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The Navajo Canyon trailhead at Adobe Falls Road may soon be the staging ground for trail and habitat improvements. (Photo by Jeff Clemetson)

## Plan to restore Navajo Canyon gains steam

By JEFF CLEMETSON |MIIssơ Tines Courier
As a coastal city, San Diego is best known abroad for its beaches. But locals know it is also full of wonderful urban and suburban neighborhoods intertwined between mountains, foothills and canyons.
For outdoor nature enthusiasts, the Navajo area is best known for
its proximity to the expansive Mission trails Regional Park. But there is another, more niche, local outdoor space that is about to get some long overdue attention Navajo Canyon.

## NAVAJO CANYON

ENHANCEMENT PLAN
A plan is currently underway to enhance trails and restore habitat
in Navajo Canyon, which runs north eastward from its main entrance along Adobe Falls Road. It is part of a project led by San Diego Canyonlands and funded by the Coastal Conservancy to create enhancement plans for 12 canyons in the city of San Diego, said SD Canyonlands director Eric Bowlby.
Right now, the Navajo Canyon Enhancement Plan is wrapping

SEE NAVAJO CANYON, Page 4

## CPG reforms pass committee vote

## By KENDRA SITTON and JEFF CLEMETSON

 Misson Thies CourierThe City Council's Land Use and Housing Committee voted to reform community planning groups (CPGs) on Dec. 5 that includes revisions from a maximum length of meetings to how elections are run. David Smith, who chairs the Navajo Community Planners, Inc., the planning group for the Navajo neighborhoods, said the "general consensus of the reforms is positive to NCPI members."

SEE CPG REFORMS, Page 3

(I to r) NCPI board chair David Smith, board member Robert Weichelt, vice chair Matt Adams, and board member Dan Smith. The proposed reforms are mostly supported by the NCPI board. (File photo)


Get up to date on local events Page 21

## NEWS BRIIEFS

## HOMELESS COUNT SEEKS

 VOLUNTEERSThe Regional Task Force on the Homeless conducts an annual count and survey of homeless individuals throughout San Diego County called We All Count for a oneday snapshot of where the region's unsheltered neighbors are living. This is an engaged count to meet them where they are at.

San Diego County's annual Point-in-Time Count campaign helps the Regional Task Force to better understand the state of homelessness in our region n order to help individuals, veterans and families leave the streets. This year, that day is Thursday, Jan. 23. Volunteers meet starting at 3:30 a.m. and head out for counting from 4-8 a.m. at most deployment sites.

This effort has involved 1,600 volunteers countywide in the past, but this year more volunteers are being requested for a thorough count. Organizers describe the volunteer experience as "a great way to serve the community as it gives a voice to them and helps direct critical funding for housing and services."
To sign up, visit the Regional Task Force on the Homeless page for We All Count at bit. ly/35kOYTO.
For questions, reach out to PITC@rtfhsd.org.

## CRUSADERS SOCCER CLUB

 TO HOST TRYOUTSCrusaders Soccer Club's (CSC) recreational spring soccer season begins April 1 Players, born between 2005 and 2016 can be registered through Jan. 15 (there is a late registration fee beginning Jan. 16) for the recreational spring

SEE NEWS BRIEFS, Page 5

## CONTACT US

Editorial
(858) 270-3103 $\times 130$
jeff@sdnews.com
Advertising
(858) 270-3103 $\times 118$
hfine@sdnews.com
www.sdnews.com
San Diego Community Newspaper Group


## New community market opens in Lake Murray area

By JEFF CLEMETSON |La Mesa Courier

Good things are starting to brew in the Lake Murray area of La Mesa.
On Dec. 7, Brew Coffee Spot, 6101 Lake Murray Blvd., hosted the "Brew Holiday Market" - a


Even the rain couldn't keep the holiday cheer away from vendors at the Brew Holiday Market. (Courtesy Tara Van Sickle)
crafts market in the parking lot next to the coffee shop that attracted vendors and local residents despite a rainfall that persisted throughout the event.
"It was pouring and it was so busy. It was awesome," said Tara Van Sickle, who was both
a vendor and an organizer of the event. "Customers would walk by and you could see they were happy about the vibe."
The market did so well, that Brew Coffee Spot owner Joe Paraiso and Van Sickle have decided to make it a monthly event called the Brew Community Market. The new market, which will be held on the first Saturday of the month with the exception of January and July, when the market will be held on the second Saturday, is an opportunity to fill a need for community events.
"The whole idea is, this part of La Mesa and San Carlos and Lake Murray area, there's really nothing going on and there are so many people here and there are people in the community that just wish something would start happening over here. So that's where we come in," Paraiso said.
Although the monthly markets will mark the first regular events in Brew Coffee Spot's parking lot, they are not the first.
In the recent past, the lot has hosted two car shows - a classic car and bike show and a Volkswagen enthusiast show.
"We had a pretty big turnout for both of them," Paraiso said, and credited the ample parking and the proximity to his shop and others in the shopping center for the success of the events
"People come out here, they walk around, check stuff out, buy


Tara Van Sickle and Joe Paraiso (Photo by Jeff Clemetson)
stuff and then come in for a cup of coffee. But we're really going to help everybody in the shopping center. It's not just a selfish thing. We want to bring people to the shopping center."
At the Dec. 7 market, despite the rain, the community showed overwhelming support for the 17 vendors that sold everything from handmade holiday decorations and gifts to jewelry, clothing, essential oils, candies and more.

One woman crocheted actual little plaid ornaments - they were so cute. She actually sold out of everything she brought," Van Sickle said, adding that a local school even raised money with a gift-wrapping station.

The next market will be held on Jan. 11, and Paraiso and Van Sickle expect it will do even better than the first as the word gets out and hopefully the weather improves. The space for the market can hold up to 20 or so vendors, so there is room for a few more, Van Sickle said, adding that the vendors in the first market were mostly locals and customers of the coffee shop.
For more information about upcoming events at Brew Coffee Spot, including the Brew Community Markets, visit brewcoffeespot.com.
-Reach editor Jeff Clemetson at jeff@sdnews.com.


