six straight months of year-over-year gains.

"This is great news for the goals of the region's various climate action plans and for riders. This shows there is a real mandate to invest in improving transit," said Georgette Gómez, MTS chair and Council President of the city of San Diego in a press release.

Public transit ridership has dropped in most systems in the United States over the past several years. MTS was one of the last systems to experience a drop and it may, if trends continue, be one of the first to reverse the trend.

For the first seven months of FY19, Trolley ridership is up 1 percent from 21,810,915 trips to 22,037,351 trips. Bus ridership is virtually unchanged, dropping just 23,247 trips to 27,941,344 trips for the fiscal year to date.

"These numbers are highly encouraging," said Paul Jablonski, MTS chief executive officer. "In January of last year, MTS began implementing many route changes that increased frequency on our high-demand routes. We completed making changes in January of this year and we've already begun to see the results."

While Trolley ridership has led the resurgence, bus ridership has held steady and two major developments may put its ridership into the plus column soon.

In late January, the South Bay Rapid opened and average weekday ridership on that line is about 1,500 and climbing. The addition of this service from Otay Mesa to Downtown, as well as the opening of a modern transit center just north of the Otay Mesa border crossing, has caused other routes serving the area to increase as well.

Additionally, MTS replaced shuttles operated by UC San Diego by adding service to Rapid Superloop routes at the end of January. These routes, serving the University City area, are showing weekday ridership gains of more than 3,000 trips per day.

February will be the first complete month in which these substantial gains will be recorded to bus ridership.

For more information, visit sdmts.com.



Chelsea Clinton (far right) talks with transitioning foster youth at Just in Time for Foster Youth in Grantville on Feb. 7. (Courtesy Just in Time)

Chelsea Clinton visits Grantville

Just in Time for Foster Youth (JIT), in partnership with the Clinton Foundation

See NEWS BRIEFS page 5 →

Key Club seeks alumni for 50-year reunion

John Crawford

For 50 years, the Key Club of Patrick Henry High School has been dedicated to building student leadership skills, and contributing thousands upon thousands of volunteer service hours to the neighborhood. The Key Club has operated at Patrick Henry since the school's first year of existence in 1968-69, becoming the oldest club on campus in the process.

The Key Club members of today hope to mark the 50th anniversary of their organization by reaching out to its past. On Thursday, May 2, Key Club alumni from the past 50 years are invited to return to campus for a celebration through the decades, reuniting classmates and giving today's student leaders a glimpse of their living history. We are looking for PHHS Key Club alumni from all years.

The anniversary event begins at 5 p.m. with a campus tour around Patrick Henry, highlighting the new construction and new additions that have shaped the campus in recent years. If you haven't been on campus lately, there is a ton of exciting new improvements that simply must be seen. At 6 p.m., the

reunion event begins inside the PHAME Building — one of those exciting new buildings that only recently opened.

We will recognize past club presidents and club officers from the last 50 years, recognizing our graduates by decade, and hearing updates from some of the most interesting Key Club members of yesteryear. This special reunion event will be hosted by Benny Cartwright (Class of 1998) and Christina Meeker (Class of 2009) — the only two students in the history of the club to serve two terms as club president.

We will also hear from current Key Club President Ivy Vuong (Class of 2019) and many other special guests. We also hope to have a special message from PHHS Principal Elizabeth "Listy" Gillingham, and Grantville-Allied Gardens

Kiwanis Club President Kathy Butterstein. The Kiwanis Club of Grantville-Allied Gardens has sponsored the PHHS Key Club since its inception, officially recognized on Feb. 11, 1969.

Following the on-stage reunion event will be a mocktail reception (non-alcoholic, of course) elsewhere on campus, where Key Club members of yesterday and today can mingle, connect, and reunite with old friends. Kiwanis members will also be on hand to visit with some of their favorite graduates from years past.

Finally, there will also be an unofficial gathering after the event at Hooley's Public House in La Mesa, owned and operated by Craig MacDonald (PHHS Key Club President 1979-80).

The success of this event will depend very much on word-of-mouth, so we are hoping friends, neighbors, classmates, and alumni can help us connect with those members we are missing — especially from the early years. If you are a Patrick Henry Key Club graduate, or you know of somebody who is, please visit our event website and RSVP online at tinyurl.com/PHHSKeyClub50th.

Thank you for spreading the word, and we hope to see many of our Key Club graduates back on campus on May 2.

—John Crawford writes on behalf of the Grantville-Allied Gardens Kiwanis and is a Patrick Henry graduate of the class of 1997.■



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AmeriCorps NCCC team at Mission Trails

AmeriCorps NCCC team Green 1 assisted rangers at the Mission Trails Regional Park in San Diego, California from Jan. 11 until Feb. 25.

To assist Mission Trails Regional Park, the 10-member Green 1 team worked on trail restoration projects, removed invasive plants and helped with beautification of park facilities. Additionally, they implemented educational outreach events for the public to attend.

"Green 1 has had a great first few weeks working at Mission Trails Regional Park. Our work is already being



(l to r) Back row: Taylor Arnold, Madelyn Carlson, Melissa Berry, Darian Natividad, Chris Mackey; front row: Tanner Kinkela, Jessie Kinne, Late Mosca, Kendall Church, Mario Cornejo



An NCCC crew member restores a trail at Mission Trails. (Photos courtesy AmeriCorps NCCC)

noticed by community members, and the appreciation we are receiving makes each day worth it," said Green 1 team leader Kate Mosca. "The rangers we are working with are wonderful as they share their wealth of knowledge about the park and make each day interesting and fun. We are excited to continue the

work we started and to explore more of the park and the greater San Diego area."

AmeriCorps NCCC is a full-time, residential, national service program in which 2,800 young adults serve nationwide each year. During their 10-month term, Corps Members — all 18 to 24 year olds — work on teams of eight to 12 on projects that address critical needs. Traditional NCCC members work on a variety of different six- to eight-week-long projects related to natural and other disasters, infrastructure improvement, environmental stewardship and conservation, energy conservation, and urban and rural development. ■

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and The San Diego Foundation, hosted Chelsea Clinton on Thursday, Feb. 7, at their Grantville location during one of JIT's mentoring program sessions called Coach Approach, where she spoke with JIT and transitioning foster youth. Clinton met with transition-age foster youth at JIT to hear about their goals, learn about their experience in the foster care system, continue the discussion about issues in child welfare and help spread awareness.

In spring of 2017, JIT joined the initial phase of a three-year project, called Strong Families, Thriving Communities, in partnership with the Clinton Foundation, HHSA and The San Diego Foundation, to advance the quality of life and change outcomes for all children and families in San Diego County. JIT continues to provide unique programs and services and engage a caring community to help transition-age foster youth achieve self-sufficiency and well-being.

Coach Approach is a groundbreaking program provided by JIT that uses an approach based on the belief that every individual is creative, resourceful and whole, and that it is the role of the coach to start by setting aside his/her own opinions, seek understanding with active listening, and then ask powerful questions that can lead to transformational change among transition-age foster youth.

For more information about Just in Time for Foster Youth programs, visit jitfosteryouth.org.

Burn Institute offers free smoke detectors

National safety statistics show that adults age 65 and older are two times more likely to die in a home fire than any other segment of the population; for those over age 75, that risk nearly quadruples. Despite these alarming statistics, thousands of seniors throughout San Diego and Imperial counties are

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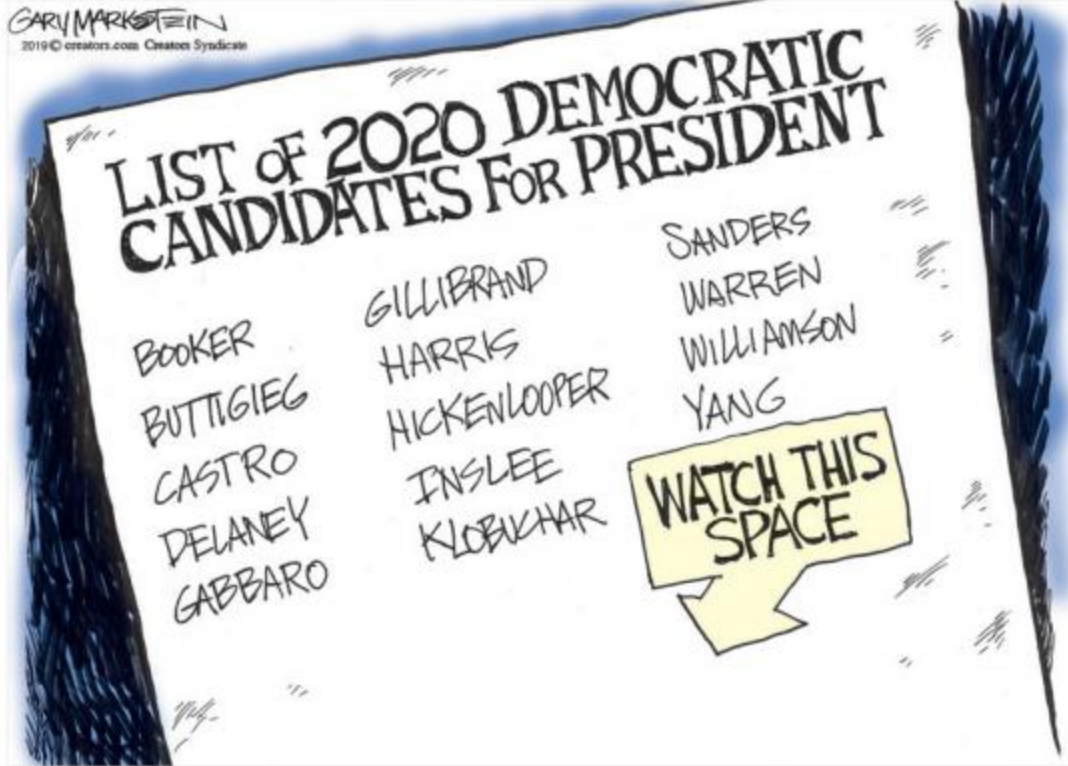
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Guest editorial

Senate Bill 615 will streamline California citizens' access to public records

Mara W. Elliott

As your City Attorney, I'm always looking for ways to make government more efficient and transparent.

For that reason, I'm working with state Sen. Ben Hueso on legislation to streamline record disclosure under the California Public Records Act, the state law that safeguards government accountability and public information.