## CPG reforms

continved from Page 1

The reforms come after a city audit, a Grand Jury report and Circulate San Diego's Democracy in Planning all raised serious concerns about how the groups are run. In response, a task force was formed that created 33 recommendations on how to improve the groups. Those recommendations were voted on by CPGs throughout the region as well as the Community Planners Committee before being brought to the San Diego City Council.
The advisory groups are filled with elected members who volunteer to weigh in on land-use issues in their neighborhood. They are meant to be the lowest rung of democracy, but critics worry they are often inaccessible to marginalized groups. Research has shown CPGs skew whiter, wealthier and older than the neighborhoods they represent. In addition, they are often filled almost exclusively with homeowners, even in areas where the majority of people rent. On a basic level, homeowners and renters have different concerns when looking at new developments - one of the main purposes of CPGs. A typical renter might favor bringing in developments that keep rent down by adding more housing stock, while a typical homeowner might favor keeping developments out that could potentially bring down their property value.
"Planning Groups cannot represent their community if they do not look like their community," said Maya Rosas, director of policy at Circulate San Diego, in a press conference before the vote. To that end, the reforms include creating a distinct category between renters and homeowners and reserving at least one seat for renters to be represented on the board.
If the reforms are enacted, members of the CPG boards will have to fill out a demographic survey and termed-out members must wait two years to be elected again. In addition, a compromise was reached that in order to qualify to run for the group, a person only needs to attend one CPG meeting in the past 12 months.
CPGs have seen little support from the city of San Diego in recent years. Few have staff from the Planning Department assigned to attend and answer questions. Even fewer have representatives from the City Attorney's office ensuring the group is following the Brown Act - which means any question about the specifics of a project or the legality of an action requires significant discussion with officials not in attendance, sometimes delaying the process.
The new reforms include directing the Planning Department to closely monitor CPG actions and provide timely guidance to preclude requests for inappropriate project additions or modifications. The Planning Department is also tasked with providing resources
to improve recruiting that could result in more diverse CPG membership. The city attorney will also be more involved in conducting disciplinary reviews if a CPG violates the Brown Act.
There will also be more transparency within CPG groups if the reforms are passed by the full City Council as the changes include deadlines on putting documents such as minutes, agendas, and rosters in a centralized location available for the public. Project review recommendations and member applications will also be recorded. It will also be explicit that groups are allowed to use social media, in accordance with the Brown Act.

Another major aim of the re forms is increasing training for members of CPGs. Instead of just new members going through training, all members would be trained annually on the Brown Act, CEQA Review, and the city's development review process. Some CPGs said this would put an undue burden on members, but the recommendations passed 4-0.
One group in favor of the changes are developers, with several speaking out about issues they faced getting project recommendations from CPGs at a public hearing before the vote. With each CPG being vastly different, getting projects past them was described as "shaking a magic eight ball." Intentionally or unintentionally, CPGs can hold up projects or even shut them down by drawing out the process of giving recommendations. The cost of delays is then passed on to homebuyers and renters, according to the de velopers who spoke. The reforms would standardize the process of making recommendations and impose deadlines so developers can get community input early on in the planning stage and not have to repeatedly return before the group. While the committee over whelmingly supported many of the recommendations, a plan to make CPG members file economic interest forms was sent back to staff. Council member Chris Ward spoke out strongly against volunteers being forced to fill out the forms required by the Political Reform Act, as small mistakes could incur major fines and the forms themselves are complicated and burdensome.

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That reform was also ques tioned by NCPI board members. "There were some mixed emotions about that one, if you can imagine," Smith said, adding that the board felt the rule was a bit onerous because although there is some weight to CPG decisions, the board members' recommendations are only advisory
A recommendation from the task force to tape, either via audio or video, any land-use items on the agenda failed as council members worried the city would not provide the tools to do this and it would be too difficult to have volunteers do. Another recommendation that would have disbanded a CPG or forced it to merge with another CPG if it failed to meet a quorum for three months in a row was changed so the CPG in question would be considered inactive, and would have to complete specific steps to regain its active status.

After Council member Vivian Moreno opposed the original wording on the grounds that no community should be without representation, she pointed out Barrio Logan, the neighborhood south of Downtown quickly undergoing gentrification, has only had a CPG for a few years - long after it began going through significant changes.
For the Navajo area, the NCPI board has historically been filled with members that have lots of expertise in the area of city planning, construction, real estate and other aspects of localized decision making - a history that has been recognized by the city's task force.
"We head from our planner and from the task force that Navajo is a very well run CPG and they've modelled us to other CPGs as the proper way to run one," Smith said, adding that the NCPI board is overall happy with the changes to the CPG policies
In a way, the tighter the rules there are related to CPGs, the more legitimate they make them," he said.
Next, the approved reforms will go before the full City Council and City Attorney Mara Elliott for review.
-Kendra Sitton can be reached at kendra@sdnews.com. Editor Jeff Clemetson can be reached at jeff@sdnews.com

## Why Homeowners Leave Thousands Behind When Selling Their Homes

San Diego - A new report has just been released which reveals 7 costly mistakes that most homeowners make when selling their home, and a 9 Step System that can help you sell your home fast and the most amount of money.
This industry report shows clearly how the traditional ways of selling homes have become increasingly less and less effective in today's market. The fact of this matter is that fully three quarters of homesellers don't get what they want for their homes and become disillusioned and worse financially disadvantaged when they put their homes on the market.

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

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Navajo Canyon
CONTINUED FROM Page 1
up gathering input from various stakeholders along the canyon on what can be done to improve the area.
"Do we need any trails, do we need any signage, are there
danger points, do we need a bridge - various things like that and the community provides the input,' Bowlby said.

Prior to the stakeholder meetings, SD Canyonlands went door-to-door in surrounding neighborhoods to invite residents on a guided tour of Navajo Canyon.

## BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

ChEARS
At the ChEARS hearing center, you will always be seen by Audiologists. Our Doctors of Audiology will evaluate your hearing needs and guide you through the proper care and treatment. With over 32 years of combined hearing health care experience, Dr. Faillace and Dr. Kearney see patients from 2 months of age to $100+$ years of age. They provide services that include hearing evaluations, tinnitus consultation and treatment, hearing aids sales and service for adults and children. We also have the expertise in filting implantable hearing devices to include Cochlear implants and Bone Anchored Hearing Aid (BAHA). Because the hearing center is within the SENTA clinic, most medical conditions related to the Ears, Nose or Throat can be addressed in house. They are able to provide comprehensive Audiological and medical health care within a one stop center! Put your hearing health care in their hands, you will be glad you did!
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"We do that for a number of reasons," he said. "Sometimes we do that just to build a friends group to support the city in stewardship. This year we did that and also went door-to-door to discuss a need for enhancements, restoration and improvements in the canyon. So it's a real grassroots community outreach effort that we make to create a list of stakeholders."

So far there have been three meetings with stakeholders to gather input for the plan. At the next meeting, which Bowlby predicts will be held in mid to late February, the draft plan will be presented. But, he said, residents shouldn't expect drastic changes like BMX courses or suspension bridges. Because Navajo Canyon is located in a habitat species conservation area and is protected, uses in the area are limited.
"We're allowed to have access to the canyon, reasonable access, so if we were to propose a new trail somewhere in Navajo Canyon, the maximum impact would be 4 foot wide and anything that would be impacted outside of that would need to [be] restored back to natural habitat," Bowlby said.
However, the plan also does not include any new trails at the moment.
"Some constituents that live on the top end of the north ridge of Navajo Canyon had indicated they would like to have a trail, but the ranger said it is super steep and would be super difficult to maintain if we built one on such a
steep slope," Bowlby said. "Navajo doesn't have any new trails in the plan right now, but improvements to existing trails is definitely on the agenda."
Bowlby added that new trails could be considered if stakeholders come to a consensus to build them. "It is the Navajo community's plan in the end," he said.
However, SD Canyonlands does have some control on what it seeks funding for and is not obligated to fulfill the plan. "We are just creating a conceptual plan based on community stakeholder input."
Besides improving the existing trails, the plan will include minor improvements like signage and major improvements like restoration of habitat.
"There are somewhere around 500 palm trees in the canyon, which are not native, and have taken over the stream corridor and one of the things we'll do to restore the canyon would be to remove those palm trees."
Returning Navajo Canyon to its natural state will have many positive effects.
"Rehabilitating native habitats at Navajo Canyon, which are within the city's Multiple Habitat Planning Area (MHPA), will attract more native wildlife," said Carey Goldstein, a senior ranger with the Parks and Recreation Service. "This includes some species covered by the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) such as the Least Bell's Vireo. These birds enjoy the native willow trees that are often
displaced by invasive palm trees Another bird which may benefit from the project is the California Gnatcatcher, an endangered species which only lives in [San] Diegan coastal sage scrub plant communities like those found in the canyon."

Goldstein added that beautifying the canyon by removing invasive trees and plants will provide a more aesthetically pleasing experience for canyon users, which he estimates is currently about 100 people a day - a mix of hikers, dog walkers and mountain bikers.
Once a date is set for the next meeting where the draft plan will be introduced, SD Canyonlands will make an outreach effort to share the plan with neighbors, local planning groups and other outlets to inform residents about the meeting. If there is a consensus on the plan, the next step will be to go after funding to implement the plan - which SD Canyonlands and the city have had some success in getting.

Another canyon enhancement project is currently underway in nearby Ruffin Canyon, where SD Canyonlands developed the plan and construction on rehabbing trails and the natural habitat is now ongoing. Most recently, 300 palm trees were removed from Ruffin Canyon by helicopter.

For more information on San Diego Canyonlands, visit sdcanyonlands.org.
-Reach editor Jeff Clemetson at jeff@sdnews.com.


A map showing some of the draft plans for trail improvements in Navajo Canyon (Courtesy SD Canyonlands)


## News briefs

continued from Page 1
season which begins on Sunday, March 1, through April 26 (no games on Easter Sunday). For more information and to register a player, visit bit.ly/39KhtWf.
Crusaders Soccer is also inviting all soccer players to tryouts for the upcoming 2020-21 competitive season. Under the direction of Rene Miramontes, director of coaching, the mission of CSC competitive soccer is to provide a fun, safe, and professional soccer environment. The Competitive Elite and Academy divisions are continuing and have expanded. CSC will also have players participating in the National Premier League.
Below is the tryout information for each age group along and a URL to register for the proper tryout session. For any other competitive soccer questions, please contact Rene Miramontes at 619-807-2951 or email: rene.miramontes@crusaderssoccer.org. All tryouts for boys and girls are from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Pershing Middle School on the following dates:

- 2007 and 2008 players - Jan. 11 and 12
- 2006 and 2009 players - Jan. 18 and 19
- 2010 to 2013 players - Jan. 25 and 26.
Please bring shin guards, a ball and plenty of water. Players should arrive 30 minutes early so parents/guardians can check in the player. Register at crusaderssoccer.org/tryouts/.
For nearly 50 years, the Crusaders Soccer Club has focused on developing leaders both on and off the soccer field within the East County community, consisting of players primarily from the cities of San Diego, La Mesa, El Cajon and Santee.