Our bill, Senate Bill 615, would speed access to public information while avoiding unnecessary lawsuits resulting from innocent mistakes. It's a win-win for transparency and the taxpayers. And it's urgently needed.

Ensuring the public's access to information is critical, yet in recent years, the city of San Diego, and public agencies statewide, have struggled to keep up with a widening avalanche of Public Records Act requests.

The numbers are staggering. Since 2013, Public Record Act requests handled by the city of San Diego ballooned from 749 to 4,824 annually. That's a 644 percent increase and climbing. Cash-strapped school districts and California's public universities face similar challenges.

The records produced by the city could fill a library — tens of thousands of pages every year.

Yet the city's response to each and every PRA request must be absolutely perfect. If just one sheet of paper is inadvertently overlooked by any one of the dozens of city employees who are asked to search for records, it can lead to an expensive

judgment against taxpayers. No excuses, no explanations, are allowed.

That no-excuses rule was created in a recent case that cost taxpayers \$158,000. Following a diligent search, the city had provided hundreds of records, but an innocent error was made. The lawyer who discovered the mistake got paid \$158,000 in fees — money that could have gone to streets and sidewalks, parks and libraries.

Some suggest that these expensive judgments against taxpayers are an unavoidable cost of maintaining open government. I disagree. And I'm working to solve this problem through state legislation rooted in a very simple value: honest communication.

SB 615 would require public agencies and record-seekers to engage in a "meet and confer" session — basically, a simple conversation to resolve disputes in good faith before misunderstandings can escalate.

During "meet and confer," the parties must help one another understand what records were requested, what records have been produced, and why the two may not exactly match up.

The same process is required when lawyers have disputes over pre-trial discovery of documents. Meet and confer sessions can occur in a matter of minutes over the telephone. And they've prevented thousands of unnecessary lawsuits.

The record-seeker doesn't give up her right to sue. If she remains unsatisfied after "meet and confer," she can still file a lawsuit — the very next day, in fact. And if a court finds the public

agency improperly withheld records, she will still win. These cases, however, should become increasingly rare through improved communication.

View this through the eyes of the average citizen.

She may be seeking records about her child's school or conditions in her neighborhood. She doesn't have money for attorneys, or time for lawsuits. She simply wants the public records she's entitled to by law. She shouldn't have to sue to get them. The "meet and confer" process will help her get them quicker than a lawsuit ever could.

Or you can view SB 615 through the eyes of taxpayers, whose pockets are plucked every time a public-record lawsuit is filed. They shouldn't have to pay tens of thousands of dollars whenever the city falls short of perfection. The "meet and confer" process will prevent unnecessary lawsuits and expensive judgments.

Dishonest public agencies will gain nothing from SB 615. The bill still allows lawyers to hold public officials accountable for withholding documents — and to recover their costs — just not when a judge rules that an innocent mistake was made. And with "meet and confer," innocent mistakes should all but disappear.

The California Public Records Act was intended as a tool for citizens to get quick and easy access to public information. SB 615 will further that purpose while sparing taxpayers from unnecessary lawsuits and expensive payouts.

—Mara M. Elliott is City Attorney of San Diego. ■

Guest editorial

Hate crimes: One lie, many truths

Gray Ndiaye

Jussie Smollett, a popular actor and singer-songwriter, was recently arrested and charged with filing a false police report.

Smollett alleged that he was attacked in late January by two white men who spewed racist and homophobic slurs as they assaulted him.

A standout detail was his claim that the assailants said, "This is MAGA country." Smollett has been very critical of the Trump administration and said he believed this was some sort of retaliation.

Originally viewed as the victim, Smollett is now accused of orchestrating his own attack.

This has created an uproar. Smollett's attack was a major news story, and a plethora of public figures expressed support for him. The public isn't only shocked but also outraged by the latest accusations — especially survivors of hate crimes.

This situation hits close to home. Though I was never physically assaulted, I've been targeted for harassment due to my sexuality.

It's been a challenging journey navigating between two crucial factors of my identity; I am both black and gay. In the spring of 2015, a fake advertisement was posted on a college social app. The advertisement listed my college apartment number and was advertising for men to come over.

It was written as if it were a woman. I was gone at the time, but men began coming to my apartment looking for sex. My classmate who lived in my complex saw the ad and let me know.

It was embarrassing because other students had seen the ad. I contacted both campus security and the police. Nothing happened. I still have no closure on this incident.

In the fall of 2015, I was leaving class with a friend. A car followed us while its passengers yelled homophobic slurs at me, chasing me into a corner. This was caught on tape by security cameras.

I alerted campus security, and although they saw the clear visuals on the tape, nothing happened. Since it was a verbal bashing, they didn't think it was a real threat (never mind my being chased by a car).

It was a Christian university. Since then, I've always wondered what they would do if I were a straight, white male who was verbally bashed and chased with evidence on tape.

Though both of these events left an impact, I'm lucky that it was no worse. Due to the current divisive state of our country, hate crimes have been on the rise across most categories.

In particular, there's been a spike in hate crimes regarding

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See HATE CRIMES page 7 →

Law professor updates club on Trump legal jeopardy



Tina Rynberg and
Jeff Benesch

Some two long years ago, just before the inauguration of Donald Trump as our 45th president, we were privileged to have Professor Marjorie Cohn make her observations and predictions of a Trump presidency. As it turns out, she was not only accurate in her dire prognosis, but may have fallen short of the actual damage to our political system, our international standing, the environment and our moral and ethical standards and norms.

Professor Cohn will be returning to La Mesa Foothills Democratic Club on Wednesday night, April 3, to give us her latest view of the legal jeopardy facing the many facets of the Trump empire: The presidency, the Trump Organization, Trump Foundation, the Inaugural Committee, various family entanglements, and other related aspects of the president's self-aggrandizing conduct in the White House.

Now that Congressional Democrats are committed to exposing the Trump presidency for the criminal enterprise that it has become, they'll be joining the 17-plus ongoing investigations by various federal

districts and state attorneys general and will soon be sharing the spotlight with the yet-to-be-delivered Mueller report. Congress will surely follow up with the many leads suggested by the testimony of Michael Cohen, the president's long-time personal lawyer and hatchet man. He claims he was directed by Trump to "take care" of legal and ethical entanglements as many as 500 times in the decade he was employed. He famously called Trump a racist, a con man, and a cheat.

Professor Cohn will go in depth into the potential legal dangers facing the president and his family in the coming weeks and months. Also under discussion will be potential liabilities for abuse of power, violating the emoluments clause, obstruction of justice, conspiracy to defraud the IRS and the government for a host of financial misdeeds, money laundering, and of course, the Russia investigation and the prospect that the Trump campaign willingly cooperated with a foreign government to alter the outcome of the 2016 election. There have



Professor Marjorie Cohn will be the featured speaker at the April 3 La Mesa Foothills Democratic Club meeting. (Courtesy LMFDC)

already been multiple indictments and sentences for several dozen people including the Trump campaign chair and his deputy, the President's personal lawyer, the National Security Advisor, other Trump advisors and associates, and at least a couple dozen Russian nationals — most of the latter working in cyber warfare for Russian intelligence and the Kremlin.

Marjorie Cohn is professor emerita at Thomas Jefferson School of Law, former president

of the National Lawyers Guild, deputy secretary general of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers and a member of the advisory board of Veterans for Peace. A prolific author, her most recent book is "Drones and Targeted Killing: Legal, Moral, and Geopolitical Issues." Cohn is also a regular contributor to the daily emag Truthout. Her latest article is a synopsis of the recent Michael Cohen congressional testimony titled "Cohen Knows What Trump Is Capable Of. His Testimony Should Terrify Us."

The April 3 meeting begins at 6:30 p.m. at La Mesa Community Center, 4975 Memorial Drive, La Mesa. All are welcome to attend, and annual memberships begin at \$30. Check out our calendar of events on our website at lamesafoothillsdemocraticclub.com and like us on Facebook.

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

► Hate crimes, from page 6

race, religion, sexual orientation, and gender identity. The Human Rights Campaign reported that in 2017, 29 transgender individuals were brutally killed. This is the highest ever recorded — though the 26 transgender individuals murdered last year comes close.

In fact, hate crimes have been on the rise for three consecutive years, according to the FBI. As a black man and a gay man — a member of two marginalized groups often targeted — this is a source of constant fear and anxiety.

Unlike Smollett's case, which was an extremely rare case of possible false reporting, rights groups estimate that far more real incidents go unreported.

Hatred is still prevalent. Whether verbal or physical, these attacks are very real and can carry fatal outcomes. The Jussie Smollett episode shouldn't distract us from this. One man may have lied, but the real story is how many lives are still threatened.

Please don't stop supporting victims of hate crimes or advocating for justice.

—Gray Ndiaye is a modern-day Griot who resides in Southern California. He's on Twitter and Instagram at @graythegriot. Distributed by OtherWords.org.■

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Kathleen White,
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BIRTHSTONE OF THE MONTH - AQUAMARINE OR BLOODSTONE

Although very different these two historic gems both promise courage to those born in March. Blue-green aquamarine is a member of the beryl family the same as emerald and morganite. It is as clear as sea water from which it gets its name and has long been prized by sailors as a talisman on long voyages. Aquamarines are also believed to have a calming influence on relationships making them excellent gifts for weddings or anniversaries. Dark green bloodstone is an opaque gem noted for the bright red flashes on the surface and has been a favorite for men's jewelry since the middle ages.



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Winterble to headline Republican Women dinner event



Pat Boerner

Navajo Canyon Republican Women of California (RWCNC) are having a politically educational dinner event at St. Dunstan's Church, 6556 Park Ridge Blvd. in San Diego, on Tuesday, April 9, from 5 to 8 p.m. Guest speaker will be Brett Winterble, a 20-year veteran of radio and television. Funny, insightful and high energy are all attributes that describe Winterble. You can listen to him on KFMB 760AM weekdays from 3 to 7 p.m. and see him on NewsMax TV. Please join us at this event to learn what is happening, and what we can expect to



(Courtesy RWCNC)

see in the future of the Republican Party.

Doors open at 5 p.m. and a taco dinner will be served at 6 p.m. followed by our speaker at 7 p.m. Navajo ladies are offering all this for only \$15 because we want people to attend, be informed and get energized! There will be a chance to win \$100 cash, visit vendors displaying items for sale and bid on surprise items at a live auction.