(Photo courtesy Kaiser family)


## DEL CERRO FOOD DRIVE IS ANOTHER HUGE SUCCESS

The Kaisers' 33rd annual Del Cerro Food Drive provided huge Thanksgiving feasts for 108 less fortunate families chosen by the Salvation Army.
Tom, Kassy and Lindy Kaiser said that over 60 volunteers (from passing out flyers, collecting, sorting, boxing food, and monetary donations to complete the boxes) made this possible.
The Kaisers want to specifically thank: Windmill Farms for providing frozen turkeys, Home Depot for providing the boxes, Pizazz Salon, Nancy Losek, for promoting the drive and collecting barrels of food, Jack and Candy Kirchner for providing the space
for food collection and sorting, and to Norm Katz for all of his extraordinary organizational skill and help every year.
The Del Cerro Community was hugely generous in providing tons of food and donations to complete the Thanksgiving boxes. Each Thanksgiving box contained approximately 75-80 pounds of food, including turkey, bags of apples, potatoes and onions plus all other types of Thanksgiving food, freshly baked dinner rolls, roasting pans and recipes.
The letters of gratitude for the Thanksgiving box that the recipients send to the Salvation Army makes this drive so very rewarding to all of those who make this food drive a success.

Tom, Kassy and Lindy want to thank each and every one who put food out to be picked up, donations of time and money, and each person's time and effort passing out flyers, collecting, sorting, filling boxes, and helping to make this year's drive a huge success.

## DISTRICT 7 CANDIDATES FORUM IN SERRA MESA

Cubberley PTA and the Serra Mesa Community Council are co-sponsoring a District 7 City Council Candidate Forum on Wednesday, Jan. 22, 6:30-8:30 p.m., at Cubberley Elementary School, 3201 Marathon Drive. The forum will be moderated by the League of Women Voters according to their guidelines. District 7 encompasses Allied Gardens, Del Cerro, Grantville, Linda Vista, Mission Valley, San Carlos, Serra Mesa, and Tierrasanta.

As the result of 2017 state legislation, California becomes one of 14 states to hold primaries on Super Tuesday, March 3. Mail-in ballots will distributed in February. Consequently, if you haven't already selected a city council candidate, this forum is for you. It's a chance to meet the candidates, ask questions, and find out their position on issues - citywide and locally. If you can't attend the forum but have a question you want asked, please email communitycouncil@serramesa.org

The two candidates who receive the most votes in the primary advance to the general election in November. The City Council representative is extremely important since District 7 tends to keep representatives for a long time. In the last 18 years we've only had three representatives - Scott Sherman, Lorie Zapf (representative for only four years because her residence changed to another district as a result of redistricting), and Donna Frye.

The forum is open to all - invite your friends and neighbors!

## TYPE 0 BLOOD AT ‘CRITICAL LEVELS'

San Diego Blood Bank is asking those who have never given blood and those who haven't given blood recently, and have Type

O blood, to donate blood immediately. Supplies of O-positive and O-negative blood are at critically low levels.
Type O-positive is the most common blood type, and therefore needed by many hospital patients, while Type O-negative is the universal blood type and can be given to any patient, and is often used
in emergency rooms when there is no time to determine the blood type of the patient.
"Coming out of the holiday season, we typically see a decrease in donations of all types at this time due to schools being out of session for the holidays and seasonal illnesses like the flu," said David Wellis, San Diego Blood

Bank CEO. "The need for Type O blood has hit a critically low level and we need the community to help us keep a safe supply for local hospital patients."

San Diego Blood Bank has six donor centers throughout San Diego County and bloodmobiles

SEE NEWS BRIEFS, Page 21

## 

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Fountains restaurant boasts an all-day menu with healthy, delicious, and convenient grab 'n go options. Located in the Legacy Pavilion, the outdoor patio is considered the best perch in the house. Enjoy the ease of casual cuisine as you enjoy San Diego sunshine views and our very own Bellagio-inspired Legacy Fountains.
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## Guest editorials

# Federal solar tax credit begins sunset in 2020 

## What Southern California homeowners need to know to go solar with a tax credit

By DANIEL Sulluvan
One of the most significant pieces of legislation that has helped advance the deployment of both residential and commercial solar across the United States is the solar investment tax credit. Established by Congress in 2006, the investment tax credit (ITC) grants a $30 \%$ federal tax credit for the installation of a solar power system on residential and commercial properties.
A tax credit is a dollar-for-dollar reduction of the income tax you owe. For example, if you owe $\$ 1,000$ in federal taxes but are eligible for a $\$ 1,000$ tax credit, your net liability drops to zero. Tax credits are generally designed to encourage or reward certain types of behavior that are considered beneficial to the economy, the environment or to further any other purpose
the government deems important. When you purchase a solar power system, you can claim a tax credit equal to a percentage of the cost of the project outlined by the program. This [was] 30\% through Dec. 31, 2019.
Since the tax credit was implemented in 2006, two years after the founding of local solar firm Sullivan Solar Power, the solar industry has grown by more than 10,000\%, with an average growth rate of $52 \%$ each year according to the Solar Energy Industry Association. The growth of the solar industry in the United States means a win for the local and national economy. It provides a new industry to supply local jobs and greater savings for consumers on electricity, which can be redistributed back into the economy. In addition to positioning the United States as a leader in global
fechnology, investing in solar power grants political independence from foreign fossil-fuel producing countries and perhaps most importantly, promotes the development of an energy source that reduces our carbon footprint and does not contribute to climate change while powering our needs
The solar ITC was set to expire in 2016, however, Congress passed the Omnibus Appropriations Bill which garnered bipartisan support in part because, it also lifted a ban on fossil fuel exports. The legislation extended the tax credit in full through the year 2019. with a step-down clause to commence from 2020-2022.

The step-down clause of the solar ITC is as follows

- 2020-26\% for residential and commercial
- 2021-22\% for residential and commercial
- 2022 - $10 \%$ commer cial only
There is no better time to o solar than today, when Americans can take advantage of the federal tax credit to help pay for a solar power system which will reduce or eliminate their electric bill. Southern Californians pay a premium for energy, Southern California Edison and San Diego Gas \& Electric often fall within the top 10 most expensive utilities in the United States. A typical Southern California family can pay off their solar power system within an average of five years, equaling savings of more than $\$ 80,000$ within 20 years.
-Daniel Sullivan is president and founder of San Diego-based Sullivan Solar For more information, visit sullivansolarpower.com.