See DINNER EVENT page 22 —>

News from your County Supervisor

Dianne's Corner

Dianne Jacob



In my recent State of the County address, I laid out an ambitious list of initiatives that will help us address many of our biggest challenges.

Among the proposals outlined in my speech that will come to the Board of Supervisors over the next few months:

Housing: Doubling the size of the county's housing trust fund to \$50 million, and increasing financial incentives to make it easier to build granny flats and other secondary dwellings next to existing houses.

Wildfire protection: Strengthening the building

code for construction in high-risk fire areas and offering grants to existing homeowners to encourage the installation of safer vents, walls and other fire-resistant materials.

New homes and communities must be built to give people and property the greatest chance of survival.

Mental health and substance abuse services: Developing a coordinated system of care that focuses on individuals, not programs, and making improvements related to the county's Psychiatric Emergency Response Teams (PERT).

Energy: Joining the community choice energy movement and teaming up with local cities to open up the energy market.

County government is already allowed to shop the energy market. We buy

the bulk of our electricity from providers other than SDG&E.

If the county can shop for energy, why not the rest of us? Why not ratepayers, school districts and others?

With two new members on the Board of Supervisors, it's time to open the window to bold ideas and fresh opportunities. I plan to make the most of it!

I welcome your thoughts and feedback on what is already turning into a busy 2019.

—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.

Audit shows community planning groups lack transparency

District 7 Dispatch

Scott Sherman



At the first Audit Committee meeting of the year, a performance audit of San Diego's Community Planning Groups (CPGs) was released. The audit discovered many CPGs lack

transparency, have inconsistent record retention, and may not comply with the Brown Act.

CPGs are an integral component of the city's planning process and provide residents with the opportunity to give important feedback to officials on development projects, community plan updates, and rezoning; among other important issues.

It is important that CPGs operate effectively to ensure

community feedback is received on city projects.

Volunteers who serve on Community Planning Groups provide a vital service to their city and community. It is important that city officials provide them with the proper tools and guidance to ensure the boards they serve on operate more effectively.

Other findings of the audit include:

Renters are not adequately represented on CPG boards.

CPGs lack transparency because they are not consistently submitting or retaining documents.

Some CPGs member continue to serve on boards after term limits have expired.

The Audit Committee voted unanimously to forward the report to the full council with recommendations to update

Council Policy 600-24 to help ensure transparency, compliance, diverse community representation, and performance.

To review the full audit, please click visit: sandiego.gov/auditor.

—San Diego City Councilmember Scott Sherman represents the District 7 neighborhoods of Mission Valley, Grantville, Allied Gardens, Del Cerro and San Carlos.

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► Grantville, from page 1

"While this rezone was extremely beneficial to the community, it left out a solution to the FEMA flood plain that overlays the properties where high-density residential is to be built."

Flooding has been a problem for businesses along the Alvarado Creek for years and in 2017, the city took steps to address the issue when it produced the Grantville Trolley Station/Alvarado Creek Revitalization Study — a \$500,000 Transnet grant funded project that produced a plan to widen Alvarado Creek and fix the flooding problem. The plan was adopted by the Navajo Community Planners in May 2017 but has yet to be adopted by the city.

"Because this report is only a study, it bears no legal requirement for developers to adhere to," Smith said. "It has not been adopted by development services, nor was it included as part of the community plan update."

This creates an immediate problem, Smith argued, because current plans to develop housing on MTS property at Grantville Trolley Station allows the developers to obtain building permits without requirements to contribute to the costs and implement final flooding solutions for the study.

"We strongly ask the City Council to endorse and close this loophole forever and adopt the study before our community loses the opportunity to build approximately 4,000 units

around a major transit corridor," he said.

Smith is one of a group of property owners along Alvarado Creek who hopes to one day redevelop their light industrial use properties into dense housing — a goal that matches the city's climate action plan as well as SANDAG's regional plan for transportation.

Grantville Trolley Station housing projects

Smith's urgency for the city to take action on the Alvarado Creek study is spurred by proposed housing projects at the Grantville Trolley Station. Two developers, Greystar and Affirmed Housing, have plans to build 261 student housing units and 182 affordable housing units, respectively.

"What is important to note is the total density of the two projects is only 47.4 dwelling units per acre," Smith said. "The problem is, that is an incredibly low number. The focus plan amendment allows up to 109 dwelling units per acre on that site."

Smith said that the low density is understandable considering the high cost of building high-rise housing units.

"It doesn't make much sense for the developer to go any more than that because once you go more than that amount of density, construction costs change and you can't get the rents from the students to subsidize the steel construction," he said. "The issue is, you only get to build around a trolley station one time. This is a one-time shot."

In mid-January, Smith and other stakeholders along Alvarado Creek met with MTS to discuss the projects and how the developers and MTS plan on handling the Alvarado Creek study.

MTS, Smith said, plans on respecting the study by not building on any of the land marked for widening the creek and developing the structures needed to avert the flooding, which is good news for the other property owners along the creek who hope that the flood plan is someday implemented. But it was not all good news. Although the housing developments will not encroach on the land needed for the flood plan, MTS is looking to give the creek land to the city through the use of an IOD (irrevocable offer of dedication). This would essentially put the burden of financing the flood plan on the city.

"What essentially that does is it stalls, kicks the can down the road, it sheds liability to the city and it negatively impacts all the property owners around the trolley station, except for MTS," Smith said. "Because their unwillingness to contribute and do their portion and push it to somebody else, that means that the rest of us

that are in the flood plain will not be able to develop."

MTS Director of Marketing and Communications Rob Schupp said that MTS doesn't have a "strong position" on the IOD yet. That plan was presented as one way the Grantville Trolley Station housing projects could move forward, while at the same time recognizing that the flooding mitigation needs to happen.

"We want to move forward with the project, so we're doing the project in a way that doesn't

preclude mitigation. But who pays for it, who's responsible, how it involves all the other property owners around there — I think that needs further discussion and we're kind of waiting for an official project by the city," Schupp said. "Until the city comes up with an official project that identifies all this stuff, it's hard to respond to a non-project."

Other options

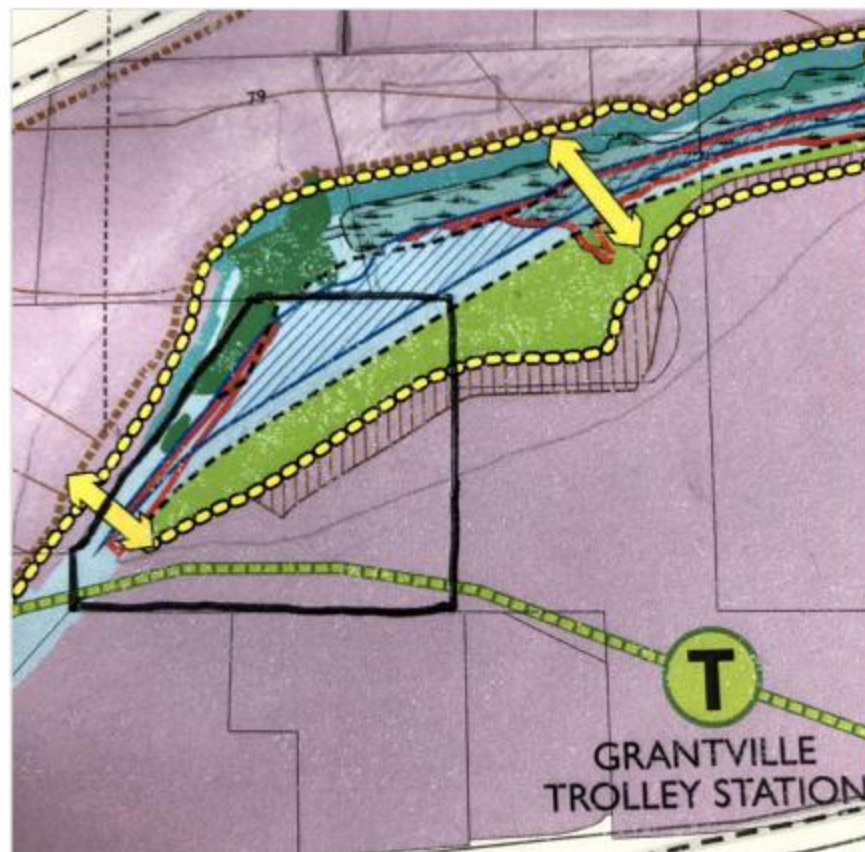
If the city does not officially adopt the Alvarado Creek study and turn it from a non-project to an official one, there could be repercussions for other property owners along Alvarado Creek. According to Smith, allowing MTS to pass on the cost of fixing the flooding to the city is an unnecessary burden on taxpayers and the other property owners. MTS, he argues, will be leasing the land for a sizeable sum of money — money that can be used in other ways, or not collected at all so developers have more leeway in building more density.

"MTS is not a landlord, not a for-profit entity, they are a public agency," he said. "So if they are to do what's best for the housing crisis in San Diego, and what their mission statement is, [MTS] president Gomez should be more concerned about allowing the developers to build as much as they possibly can. And they shouldn't care if MTS even makes a dollar on their rental."

That would be one option. Another option for the property — one preferred by Smith — would be to allow the lower density projects to be built, but have the city reject the IOD and force MTS to eventually build its portion of the flood project. This would create a path toward finishing the Alvarado Creek flood plan and spurring redevelopment in Grantville that would bring thousands more housing units and increase ridership on the trolley.

"That would be a homerun for the community," Smith said.

—Reach Jeff Clemetson at jeff@sdccnn.com ■



The portion of Alvarado Creek owned by MTS is outlined in black. (Courtesy David Smith)

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.



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**PATRICK
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High School

Patrick Henry High School News

Elizabeth Gillingham

PHHS Teacher of the Year

Rick Budzynski was selected by the PHHS staff as this year's San Diego Unified Teacher of the Year for the 2019-2020 school year. Mr. B, as he is fondly referred to, teaches math at Henry and has actually served the Henry Cluster in two capacities. He started his career at Pershing Middle School and later transferred to De Portola Middle School in Tierrasanta. He returned to the community in 2015 at Henry, where we hope he has finally found his home.

After one year, Mr. B added coaching roller hockey to his repertoire by helping establish a team that has been very successful for the last three years. Students love sitting in class with Budzynski because he is passionate about teaching and cares to see them find success. He makes a point to get everyone active and often has them demonstrating their learning through hands-on activities that connect to the real world.

According to Henry teacher Greg Chronopolos who works with Budzynski: "Rick has a sign on his wall 'No Excuses.' To his credit, he takes away student excuses to why they might fail his class. He provides every opportunity imaginable to promote student success. Like most math teachers, he wants things done a certain way. There is quite often a six-week (or more) grace period to allow the kids to learn the proper procedure. He provides students notebooks for their daily work and pencils for the forgetful freshmen. He has a liberal 'turn-in late' policy. He tutors, he calls parents, he emails study material home before tests. Rick can relate to any kid from every background and make 'that' connection. He's not all warm and fuzzy, but he's also not fake, he plays it straight. Kids respect him and they produce for him."

We are thrilled to have Rick Budzynski serve as our Teacher of the Year for 2020!



Rick "Mr. B" Budzynski is PHHS Teach of the Year.

Students play at Symphony Hall

Congratulations to the 10 PHHS music students who were selected by audition and performed in the San Diego Unified High School Instrumental Honor Concert last month in Symphony Hall! The students were:

Honor Orchestra: John Segovia, violin; Kellie Formanek, cello; Matthew Thomas, principal bass.

Honor Band: Ava Calbreath, clarinet; Matthew Dollman, alto saxophone; Andrea Arend, principal tenor saxophone; Sam Capron, tenor saxophone; Christian Florendo, trumpet; Ethan Ackland, principal percussion; Ivan Melero, percussion.

Percussionist Ethan Ackland performed in both groups. It is especially impressive that three PHHS students are in the top positions (principal) on their instruments.

Engineering teacher selected for educator award

PHHS engineering teacher extraordinaire, Adria Van Loan, was selected by the San Diego County Engineering Council (SDCEC), as the winner of the prestigious Outstanding K-12 Engineering Educator Award for 2018. The awards ceremony was held on Friday, Feb. 22 at the National Engineering Week awards banquet at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in San Diego.

Van Loan started at PHHS as a math teacher and later joined the engineering department. She quickly showed great promise by taking the lead with our robotics program, which took a team to Houston in the third year of existence.

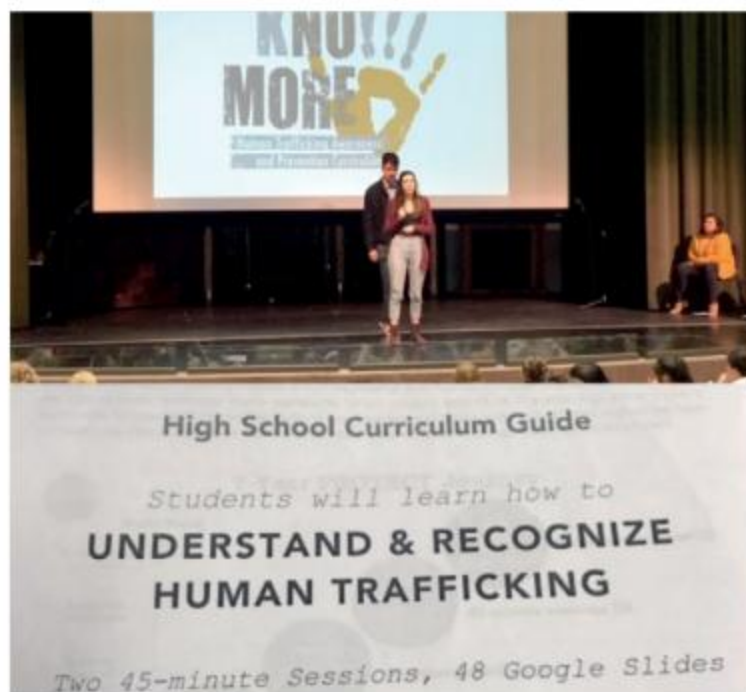
New physical education, old teacher

[Editor's note: written by PHHS PE teacher Terri Clark]

January was Human Trafficking Awareness Month across our country. And thankfully, Assembly Bill 1227 was signed into law by Gov. Brown on Oct. 7, 2017. This law requires California public schools to provide human trafficking prevention education to students and educators in order to reduce the vulnerability of our youth and to prevent future victimization. California schools are now required to provide instruction on all forms of human trafficking in comprehensive sexual education at least once in middle school and once in high school. In the public school arena, this is also known as Commercial and Sexual Exploitation of Children, or CSEC.

Human trafficking occurs every day. San Diego is one of three top hot spots in California for human trafficking along with Los Angeles and San Francisco. This fact alone should be enough to move the needle forward in education around the subject of human trafficking. Thanks to AB 1227, we now have a way to move that needle — we have mandates in place that require human trafficking education for every student in California. Prevention is paramount in stopping the recruitment of our youth.

What does mandated education look like in a school



Ninth-grade PE students learn about human trafficking at an assembly. (Photos courtesy PHHS)

setting? With the newly adopted curriculum for San Diego Unified School District, it looks like this: teacher training first, then student education next. The curriculum adopted by San Diego Unified School District is a multifaceted approach that uses two curriculums and layers them together: Protect, through 3-Strands Global and "kNOw MORE," through Point Loma Nazarene University's Center for Justice and Reconciliation. Together both of these projects bring students to the heart of the human trafficking issue by

addressing topics such as true choice, supply and demand, and child pornography. It also educates students by teaching them to identify the origins, symptoms and signs of human trafficking in their communities and beyond.

The need for this education across the grade levels is best validated by the following statistics: There are 40 million victims of modern day slavery worldwide. There are at least 100,000 victims of human

See PHHS page 13 →



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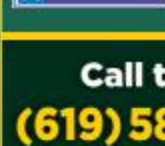


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► PHHS, from page 12

trafficking across America (more than Qualcomm Stadium could hold if it were filled to capacity). Human trafficking is a \$150 billion global industry and the fastest growing criminal enterprise. Ten million children worldwide are exploited in the global sex trade. And furthermore, 81 percent of victims are trapped in forced labor, 75 percent of victims are female, and 25 percent of victims are children. These statistics — from 3-Strands Global, PLNU Center for Justice and Reconciliation — are staggering and serve as a catalyst for change, helping our students

learn to safely navigate the world they live in.

Our physical education ninth-grade team took on the challenge of this new curriculum and brought it to all freshmen at Patrick Henry High School in January. Two of the lessons were a traditional classroom lesson model packed with not only the statistics highlighted above, but with tools students can use to spot the signs, learn the language, and be an upstander instead of a bystander when they see a potential red flag. The final lesson was a dramatic and engaging drama titled kNow MORE, where students were encouraged to participate, dialogue with peers and practice the strategies of prevention and

awareness. Upon completion of the unit, all students were given a tip card that has information and important hotline numbers when they suspect someone might be in danger.

As someone who has been teaching for 20-plus years, it continues to be my privilege to bring education to students than can not only be life-changing, but life-saving. Our world continues to change, evolve and require new skills and knowledge to navigate it. As the role of a physical educator has evolved, I keep moving forward in hopes of producing students who are physically literate about the world they live in. You can follow me on Twitter: teachingthemasses.

Student of the Month

Jonna Carey is a senior at Henry who represents everything that makes working in a high school worthwhile. She was selected as our Kiwanis Student of the Month for February because she inspires everyone through her story of hard work, perseverance, dedication, commitment to family, and love of making a difference on anything she decides to do.

Carey is currently performing with a GPA of 4.3 and seeking admission to colleges such as Stanford, UCLA, and UC Berkley to name a few. She is considering pursuing a career in medicine or in science as she is interested in the environment and likes the idea of studying and changing the way people think.

Carey shows a strong commitment to her education by never wanting to cut corners in the way she approaches her learning and will stay up late to get her work done on time, no excuses. Henry English teacher Valerie Crawford describes Carey as "optimistic, creative and dedicated."

Crawford also wrote in Carey's college letter of recommendation: "Through her work with athletics here at Henry, Jonna has gained leadership

experience and hopes to use that to her advantage in her collegiate endeavors. As her English language arts teacher twice over, I have had the pleasure to watch her reach to better her work and the world around her. I have even seen her helping other students with their work when they have difficulty. She is an inspiration for others to follow. Jonna is a giving person, who puts others before herself. She holds down a job as a photo booth operator, volunteers many hours for Key Club International, and has become a true part of Henry High. She is a true leader."

Carey is unique in that she has earned two CIF Championship patches both in tennis this year and badminton last year. She hopes to earn a third patch with the badminton team for the season coming up again this year. Carey is also on our ASB serving as a student leader to help make Henry a better place. She has made her mark at Henry as a senior as she impresses everyone she meets with her positive and caring attitude.

—Elizabeth Gillingham is principal of Patrick Henry High School.■

JROTC Academic Bowl 2019

[Editor's note: Written by PHHS student Jonny Phan, SDUSD JROTC Brigade public affairs officer]

Normally in the year, we like to start off our first Brigade competition with some intensive drill. This year, however, we began our season with a showdown between all JROTC Academic teams. Jan. 12 marked the annual SDUSD JROTC Brigade Academic Bowl, where competitors from all 13 schools across the San Diego Unified School District gathered to compete at Patrick Henry High School.

Competitors have practiced and competed in preliminary rounds all school year in order to prepare for this highly anticipated event. Each team consists of the unit's top four scholars, collaborating and buzzing in to answer questions pertaining to a variety of academic disciplines. Within each round, a moderator will give questions covering topics from either science, history, literature, or mathematics. Some specific topics also include pop culture, sports, and political slang.

"I have to say my favorite topics were about government and politics," said c/LTC Krista Peterson, academic team commander from Kearny High School. "I think it really motivates cadets to educate themselves on matters that almost directly affect their lives."

After three compelling rounds of competing back



Patrick Henry High School's NJROTC Academic Team with first place trophy: (l to r) Valerie Ho (Brigade commander), Anne Nguyen, Truc Nguyen, Andrew Gordon, Robert Mack, Evan Dicker (Brigade personnel officer)

to back, the top four schools were narrowed down to compete for the Academic Bowl Championship Finals. As a result, the final round was headed by Point Loma NJROTC ending in fourth place, Serra NJROTC in third place, Scripps Ranch AFJROTC in second place, and Patrick Henry NJROTC as the first-place winner.