## Declutter your life for a stress-free 2020

KATHI BURNS $\int_{\text {adosface }}$ To Your LIfe

2020 marks the beginning of a new decade and if you want to embrace it with 20/20 vision and clarity, this is the perfect time to begin decluttering and organizing your life.

The average U.S. home contains more than 300,000 possessions. It is no wonder why we sometimes feel like our possessions are possessing us!
Most of us spend a great deal of time buying, maintaining, storing, trying to access and keeping track of our items.
When your life is overrun with clutter, you are not be able to see clearly what you need to do to create more success or to simply have more free time.
The great news is that when your home and your life become organized and declut tered, you will automatically have extra room for new experiences and will also experience a greater sense of peace and well-being.
When we waste time searching for things we know we own, but cannot find, we become frustrated and lose precious hours from our life. Studies show that the average person wastes $31 / 2$ hours each week searching for lost items.
There are several simple steps you can take to start 2020 on an organized path. These steps are simple but not necessarily easy. Keep in mind, there is no one end result - it is all about your personal vision for this new decade. If you feel ready to begin anew, here are a few basic steps you can
take right now to start this new decade feeling like your life is under control!
The first organizing tactic is to set up a permanent donation box in your home.
It is important to position your donation bin in a place that is quick and easy to access. A hall closet or right inside the garage door typically trumps other locations.
Once you set up a permanent donation bin for items you no longer want, use, or love, your life will become less cluttered with less effort. Develop your new habit of releasing unwanted items into this bin for four to six weeks until it becomes automatic.
It doesn't really matter what type of bin you use for your unwanted items. It can be as simple as a plastic tub or old box. The main requirement is that it stays vertical on its own. This way it is super easy to open the closet door and toss items in as soon as you decide they are no longer needed, used or loved.
To guarantee success, once your donation bin is full, you must take it immediately to your closest donation station. Get into the habit of going to the donation station as frequently as your bin fills up. If your bin is the perfect size and shape, simply empty it and bring the bin back to keep the process going!
Adding a second donation bin inside your master closet will dramatically help you reduce your closet congestion by helping you get rid of clothes you no longer wear.

When you try on a piece of clothing and take it off right away - this is a good indication that you no longer really like it. We only wear $20 \%$ of the clothes in our closet so this might be the perfect time to get real with yourself. If you don't want to wear it today, why would you want to wear it tomorrow?
If in doubt and you just can't talk yourself into tossing it mmediately, place the hanger backward onto the rod. In a few months, check to see if you ever wore it again. If not, toss it onto your donation bin quickly and be done with it
Once you have a donation station set up inside your home, it is time to start the purging process.
Your next step will be to assess each space every time you open a door or drawer. Do a quick scan to check if there is anything inside that you have not used for the last six months or a year.
A pro organizing tip: It is easier to make decisions if you empty the drawer. Seeing all of the contents will help you make a quick assessment of the contents. You will probably be surprised or even shocked at how much stuff that drawer contained.
Before you place items back into that drawer or cabinet, think about how you might be able to optimize that space. This area will be better organized when you create separate zones to contain each type of item.
It is easy to contain collections of 'like’ items within
plastic bins. You can also employ baskets to serve as quick and easy dividers in deep drawers. Use pre-made plastic drawer bins for instant cabinets within cabinets.
For instance, my bedside drawer has a few different caddies within. One caddie holds pens and notepads, another holds vitamins, my extra cables are stashed inside a plastic bag and the last container holds my reading glasses.
This strategy follows the principle of containing 'like with like’ that you will often hear professional organizers like myself teaching. The reason we love this organizing tactic is simply when similar items 'live' in the same location, they are much easier to find when needed.
One super important decluttering strategy is to purge your home on a regular basis. The beginning of each year is the ideal time. The beginning of a new decade makes decluttering even more significant. Start this decade with systems put into place and remove all clutter from your space!
Keep in mind that purging and releasing items on a regular basis is a win-win! It helps you pass your good out into the world and at the same time makes your home much less stressful and you will absolutely receive the bonus of more free time for fun!
-Kathi Burns is the CPO founder of addSpace To Your Life! Learn more at addspacetoyourlife.com.

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621 Grand Ave. Suite C
San Diego, CA 92109
(858) 270-3103

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| EDITOR <br> Jeff Clemetson x130 <br> jeff@sdnews.com | WEB \& SOCIAL MEDIA <br> Jeff Clemetson <br> jeff@sdnews.com |
| :--- | :--- |
| CONTRIBUTING | PRODUCTION |
| EDITORS | MANAGER |
| Kendra Sitton x136 | Chris Baker x107 |
| Tom Melville x131 | chris@sdnews.com |
| Emily Blackwood x133 | ADVERTISING |
| Dave Schwab x132 | CONSULTANT |
| COPY EDITOR | Heather Fine x118 |
| hfine@sdnews.com |  |
| Dustin Lothspeich |  |
| CONTRIBUTORS | ACCOUNTING |
| Jeff Benesch | Heather Humble x120 |
| Nora Bodrian | accounting@sdnews.com |
| Pat Boerner | BUSINESS |
| Kathi Burns | CONSULTANT |
| Rep. Susan Davis | David Mannis |
| David Ege |  |
| Elizabeth Gillingham | PUBLISHER |
| Shain Haug | Julie Main |
| Kathryn Johnson | (858) 270-3103 x106 |
| Patricia Mooney |  |
| Jennifer Morrissey | julie@sdnews.com |
| Tina Rynberg |  |
| Frank Sabatini Jr. |  |
| Patricia Simpson |  |
| Daniel Sullivan |  |
| Dave Thomas |  |
| Rebecca J.Williamson |  |
| Jay Wilson |  |

WEB \& SOCIAL MEDIA Jeff Clemetson

PRODUCTION
MANAGER
Chris Baker x107
ADVERTISING
CONSULTANT
hfine@sdne xils
ACCOUNTING
accormex 120