Where every correct answer awards either five or 10 points, Patrick Henry impressively dominated with a total of 175 points, which was at least 85 points higher than the rest of the other competitors.

On June 21, some teams will be anticipating on qualifying for the JLAB Championship — JROTC Academic Bowl on the national level — hosted in Washington,

D.C. As Joint Brigade, we are proud to hold the Academic Bowl every year since it fosters essential aspects of teamwork and camaraderie among cadets. Despite the competitiveness where every team has no hesitation to show off their vast knowledge, battles are friendly, and cadets can appreciate what they have trained and studied for all year.

Special acknowledgments to c/MAJ Dicker, Evan (J-1) for maintaining the Academic Bowl, spending all year long to create hundreds of questions for every Academic Bowl round leading up to the championship finals. A big thank you to Patrick Henry's volunteers for diligently working to guide teams around campus and making sure that the event ran smoothly as well!



PHHS Student of the Month Jonna Carey (Photos courtesy PHHS)

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BEEF HEAD AND HOTCAKES

Restaurant Review

Frank Sabatini Jr.



Throughout all of my serial relationships with San Diego taco shops over the years, neither cabeza or pancakes ever entered into the love affairs — if only because they were never an option.

However, I recently encountered the uncommon offerings at Picante Taqueria Mexican Grill, a little mom-and-pop joint located in a rear section of the Village Square shopping plaza on Mission Gorge Road.

Visiting on a whim with the intention of trying my usual rolled tacos from a place I'd never been, the menu suggested I abandon my routine preferences. I actually ended up doing so twice, having

returned for a second tryst a few days later.

"What is cabeza?" I asked the young, friendly order taker on my first visit when seeing it listed as a protein option for tacos and burritos. In his limited English — and just as I had suspected — he pointed to his head while saying "beef."

I faintly recalled learning of cabeza years ago after noticing it on a few menus in Tijuana and Ensenada. Depending who's cooking it, the roasted beef head can yield everything from the cheeks and tongue, to the eyes, ears and lips. With my taste for adventure running rather strong, I deliberately

didn't ask the staff at Picante Taqueria which parts are used. I instead asked for a sample.

Given graciously to me in a little plastic cup, the meat appeared like traditional shredded beef, perhaps a tad darker in color. If there were eyeballs or ear lobes lurking within, they were incognito in their mulched form.

The flavor immediately struck me as deeper and richer than beef extracted from the neck down. So after polishing off the sample, I opted for the cabeza in a mini taco, which accompanied two others filled separately with pollo asada and carnitas.

Because of cabeza's high oil content, the meat is less prone to turning dry and crusty once it cools to room temperature. I saved the cabeza taco for last in my lineup and it offered a remarkably juicy mouthfeel, much like biting into a succulent roast beef minutes after it leaves the oven.

When I asked the grill cook if he sells a lot of the head meat, he gestured



A tucked-away taco shop known for its mini tacos and breakfasts (Photos by Frank Sabatini Jr.)



A flawless bean and cheese burrito

ambivalently, as if to say, "not really."

The carnitas was equally moist. I'm guessing it may have been spared the "crisping" many places give it on the flat

grill right before serving it. Conversely, the small cubes of pollo asado were dry and overcooked, although flavored

See MEXICAN GRILL page 15 —>



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2018 Mission Times COURIER BEST OF

► **Mexican Grill**, from page 14

impressively with cumin, achiote and citrus.

For all of the mini and regular tacos, as

well as the mulitas (quesadilla-like sandwiches), the shop uses corn tortillas that are made in-house throughout the day. Their pillow-fresh texture is unmistakable.

On my second visit, a breakfast burrito initially

called. But I ended up with a payload of carbs, opting instead for two medium-size pancakes with butter and syrup, and a bean-and-cheese burrito filled with a thick mash of lard-laden pinto beans — exactly how I prefer them.

From what I could see, a specific area of the grill was reserved for cooking the hotcakes, which explained their unclouded flavor. Nary a hint of grease from meat or fried potatoes crept into them. Though not the fluffiest or most dramatic-looking in town, they cured a hankering for something I never expected to see available in a small, unassuming taco shop.

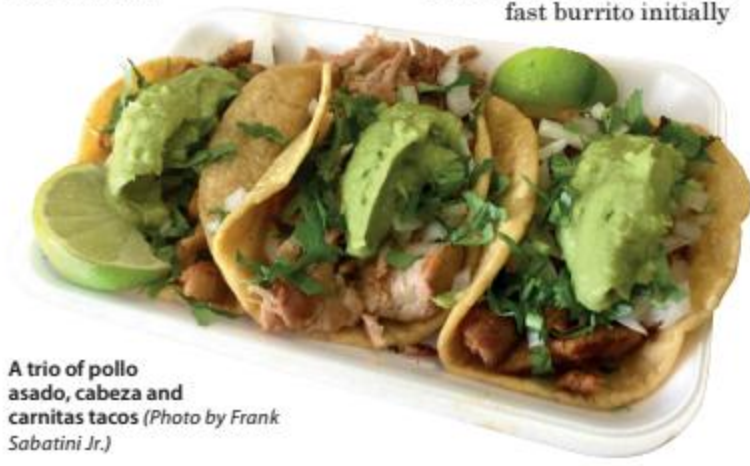
Full breakfast options are available as well, ranging from huevos rancheros and huevos

con nopales to American-style plates of bacon, eggs and potatoes.

In addition, there's also a menu of healthy options such as salads, a veggie burrito using vegetarian-style black beans, and bowls comprising rice, beans and a various proteins. But for this regular consumer of inexpensive Mexican food, it's unlikely I'll return with a

calorie meter in hand. The full-fat stuff I tried here is generally too tasty to pass up.

—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.



A trio of pollo asado, cabeza and carnitas tacos (Photo by Frank Sabatini Jr.)

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iNaturalist Observation of the Month: Golden milkcap

Patricia Simpson

How is everyone enjoying the rainy season? I know I am. Water is life and it's very apparent during a rainy season, especially in our Mediterranean climate landscape. Many things are thriving: weeds abound, insects emerge in numbers, and mushrooms of all sorts pop out of the ground. Contrary to common belief, a mushroom is not a vegetable. It belongs to its own phylum: basidiomycete fungi (Basidiomycota).



Golden milkcap (Photo by Cindy Trubovitz)

To grow, mushrooms need decaying matter on which they feed and lots of moisture. In fact, water is about 92 percent of a mushroom's composition. Mushrooms first develop underground. That underground system is called mycelium. What we see emerging on the surface is the fruiting body, often composed of a stem and a cap. In many mushrooms, under the cap are gills, which harbor the spores. When the fruit or mushroom gets to maturity, the spores will fall to the ground and when moisture comes around again, they will form new mycelium underground. And the cycle continues.

Mushrooms have delighted tummies for ages, but they have also sickened or killed many. You should never consume a wild mushroom unless the identity has been confirmed and its edibility verified. For some mushrooms, such as the golden milkcap (*Lactarius alnicola*) seen in this observation on iNaturalist by ctrubo at bit.ly/2H6nwZy, the nasty taste alone is a deterrent to consumption.

Please note that it is illegal to harvest mushrooms on many public lands and others may require gathering permits. While we are enjoying the rain, grab your camera, snap photos of fungi you encounter and post on iNaturalist!

—Patricia Simpson is a trail guide at Mission Trails Regional Park.■

Kathy Rike

When walking around Lake Murray or Kumeyaay Lake, you may see birds that look like ducks and swim like ducks, but they aren't necessarily ducks. Did you know that not all ducks dive and not all ducks quack?

The seven water birds discussed here are among the ones I have seen on my springtime hikes around the lakes. They are identified by name. Can you guess which ones are ducks and which aren't? Some of their names will give you the answer to this question but others won't.

The American coot is not a duck, although it often swims near ducks. It is a member of the rail family. Its thick, white beak is in stark contrast to its dark body. It dives for food but has lobed feet, rather than webbed feet. Interestingly, this bird seems to run on the water before taking off in flight.

The Canada goose's name is a dead giveaway that it is also not a duck, although it is a part of the same scientific family along with swans. Its appearance is very unlike a duck due to its long neck. Geese have 17 vertebrae in their necks; ducks have fewer.

The gadwall is a duck. Both the males and females are nondescript looking with brownish plumage. You'll find them in the deeper parts of small bodies of water. I saw two in a secluded part of Lake Kumeyaay in the area of the floating bridge, near tall rushes or sedges. They are dabblers rather than divers, getting their food by tipping over to reach vegetation they eat, which is near the water's surface.

The lesser scaup is also a duck. They are winter visitors in San Diego. I spotted them swimming in Lake Murray in March before they migrated north for the summer. They are diving ducks looking for small invertebrates. From a distance without binoculars you can see their distinctive black heads and black tails bookending what looks like a broad band of white on their backs. AllAboutBirds.org states that they "often look like they are doing somersaults or



Pie-billed grebe



Canada goose



Lesser scaup



Gadwall



American coot



Ruddy duck (Photos courtesy MTRP)

other odd acrobatics as they try to pick off the amphipods [small crustaceans] that cling to their belly feathers as they swim through the water."

The mallard is a duck that many people recognize due to the male's bright iridescent green head and neck. This duck is related to almost every breed of domestic duck and is commonly found in ponds and lakes. Mallards are dabblers like gadwalls. They reach the plants they eat by simply tipping over, head first.

The pied-billed grebe is a water bird but not a duck. Like the American coot, its feet are lobed rather than webbed, and

are located near its behind. In fact, grebe means "feet at the buttocks." Due to this positioning it uses its feet almost like a fish's tail while swimming. It doesn't fly well or navigate well on land, but it's an expert diver looking for fish, crustaceans, and invertebrates.

The ruddy duck is a duck, of course. They can be found on both of the lakes in Mission Trails. This duck has a tail that typically sticks up at a 45-ish degree angle. The best view of the tail is from the side, in profile. The angle reminds me of the way a wren or wrenit holds its tail. It seems like the tail is too big

for its body, at least for a duck! According to AllAboutBirds.org, ruddy ducks are sometimes harassed by other water birds including the pied-billed grebe, that attack them from underwater in a behavior aptly called "submarining."

While walking in the park, don't assume all birds you see on the water are ducks. Looks can be deceiving. And when you hear quacking, it is probably a female mallard — the only one in this group of birds that quacks.