BUSINESS
CONSULTANT

PUBLISHER
Julie Main
(858) $270-3103 \times 106$
julie@sdne

Jennifer Morrissey
Tina Rynberg
rank Sabatini Jr.
Daniel Sullivan
Rebecca J. Williamso
Jay Wilson


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# With anti-Semitism on the rise, the stories of Holocaust survivors become more important 



On Dec. 28, I had the honor of attending a birthday party for Rose Schindler, a 90-year-old friend, hosted by her remarkable family and community. A birthday at 90 is extraordinary in itself, but she is a Holocaust survivor. Her story and that of her husband is now told in the recent publication of "Two Who Survived: Keeping Hope Alive While Surviving the Holocaust," which I strongly recommend.
That same night in Monsey New York, another party commenced for the seventh night of Hanukkah. Family and friends gathered at the home of their rabbi. An individual stormed the party wielding a machete determined to harm as many people as possible. At least seven were wounded - one severely. It is clear now that the perpetrator was obsessed with anti-Semitic thoughts.
Here in San Diego, we have had our own horrific events, principally the attack on the synagogue and fatal shooting of
a worshiper in Poway last year. memories is so important. We know that anti-Semitic acts occurring throughout our country have increased sharply, not to mention those in Europe. My colleague from New York, Rep. Nita Lowey, recently wrote an editorial with the American Jewish Committee’s David Harris asking two important basic questions: Why now? How to respond?
In trying to understand the rise of anti-Semitism, Lowey
"Failure to address hate in all its forms is tantamount to accepting it."
-REP. SUSAN DAVIS
and Harris state it exists as the world's oldest social disease. As fewer and fewer Holocaus survivors are able to tell their wrenching stories, understanding the conditions that created such dehumanization becomes a less personal story to new generations. This is why capturing those stories from survivors able and willing to share painful

It is no coincidence that the rise in violence against individuals is occurring in parallel as ignorance of the Holocaust also increases. According to a recent report by the FBI, while the number of hate crimes reported has gone down, violent acts have increased.

Failure to address hate in all its forms is tantamount to accepting it. The response to the machete attack in New York and other attacks across the country produce the usual results in increased security, and stronger police presence, and talk of raising awareness. These, of course, are positive signs. Unfortunately, as these incidents fade from memory, so do prevention efforts.
There needs to be a constant campaign of education about hate, violence - past and present - and the importance of acceptance. This education needs to start at an early age so we don't see astonishing numbers like $66 \%$ of millennials who can't identify the Auschwitz concentration camp.

We need to hear from
SEE HOLOCAUST, Page 10

## Correction

In the December issue of Mission Times Courier, a page 4 headline was incorrect. The headline "A rewarding return to Thailand" should have been "A rewarding return to South Korea." We regret the error and have an updated version online at mssiontimescourier.com.

## Letters

## SUPERIOR SMELL

Re: "Residents decry 'noxious odors' from concrete plant" [Volume 25, Issue 12 or bit.ly/2ZKS2iJ]

Your article on Superior Concrete and Asphalt was interesting and well-received.
I would like to point out that Superior has been a problem since long before the ' 90 s.
All us original owners were required to sign a form, acknowledging that we understood that blasting would occur at the plant. However, we were not informed that it would occur every working weekday (always exactly at noon). The blasts would literally shake the entire neighborhood, producing clouds of dust everywhere in our neighborhood.
On one occasion, an excessive amount of dynamite was apparently used, and a huge boulder was thrown across Mission Gorge Road, penetrating the roof of a two-story home.
Many things have changed as you noted in your article. The expansion of that plant's capacity
to include asphalt in the amount of 510 tons/hour production, is not only distressing to me, but alarming.
-Ed León
Smell in the air was overwhelming again this morning in Allied Gardens. I live across the street from Grant Hill Park and the smell hit me as soon as I opened the door this morning.
-Elizabeth Howard
I was told you might be writing about Ready Mix on Mission Gorge. They have been a very bad neighbor for a very long time. They burn rubber and other compounds to produce asphalt and the toxic fumes consume our homes to the point you can't be outdoors. It causes a burning sensation in the lungs and the neighborhood gets covered in black dust. Calls to the San Diego County Air Pollution Control District yield little to no results.
Thank you for exposing this local health hazard.
-Oded Moore


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# Dem Club to host climate change forum 



By TINA RYNBERG aND JEFF BENESCH

One month before the March California primary, La Mesa Foothills Democratic Club (LMFDC) wants to highlight that elections have consequences and who we place in higher office can either further our climate action goals and help stem the dire consequences of fossil fuel extraction and production, or send us on an never-ending spiral of climate caused disasters.
With the Trump era ushering in a whole administration of climate change deniers and with fossil fuel lobbyists as heads of our Environmental Protection Agency, LMFDC will sponsor a forum of experts to explore the issue at our general meeting on Wednesday, Feb. 5, at 7 p.m., at the La Mesa Community Center, 4975 Memorial Drive.

Multiple studies show alarming predictions of imminent rising sea levels and the economic and social disasters they will bring, it is with much urgency that we bring aggressive and progressive policies to our cities, counties, regional governing bodies, state houses, the halls of Congress, and the White House, before it's too late.
We have invited local climate action advocates Nicole Capretz, director of the Climate Action Campaign; Steve Padilla, Chula Vista City Council member and newly appointed chair of the California Coastal Commission; Rafael Castellanos, chair of the Port of San Diego and candidate for the coast-hugging Supervisory District 1; Chris Ward, San Diego City Council member and candidate for the largely coastal 78th Assembly District; and Brian Elliott, former chair of the Sierra Club's Political Action Committee to participate in this most important and urgent discussion. This
promises to be a special teaching moment for all members and guests present.
Our large and active club represents the communities of San Carlos, Allied Gardens, Del Cerro, La Mesa, College Area, Santee, Mt. Helix, Casa de Oro, Spring Valley and other close by areas. We meet the first Wednesday of each month at the spacious and newly refurbished La Mesa Community Center. Our social time begins at 6:30 p.m. with snacks, salads, desserts and beverages provided by the club membership. The business meeting starts promptly at 7 p.m.
We are starting our 2020 dues campaign with annual memberships starting at $\$ 35$. Like us on Facebook and check out our interactive website at lamesafoothillsdemcoraticclub.com.
-Tina Rynberg is president and Jeff Benesch is vice president of programming for the La Mesa Foothills Democratic Club.