—Kathy Rike is a trail guide at Mission Trails Regional Park.■

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Allied Gardens Grantville Community Council news

Shain Haug

The community's plans to support the homeless veterans who are taking up residence at Zephyr (the old Motel 6 on Alvarado Canyon Road) and those who will soon move into Stella (the new development at Twain and Fairmont avenues) are reaching fruition. On Feb. 11, the working group of a dozen or so folks from our churches, the neighborhood, local businesses, People Assisting The Homeless (PATH), and Affirmed Housing completed delivery of collected goods to Zephyr. Even now, early in this venture, the community has offered a considerable supply of household goods in the form of 10 complete "Welcome Home" kits consisting of household goods. About 20 more can be completed, but still needed are basics such as toothpaste, soap, towels, bedsheets, personal hygiene items, kitchen utensils and the like to fill out those baskets. We will keep you advised of new drop-off times at the facility in this monthly article, in our newsletter, and on our website.

March town hall

Our intended speaker for our March town hall meeting was San Diego State University President Adele de la Torre, but she will be attending a meeting of the 23 California State University presidents on that day.

Our next town hall meeting will be on Tuesday, March 26, at 6:30 p.m. at Benjamin

Library (at the corner of Zion Avenue and Glenroy Street).

Thanks to the quick work of Charles Cadwalader, the branch manager of the Homestreet Bank, we will offer a topic that will be most relevant to our Allied Gardens homeowners. Michael Fossler will discuss how reverse mortgages can be a smart and safe way to use home equity as a retirement asset. As a child, Fossler lived in Allied Gardens where he was a Little Leaguer and for 20 years he has resided in San Carlos. For over 25 years, he has worked in the field of mortgage banking. For the past 10 years, he has worked exclusively in reverse mortgages. He will address the town hall meeting on this subject with the same passion that guides his daily work, with a concern for the peace of mind and sense of security that a reverse mortgage can provide.

Quarry inquiry

My apologies for not keeping the community up to date regarding the Superior Readymix quarry, cement, and asphalt operations. As the AGGCC president, I am a de facto member of the working group that deals with the questions of pollution from the quarry and plant operations. This group meets twice a year and I got my first look at this matter a couple of months ago.

The blasting and quarry operations have not been the basis of much concern. The primary issue was dust from the cement and asphalt operations. Response to reports of pollution

is the job of the city under the terms of a conditional use permit and is under the purview of the Air Pollution Control Board.

It appears to me that Superior is in full compliance with those requirements and that it even exceeds those requirements by a twice-daily sweeping of Mission Gorge. However, if anyone has heard about violations, I will follow up on your complaints with Superior and with the appropriate authorities.

SDSU campus plan

So far as the SDSU work on the stadium property is concerned, the environmental impact report process is underway and I think that Navajo Community Planners, Inc. (NCPI) has a handle on it. I have registered AGGCC with SDSU as subscriber of the SDSU newsletter that will cover the development. Upon your request, I will forward those bulletins to you. Let me know your concerns and I will present them to NCPI.

Board of directors

The AGGCC board of directors meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at Benjamin Library, at the corner of Zion Avenue and Glenroy Street. The next meeting after this publication will be on Tuesday, April 2. The public is welcome. Join our board and we will support your passions for the neighborhood. Our communities need you.

—Shain Haug is the president of the Allied Gardens Grantville Community Council. Reach him at aggccshain@yahoo.com. For more information, visit aggccouncil.org.

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PUZZLES

ANSWERS ON PAGE 18

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

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| 62 | | | | | | 63 | | | | 64 | |

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ACROSS

- 1 "Today I ___ man"
- 4 Fabulous fabler: var.
- 8 Serf
- 13 Served perfectly
- 14 Arias
- 15 Flight site
- 16 Standard
- 17 Bounders
- 18 Copland ballet
- 19 Smoker's resolution
- 22 Cure-alls

DOWN

- 10 Welded a baton
- 11 Quarter of four
- 12 The way, in China
- 13 Ms. Boleyn
- 20 Enthroned Madonna painter
- 21 Pod start
- 24 Dialect
- 25 Choir section
- 26 Requires
- 28 Yule visitor

ACROSS

- 40 Bar seat
- 41 Eds. reading matter
- 42 Platte Indian
- 43 Ingrid's firstborn
- 44 Life story, briefly
- 46 I finisher
- 47 Owned
- 48 Member of a certain college
- 52 Couch-potato's resolution

DOWN

- 54 Distribute
- 57 Entre ___
- 58 Surgeonfish's kin
- 59 Common Sense author
- 60 Children
- 61 Wales' symbol
- 62 Praise
- 63 Snick's partner
- 64 Paving material

DOWN

- 1 Nathaniel Benchley's ___ Million
- 2 Thanks, in Tours
- 3 Blended, old style
- 4 Snail
- 5 Flies
- 6 Adjective for shoppe
- 7 Ice-cream choice
- 8 Seraglio
- 9 Piccadilly Circus sight

DOWN

- 10 Rubinstein's Melody
- 11 ___ Bello, Panama
- 32 In the works
- 34 Home owners
- 35 More like a certain duckling
- 37 Dieppe donkey
- 38 ___ oblige
- 43 Golfer's goal

DOWN

- 45 Mysterious
- 47 Hailey novel
- 48 Ooze
- 49 Fungus disorder
- 50 Wickerwork material
- 51 Offensive odor
- 52 Not stereo
- 53 Of the dawn
- 54 Jungle swinger
- 55 Undisciplined
- 56 Ignited

Del Cerro Action Council news

Jay Wilson

Representatives of the All People's Church are planning to have an updated plan for the church property to present to us at our April Del Cerro Action Council (DCAC) meeting. When they present a plan to the city, it will be reviewed and the response usually takes the form of a cycles report. This report will indicate what the city agrees with and what may need additional information. A completed cycles report is what the Navajo Community Planners, Inc. (NCPI) will refer to when they ultimately vote on the project. Please remember that the votes by the NCPI are strictly recommendations to the city.

Refurbishing of the Princess Del Cerro Playground was postponed until May. We will have warmer weather, which will allow any paint to dry much more quickly and allow the project to take no more than one day. This is a joint project spearheaded by the Friends of Del Cerro with initial funding provided by the Del Cerro Action Council. By the time you read this, Kelly Woods, the area manager for the Park and Recreation Department for all

of the Navajo community and Tierrasanta, will have many cubic yards of new woodchips blown into the playground. This will raise the level of the chips by several inches to more than a foot in some areas.

A message from DCAC chair Mark Rawlins

Things seem to be quiet in Del Cerro. However, there have been complaints about dog owners not picking up after their dogs when their dogs go to the bathroom in the neighborhood. I think it's good etiquette and respecting others by not allowing your dog to poop on your neighbors' lawn or on the sidewalk. Your neighbor did not put that lawn in for your dog.

Furthermore, those property owners who invested in artificial grass did not expect to have any dog poop on their lawn. The other day, I saw a

lady walking her dog up on an artificial lawn allowing her dog to poop and then continue to walk on. Unfortunately, she's not the only one that does this. It is great to see people out and about walking with their dogs in the neighborhood. But just be mindful of your neighbors.

If your neighborhood has a parkway (between the sidewalk and the curb), always keep your dog on the parkway and never allow your dog to poop in your neighbors' yard. If your dog does poop, please always pick it up and dispose of it properly. Thank you, and be a good neighbor.

Join us at the next DCAC meeting on Thursday, April 25, 7 p.m. at Temple Emanu-El.

—Jay Wilson is secretary of the Del Cerro Action Council. Visit delcerroactioncouncil.org.

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@sdenn.com

Allied Gardens Library news

Kathryn Johnson

Become a Friend of the Library

Would you like to get more involved in the community? Are you passionate about the library and all we offer? If so, please consider joining the Friends of the Allied Gardens/Benjamin Library. This wonderful group of library supporters works in a variety of ways to provide exceptional programming for our patrons as well as a great library experience for all. If you would like more information, please contact me at johnsonka@sandiego.gov or attend the next meeting on Wednesday, March 27, at 1 p.m. here at the library.

New York Times now available

Thanks to the California State Library, we now offer electronic access to The New York Times from 1851 to present. This resource can be accessed from the "Search Articles and Databases" line in the "I want to..." drop-down menu on our home page. Once accessed, you will need to register with an email address. The California State Library anticipates making this available for the next 18 months.

Free tax help continues

Thanks to the very committed AARP volunteers, we will continue to offer free tax help for low to middle income adults



Tazina won the age 3 to 5 group Library Lovers Month coloring contest. (Photos courtesy Allied Gardens Library)

ages 50 and over. This service is offered on Mondays from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Fridays from 12:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. Assistance is offered on a first come, first served basis. Please note: there will be no tax help on Friday, March 22.

Vegan adventures

Our vegan cooking class, which takes place on alternate months, returns on March 12. This month we invite people to join us for a food-sampling event that includes a variety of appetizers and vegan cake and ice cream for a vegan birthday party. Everyone is sure to enjoy this yummy program with food, music and thoughtful conversation. Tuesday, March 12, at 6 p.m. Please sign up using our online calendar at sandiego.librarymarket.com/.

Understanding Medicare

A local financial advisor will be presenting information about what Medicare offers and how to sign up. Please join us and be sure to bring your questions. Wednesday, March 13 at 5:15p.m. Please register using our online calendar at sandiego.librarymarket.com/.

Preschool gymnastics

Calling all aspiring young gymnasts! The library will host a beginning gymnastics class for children ages 3-5 on Friday, March 15, at 10 a.m. Space is limited so please register via our online calendar.

Thanks for the love

In honor of Library Lovers' Month, the library held an all-ages coloring contest and asked that people include their reason for loving the library. We received lots of colorful entries with great reasons for admiring the library. It seems we are loved for having so many puppy books, being "funner" than home and for having so many books. Congratulations to all of our winners!

—Kathryn Johnson is managing librarian of the Allied Gardens Benjamin Branch Library. ■



New York Times articles going back to 1861 are now available online.

San Carlos Library news

David Ege

The Robotics Showcase Extravaganza 2019 was a great community event that attracted 285 attendees! Thank you to our participating teams the Patrick Henry Patriots, Cajon Park Binary Drag0ns, Lakeside Middle BroncoBots, Magnolia Science Academy NextGen and MagnoBricks, Dailard Mechanical Dolphins, Crescendo, Wizalos, Dapper Robo-Noodles and Creator Critters. The appearance of robot teams from MCAS Miramar and SDPD SWAT entertained the crowd and truly inspired the young robotics teams.