## GET READY TO

If you're planning to buy or sell a home or property, we would like to help you put your plan in motion. Here are some properties that are currently on the market, but they'll be going fast Give one of us a call! It's your move....

## Republican Women celebrate holidays, install new officers

 by pat boerner

A delicious potluck buffet was enjoyed and a huge collection of gifts was gathered for Military Outreach Ministries at the Christmas holiday party at the beautiful home of California Republican Women-Navajo Canyon member Ginny Wisley. Outgoing president Marjie Siekerka was commended and thanked for her outstanding leadership in 2019, resulting in enthusiasm and increased club membership.
We were honored to have Judge Robert Amador and Judge Daniel Lamborn install the 2020 board of directors. Waskah Whelan, who served as the club's campaign precinct chair during the past year, was sworn in as the new president and is continuing as campaign precinct chair. Other newly elected officers were first vice president of programs, Marjie Siekerka; recording secretary, Gloria Harpenau; second vice president of membership, Wendy Wolfe; treasurer, Bonnee Proo; parliamentarian, Nancy Amador; ways and means, Diane Randolph; technology, Sally Steele; and corresponding secretary, Betty Landen.
The RWCNC club is off to an exciting start with Tony Krvaric, San Diego County Republican Party chairman, speaking at the Tuesday, Feb. 11, meeting at the Brigantine Restaurant in La Mesa.
The meeting will begin at 11 a.m. with check-in beginning at 10:30 a.m. A full-course lunch will be served at noon for a charge of $\$ 25$. Due to the large number attending our general meeting, reservations are mandatory. Cash and checks are accepted, but no credit cards. Please make your reservation at RSVPrwenc@gmail.com. You
will receive an email confirmation of your reservation. Any questions or to request a confirmation, please call Marjie at 619-990-2791.
You won't want to miss this opportunity to hear Mr. Krvaric's presentation which is most timely in this presidential election year. The more informed and educated we are as voters, the better job we can do educating others. Accurate, honest information is the key to winning elections and it is our responsibility to combat the "fake news" that we are all exposed to each and every day. Be informed, be proactive and fight to give President Trump another four years and keep America great! We need to elect Republicans at every level - so get involved and do whatever you can to insure Republican victories. There will be an abundance of opportunities to volunteer and help candidates at local, state and national elections in 2020.
This election year will be exciting and will have life-changing consequences. We must fight and vote - to prevent single-payer health care, which is just another way of saying rationed medical care with the government making the decisions. We are currently enjoying all the benefits of a record-breaking strong economy and we do not want to see it weakened by letting Democrats raise taxes and control the purse strings.

Make your reservation now to attend our February meeting and learn what Tony Krvaric has to say about current Republican topics and the March 3 California primary election For more information on our activities, please visit our website at RWCNavajoCanyon.org and follow us on Facebook at Republican Women of California Navajo Canyon.
-Pat Boerner writes on behalf of the California Republican WomenNavajo Canyon.


California Republican Women-Navajo Canyon officers being sworn in (Courtesy RWCNC)



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## Holocaust

CONTINUED FROM Page 7
survivors, like Rose, who clung to hope during a period of horrific atrocities. We also need to hear the stories of those who risked their lives to save Jews during the Holocaust.

We can all agree that, in the many outbursts of hate we hear and see today, social media plays a role in giving people a toxic outlet for like acceptance. Social media platforms create easy environments for hate groups and terrorist organizations to recruit vulnerable individuals, who are usually those feeling isolated from
society and seek affirmation from others. Social media companies have a responsibility to weed out those who would use their platforms as tools to spread hate and violence.
Putting a stop to hate is the responsibility of everyone. The voices of tolerance are many and the voices of hate are few. When
communities join together to de nounce hate and promote tolerance, it sends a powerful message that we will not be intimidated and we will not live in fear.
Here is a simple maxim to start the new year: Treat others as you want to be treated.
To check out the memoir, go to TwoWhoSurvived.com.
-Congresswoman Davis represents central San Diego, including the communities of Old Town, Kensington, Mission Hills, University Heights, Hillcrest Bankers Hill, North Park, South Park, Talmadge, Normal Heights, as well as La Mesa, Lemon Grove, Spring Valley and parts of El Cajon and Chula Vista.

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# Soroptimists honor fighters against human trafficking 

By DAVE SCHWAB |Missoon TMees Courier

[Editor's note: This article is part of an ongoing series on human trafficking in San Diego.]