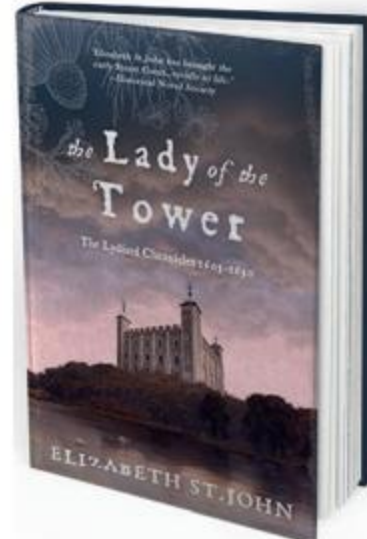
Volunteers needed

The San Carlos Friends of the Library (SCFOL) is looking for new volunteers to help with a variety of activities, including sorting donated books and working at the monthly



Author Elizabeth St. John will discuss her latest novel on March 22. (Courtesy San Carlos Library)

book sale. Last year, SCFOL members donated a total of 4,707 hours to support the San Carlos Branch Library. We are grateful for the devotion and support. To join in on the fun, leave your name and contact information at the library for SCFOL volunteer chair, Bill Bischoff.



Free drivers tune-up course

Mark your calendars for Friday, March 15 at 2 p.m. for "Age Well, Drive Smart," a presentation by the California Highway Patrol. In this free,

See SC LIBRARY page 21 →

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Obituary

City Councilmember Judy McCarty remembered

Former San Diego City Councilmember Judy McCarty passed away Monday, March 4 after an extended illness. Her health had been slowly declining over the last several months. She passed away peacefully Monday night with all her family at her side.

McCarty, 78, represented District 7 on the San Diego City Council from 1985 to 2000.

"Judy's legacy on the City Council was one of advocating for libraries, infrastructure and fiscal prudence. Perhaps her proudest achievement was her work on behalf of Mission Trails Regional Park, including the opening of the Visitor Center she helped make a reality," said former Councilmember Jim Madaffer, who served as her chief of staff and succeeded her on the City Council in 2000.

"San Diego has lost one of the great ones," said John Kern, who served as her first chief of staff. "Perpetually underestimated, she served four terms on the City Council, longer than anyone else since the City Charter was enacted in 1932. She was a tireless fighter for smart growth, neighborhoods, libraries and her great love - Mission Trails Regional Park. She will be long remembered in the hearts of those who knew her," Kern said.

Aimee Faucett, chief of staff to Mayor Kevin Faulconer said, "Judy McCarty was the first elected official I worked for. I started as an intern in 1996. She taught me some of the most important political lessons. Strength, conviction, integrity, community. Rest In Peace, Councilmember McCarty."

"Judy McCarty had strong roots representing her communities with a no-nonsense, plain-spoken, down-to-earth



Judy McCarty (Courtesy Friends of the San Carlos Library)

style. She was a consistent and tireless advocate for our libraries," said former Councilmember Byron Wear.

McCarty got her start in politics serving on Navajo Community Planners. She was elected chair of the planning group. It was during this time she was hired by former State Assemblyman and Senator Larry Stirling as a district representative. In 1985, while serving on Stirling's staff, she decided to run for a vacant seat on the City Council when then-Councilman and former Mayor Dick Murphy was appointed as a judge.

Even after her terms as a City Councilmember, McCarty was still active in politics as a member of the Navajo Canyon Republican Women, Federated. She was also a regular contributor to the Mission Times Courier, writing on behalf of the Republican Women.

Born in Hammond, Indiana, McCarty married Curtis McCarty in 1962 and together they have two children, Kate Mount of Denver and Dwight McCarty of Campbell, CA.

Services are set for Saturday March 16, 2019 at San Carlos United Methodist Church at 11 a.m.■

► SC Library, from page 20

one-hour class, participants will tune up driving skills and receive a certificate of completion, which may result in a discount from their auto insurance carrier.

Local author

We are pleased to welcome Elizabeth St. John to discuss her novel, "The Lady in the Tower," on Friday, March 22, from 2-3 p.m. In the process of delving into her own family history, St. John discovered ancestral memoirs that inspired her to begin writing "The Lydiard Chronicles." Through this series, she hopes to pique readers' interest in their own ancestral histories, as well as gain an appreciation of the times in which they lived.

Enchanting photography exhibit

Local artist Denise Strahm will exhibit her new series, "Alternate Treeality," comprised of surreal tree-focused photo montages between March 4-April 4 in the **Winer Family Community Room & Art Gallery**. Please join us on March 16 between noon and

2 p.m. for the artist reception. Refreshments will be served.

Library Worker Appreciation Day

The San Carlos Friends of the Library would like to invite the community to come and celebrate our library staff on Wednesday, April 10, from 4-6 p.m. This event is sponsored by the Friends of the San Diego Public Library 40th Anniversary Celebration during National Library Week, April 8-11, with the theme "Libraries = Strong Communities." Refreshments will be served.

Challenge Island: Maracanã Stadium

Challenge Island returns to the San Carlos Branch Library on Wednesday, March 27, from 4-5:15 p.m. Children ages 8-12 will use creativity, critical thinking and social skills as they take an imaginary trip to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil to play World Cup football. They will then design and create a World Cup football stadium and play their game in a Challenge Island Football Championship. This popular science- and engineering-based program fills up quickly, so please register early by calling 619-527-3430.

Minecraft

Kids ages 9-12 can employ their technology skills on Thursday, March 28, from 1:30-3 p.m. Enjoy coding your own aquarium and coral reef habitat and finding sunken ships to create a story — no need to bring a laptop. Presented by Microsoft. Registration is required. Sign up at sandiego.gov/team.

Dates to Remember

- March 14, 12:30-2 p.m.: Library Book Club
- March 20, 4-5:30 p.m.: San Carlos Friends of the Library monthly meeting.
- April 1: CLOSED — César Chávez Day
- April 3, 6:30-8 p.m.: San Carlos Area Council Meeting. Members of the community are invited to attend.
- April 5, 1:30-3:30 p.m.: Friends of the Library only, Used Book Pre-Sale. Join SCFOL during the sale.
- April 6, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.: SCFOL Monthly Used Book Sale
- April 11, 12:30-2 p.m.: Library Book Club

—David Ege is managing librarian of the San Carlos Branch Library.■

► News briefs, from page 5

currently living in homes without a working smoke alarm.

One of the best ways seniors can improve their chances of escaping a residential fire is by making sure their home is equipped with an operating smoke alarm. The Burn Institute is working towards ensuring that every senior's home has just that. Their Senior Smoke Alarm Program provides seniors with free smoke alarms and installations. Screened and trained community partners and volunteers assist the Burn Institute year-round in installing the free alarms.

To qualify for this lifesaving program, you must be 62 years or older and own your own home. To sign up for this program or see if you are eligible, call the Burn Institute at 858-541-2277 or email smokealarm@burninstitute.org.

Smoke alarms save lives. Having a working smoke alarm in your home reduces your chances of perishing in a

house fire by 50 percent. Smoke alarms should be installed in every bedroom, outside each sleeping area and on every floor of your home. "In a fire, seconds count," said Susan Day, Burn Institute executive director in a press release. "Roughly half of home fire deaths result from fires reported at night between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. when most people are asleep. Home smoke alarms can alert people to a fire before it spreads, giving seniors enough time to get out."

Another invaluable fire safety tool each household should have is a fire escape plan. It can take less than two minutes for toxic fumes to overcome a

child or an adult and knowing the most direct route out of your home can help save your life. To create your escape plan, identify two ways out of every room in your home and know the most direct route to outside. Set a designated meeting place that is a safe distance from your residence and is stationary, such as the light-pole or mailbox. Once you get out of the house, stay out! After you have created your escape plan, it should be practiced with all members of your family at least once a year. The Burn Institute offers free fire escape planning guidelines and grids at burninstitute.org.■

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Mobile Home Connection presents this beautifully remodeled 2 BR 2BA home is located in The Cliffs Senior Mobile Home Park with amazing views overlooking Admiral Baker golf course and Mission Gorge. The home has recently been painted inside and outside, energy efficient dual pane windows, security doors, awesome wrap around deck and huge custom built shed.

Open floor plan, vaulted ceilings, ceiling fans, LED light fixtures, water resistant vinyl plank flooring and tasteful carpet are just the beginning. The very functional kitchen has stainless steel appliances, new cabinets and beautiful quartz counter tops! The large utility room has a new washer and dryer that convey.

Bathrooms have new lights, cabinets, flooring, fixtures and shower glass doors. Both bedrooms have custom built in cabinets. LAH9968

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San Carlos Area Council news

Patricia Mooney

Chief Deputy Officer of Infrastructure Johnnie Perkins joined us at our December meeting of the San Carlos Area Council (SCAC) and gave a presentation about the San Diego Pure Water Program. At that time, he invited all community members to tour the Pure Water facility.

Early in February, three of us – SCAC President Mark Schulze, his father, Rolf, and I all joined Sarah Lemons, community outreach specialist, on a walk through the complex. Lemons first showed us a PowerPoint presentation in the

conference room and then we all proceeded step by step along the water filtration process.

The facility will soon be expanding to accommodate all the water expected to flow through it into San Diego homes. Phase 1 includes several projects that will clean recycled water to produce 30 million gallons of high-quality purified water per day, beginning in 2023. Additional phases will roll out beyond 2023, delivering one-third of San Diego's water supply by 2035.

We all came away with more of an understanding of how San Diego will become more self-sufficient with our water supply relying less on

water imported from the Colorado River and the Sacramento Delta. At the end of the tour we all tasted the purified water and were impressed by how good it tasted.

The recent rains have filled a few rain buckets and our local wilderness areas are wearing a lovely shade of green just in time for St. Patrick's Day. We've seen the yellow-orange California poppies popping off the banks of Interstate 8. The San Diego River flowing through Mission Trails Regional Park is at a high volume and there are waterfalls



The Cannabis Nurses Network held a conference at the Harbor Island Sheraton to discuss the benefits of medical marijuana. (Photo by Patricia Mooney)

at both the dam and in Oak Canyon south of the Highway 52 bridge. It is nice to see families with children and pets (on leashes) enjoying the amenities of our beautiful park.

I have heard a few complaints from hikers who do not appreciate recreationists playing loud music on their devices. I agree that the sounds of nature are what most of us appreciate, especially the melody of flowing water. If you'd rather hear a soundtrack then please use your earbuds and be considerate of others who may not appreciate death metal on a sunny San Diego day.

And speaking of green, President Schulze and I spent two days as a video crew at the Cannabis Nurses Network Conference at the Sheraton on Harbor Island. While there, we learned a lot of essential information about the medicinal qualities of the cannabis plant.

It is a fact that nurses are the most respected of professions. To enter a room full of 200 nurses from all over the country who are advocating the use of cannabis for the medical needs of their patients is paradigm-shifting. Many of them became cannabis nurses after suffering catastrophic injury themselves and subsequently discovering the benefits of cannabis.

San Diego mayoral candidate Barbara Bry gave the opening remarks. Several vendors there marketed CBD products for pain management. I tried the Baskin transdermal cream for my inflamed arthritic shoulders and the relief was almost immediate.

One of the main themes of the conference was the raging opioid addiction issue. Several RNs spoke about how cannabis is certainly a gateway drug – a gateway away from opioids. This issue affects many seniors who no longer want to pop pills to feel better. If you're interested in learning more about this issue, I recommend Googling the "endocannabinoid system" and "cannabis." And for good measure, check out the Cannabis Nurses Network right here in San Diego. One of the cannabis nurses will speak to the SCAC at a future meeting. We'll let you know when that will be.

Our next SCAC meeting will be Wednesday, April 3 at 6:30-8 p.m. at the San Carlos Branch Library, 7265 Jackson Drive. Please join us to hear reports from our local state, county and city representatives.

—Patricia Mooney is vice president of the San Carlos Area Council. Have a San Carlos story to tell? Email patty@crystalpyramid.com. ■

► Dinner event, from page 8

Please make your reservations early by calling 858-273-2500 or email RSVPwcn@crystalpyramid.com. Make your checks payable to RWCNC and mail to 2295 Needham Road, #4, El Cajon, CA 92020. We expect a large turnout for this event so please reserve your spot early. We will not be accepting credit cards.

Former state Senator Joel Anderson was the speaker at our March meeting held at the Brigantine La Mesa, and he did a great job of informing us on the details of the winning strategy for Republicans in 2020. Jessica Patterson, the newly elected chairperson of the California Republican Party, is making registering Republican voters one of her highest priorities. There is a lot we can do as individuals to help her with that objective. This is the time to get involved and donate time and effort to put Republicans back in charge in Sacramento.

If you are not thrilled with the idea of an unprotected

border and single payer health care, then you can't afford to sit idly at home just complaining at what the majority party is doing. Get involved, and one good way is to become a member of RWCNC. Please join us for dinner in April at St. Dunstan's at 5 p.m. and learn more about us. If you can't make that date, our next meeting will be 11 a.m. on May 9 at the Brigantine in La Mesa when Susan Shelby from the Howard Jarvis Tax Association will be our speaker.

Reservations are required and the cost is \$25 for the full course lunch. Cash and checks are accepted, but no credit cards. For more information on our activities, please visit our website rwcnavajocanyon.org and check us out on Facebook at Republican Women of California-Navajo Canyon. Other questions, please call or text Marjie at 619-990-2791.

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

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COMMUNITY AND ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT CALENDAR

ONGOING EVENTS



'10 out of 12'
Through March 31
Playwright Anne Washburn's newest, most adventurous work embarks on a remarkable trip into the backstage world of a technical rehearsal. Don a private headset and you'll hear a near-perfect recreation of what goes on behind the scenes, complete with backstage chatter, opening night jitters, potential crises looming large, and human stories unfolding. \$22. 5915 Severin Drive, La Mesa. Tickets and showtimes available at bit.ly/2SYGOGA.



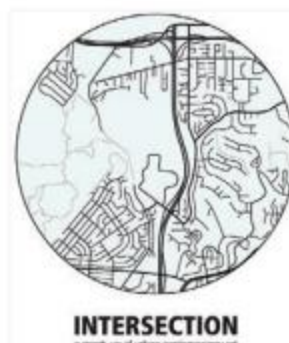
Mary Poppins
Through March 16
One of the most popular Disney movies of all time is capturing hearts in a whole new way: as a brand-new Broadway musical! Based on the books by P.L. Travers and the classic Walt Disney film, Disney and Cameron Mackintosh's "Mary Poppins" delighted audiences for over 2,500 performances and received nominations for nine Olivier and seven Tony Awards, including Best Musical. See it now live at Encore! Theatre. \$12. 9620 Campo Road. Tickets and showtimes at bit.ly/2IpdFQB.

and roll. Tickets \$15. 8800 Grossmont College Drive, El Cajon. Purchase tickets online at bit.ly/2J5H038.



Banda MS
The great big Banda from Mazatlán returns to San Diego where they will perform at Viejas Arena. Join Banda MS as they take the stage with the show starting at 8:30 p.m. Tickets starting at \$39. Purchase tickets at bit.ly/2IQHp9I.

for children ages five and under geared toward getting kids excited about reading. Each event is free and includes story time featuring our book of the month, playtime with the imagination playground, and a free book for every child to add to their home library. Begins at 10 a.m. 6845 University Ave.



Intersection
Through Apr. 25
This group exhibition at Grossmont College will showcase the diverse and innovative movement of urban contemporary art in San Diego. With the intention to create awareness of this relatively new genre, this exhibit featuring paintings, drawings, photographs, and site-specific murals will show how street art and graffiti have crossed over and influenced other mediums of fine art. Located in the Hyde art gallery, a reception will also be held on opening night Mar. 21 from 6-9 p.m. Free. 8800 Grossmont College Drive, El Cajon.



SilverMine
Catch local classic rock revival act SilverMine for back to back shows on March 22 and 23. See them at the Library Tavern, 7459 Mission Gorge Road, on March 22 at 8:30 p.m. and again at Pal Joey's, 5147 Waring Road, the next night at 9 p.m. Both shows 21+ only and have no cover.



Family Read & Play Day
Kroc Center Family Read & Play Days are monthly events



1000 Lights
The 1000 Lights water lantern festival returns this year at Santee Lakes recreational preserve, where thousands of attendees are expected to decorate and sail their own water lanterns. Festival activities include live music, food trucks and local vendors, bingo with prizes, field games, and more. Event will run from 4-8 p.m. Tickets \$25. 9310 Fanita Parkway, Santee. Tickets available at bit.ly/2Tng82v.



Spring Break Camp
The Junior Achievement of San Diego County will hold its first-ever Spring Break Camp in March. Designed for elementary and middle school students, campers will enjoy an exciting week that will jump start their entrepreneurship spirit and help them plan for career and financial success. Through daily lessons, hands-on activities, and games campers will use critical-thinking skills as they learn how to get a job, start a business, manage personal finances and explore career paths. Registration is

open for a single or multiple days, as well as the full week. \$50 per day or \$255 for the full week. Register online at bit.ly/2ISb81x.



Looks Better on Me
Join Looks Better on Me consignment as they celebrate their five years anniversary at their shop. Festivities will include live music, drinks, and raffle prizes. 2-6 p.m. Free. 6940 Alvarado Road.



Nature's Impressions
The Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation (MTRP) will present a fine art exhibition featuring award winning watercolor artists Thomas Franco, Ralph Kingery and Katie Somers. They invite the public to a reception honoring the artists held on Apr. 7 from 2-4 p.m. The exhibit will be on display from March 30 to May 10. 1 Father Junipero Serra Trail.

FEATURED EVENTS



Friends of the Library 50th
Join the Friends of the La Mesa Library to commemorate its 50th anniversary. The Shirhouse Band will kick off the event at 11 a.m. followed by crafts and face painting for the kids at noon. Local singer-songwriter Sara Petite will take the stage at 1 p.m. Bring your family to enjoy this free event! 8074 Allison Ave., La Mesa.



Celtic Concert
Many-Strings will perform a delightful selection of Irish, Scottish, and Welsh melodies at Hooley's Irish Pub in Grossmont Center. Jamie will perform on the hammered dulcimer and Chris will accompany her on guitar. The lightly narrated concert will feature the captivating music of Turlough O'Carolan, the famous blind Irish harper. It will also include such titles as "The Ships Are Sailing," "The Skye Boat Song," and "Danny Boy."



Elements of Nature Photography
Join photographer Gerry Tietje, whose pictures have

been featured in such publications as Birds and Blooms, at Mission Trails Regional Park as he presents a lecture titled "The Technical Side of Nature Photography." Learn how to use your camera's settings and hardware to their full potential and take professional quality photos. There will as well be a field portion that will give attendees the opportunity to put what they've learned into practice. Tickets \$10. Tietje's work will be on display at the MTRP visitor center through March 29. Reserve tickets at bit.ly/2Tn2sob.



Spring Awakening
Through March 23
This Tony award winning musical opens at Grossmont University's Stagehouse Theatre for eight shows over two weekends. Winner of the best musical category, "Spring Awakening" explores the transition to adulthood through a fusion of morality, sexuality, and rock

RECURRING EVENTS

Wednesdays
Santee Farmers Market
The Santee farmers market has begun its new hours this month and is open every Wednesday from 3-7 p.m. Located at the corner of Mast and Carlton Hills boulevards, this outdoor market has fresh local produce, baked goods, and florals available for purchase.

Saturdays
Movies at the Library
Each Saturday the College-Rolando Library shows a selection of children's and family-friendly movies from 4-6 p.m. Bring the kids to watch while you peruse or

sit and enjoy the movie as well! Free. 6600 Montezuma Road.

Sundays
Traveling Stories
Visit Grossmont Center each Sunday for an interactive story time for kids. Kids visit the StoryTent, pick out a book that interests them, and then read it out loud to a volunteer. The volunteer asks engaging questions that help the child build reading comprehension and critical thinking skills all while earning book bucks to trade for cool prizes. Free. 5500 Grossmont Center Drive, La Mesa.

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For details, visit mthelixpark.org



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Kiwanis Club of Grantville-Allied Gardens
San Diego Fire Rescue Foundation
San Diego Project Heart Beat
Allied Community Gardens
Mt. Helix Park Foundation