San Diegans battling human trafficking for sex and labor were recognized Nov. 27, at La Mesa Soroptimist's 62nd annual pre-Thanksgiving community breakfast at the Handlery Hotel.
Those working to stop human trafficking and assist its victims were thanked and honored for their work. Honorees included: Kathi Hardy, executive director of Freedom from Exploitation Inc. and director of operations at Survivor Leader Network of San Diego; Kiley Lizama, program manager with I Care; Catherine Hanna-Schrock, program director of kNOw MORE; Ami Carpenter and Jaime Gates, professors and co-principle investigators from University of San Diego overseeing research study on human trafficking; Suyapa Ulloa, outreach leader of PETALS (human trafficking ministry) at Rock Church; and Generate Hope.
Soroptimist International of La Mesa's Lisa Moore thanked the gathering, acknowledging visiting Soroptimist dignitaries. She then introduced mistress of ceremonies Geni Cavitt, former KGTV-TV 10 News broadcaster and producer, writer, and editor of Cavitt Productions.
"It is horrendous, terrible and unimaginable - yet it goes on all the time," said Cavitt of sex and labor trafficking. "I've learned so much more over the last few years about what sex trafficking does to people. Everyone who works in the sex trafficking area is so brave. It's not easy."
Cavitt introduced keynote speaker Yusef Miller, a former Camp Pendleton Navy Corpsman and founder of Mosques Against Trafficking (MAT), a networking awareness team of mosques and musallas, now nationwide, collaborating against human trafficking.
Characterizing trafficking as a "daunting" and "huge" topic, Miller said, "This is an $\$ 810$ million industry in San Diego, second only to drugs and a cut above guns. We're in the top 13 list of worst cities in the nation."
Dispelling trafficking misconceptions, Miller noted " $80 \%$ of those trafficked are Americanborn and raised. So this is an American problem that needs
an American solution from the American people. It's our issue, our child."
Pointing out the average age of those trafficked is 14 to 16 , Miller said, "No one is immune to this industry." He added people of color and those of lower socioeconomic status are "more vulnerable," especially runaways whom he said, "get propositioned for sex within 48 hours of running away."
Sex trafficking is increasingly occurring online, where "older males pose as younger males" to lure victims whose families they threaten once they've been recruited into the illicit trade, Miller said.

To combat online trafficking, police are now setting up sting operations online with officers posing as perpetrators to lure traffickers trying to lure young women into the trade.

Sex trafficking is not a coincidence, Miller added.
"These people are not snatched from the street," he said. "They're in our homes. They go to school with us. They're our children. They're our co-workers."
Progress is being made on eliminating the stigmatization of sex trafficking victims being categorized as "prostitutes."
"Recently, we changed the laws," Miller said adding those below age 18 are no longer saddled with proving they're not criminals.
"It was a huge step," he said. "Women used to lose their lives to this stigma of being a prostitute."

Trafficking carries over to labor, said Miller, noting he knew of an instance where labor traffickers would take enslaved laborers making tacos out, shoot a goat in front of them and then tell them, "What we did to that goat, we could do to you."

The situation is bad but there is hope if communities get together and work cooperatively, Miller said.

SEE SOROPTIMISTS, Page 17

## Navajo Community Planners hear presentation on SDSU West

By REBECCA J. WIILIAMSON<br>Mission Times Courier

Navajo Community Planners, Inc. (NCPI) held their first meeting of the year at Tifereth Israel Synagogue on Jan. 8.
The main topic of the meeting was a presentation on the SDSU West project by SDSU's Laura V. Shinn, director of planning for their facilities, planning and construction department and a slide show on the project by Glen Schmidt, president of Schmidt Design Group.

A hotel, student housing, a 35,00-seat stadium, parks, six multi-purpose fields, parks, retail, campus, and more are incorporated into the master plan.
The current timeline on SDSUMission Valley's progress according to Shinn is:

- Presentation to the California State University's Board of Trustees - Jan. 28-29, 2020 in Long Beach
- Final EIR and Campus Master Plan
- Purchase and sale agreement
- Acquisition and site development financing
- Presented to the San Diego city council: Feb. 2020
- Close of Escrow: March 27, 2020 (estimated)
- Groundbreaking: April 2020
- Stadium completion: Aug. 2022
- River Park Completion: Aug. 2023
Of note was a letter sent to Shinn on Oct. 1, 2019 with concerns NCPI had on the draft environmental impact report (EIR) targeting traffic mitigation, Navajo community access, and construction of a community recreation facility.
One resident acted as a voice for her neighbors on traffic mitigation issues.
"It's a general concern of the neighborhood because of the traffic corridors that are already clogged," said Allied Garden resident Barbara Price.
The full response to the board's concerns was not available at the meeting. According to Shinn, a final response to their draft EIR will be posted on SDSU's website on Jan. 18 - 10 days before the trustee's meeting in Long Beach. Shinn said a draft was available already online.
"Why on earth aren't the trust ees coming here to address these issues?" questioned board member Shain Haug, who represents Allied Gardens. Haug plans to issue letters to the media asking why the meeting is not in this region.
After the meeting, board member Terry Cords questioned how the scheduling and prices to use the sporting fields in the new park will play out with local youth teams.
Several board members noted they were very happy with the presentation - one of which was the chair.
"Very well done," said NCPI chair Dan Smith.
To find out more about the updates on designs, addressing the 100-year floodplain and flooding issues, lighting of multi-purpose fields, housing, metered or non-metered parking, drop off points for the sporting fields, retail such as a grocery store, proposed 4,600 student rental units, and to read the final EIR visit: sdsu.edu/missionvalley.
$<$ Rebecca J. Williamson is a San Diego-based freelance writer.


The proposed SDSU West innovation district (Rendering by Carrier Johnson + Culture)

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# Volunteering at Mission Trails Regional Park 

Mission Trails<br>Regional Park Foundation By JeNNIFER MORRISSEY

January is the time for new beginnings and New Year's resolutions. Do you have on your to-do list to make a difference in the community? If so, share some of your time and volunteer at Mission Trails Regional Park (MTRP). There are many ways you can volunteer at Mission Trails, and community members are involved in many aspects of the park's operations. Our annual Trail Guide training is full, but below are other service opportunities.
Also, don't miss our Feb. 13 presentation on mountain lions by Don Endicott, author, naturalist, and MTRP Trail Guide. This event will fill quickly, so get your tickets soon! Visit mtrp.org for details.


Trail Cam image of a mountain lion taken along the San Diego River (Courtesy MTRPF)

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Visitor and Interpretive Center: Working at the Visitor and Interpretive Center's front desk, these volunteers welcome guests to the park, answer questions about the trails, activities, programs, start presentations in our 94-seat theater, and help in the gift shop. During the week, they assist park rangers and MTRP Foundation staff in welcoming school groups to the park. These volunteers work half-day shifts, from 8:45 a.m. to 1 p.m., or from 1 p.m. to 5:15 p.m. If interested in this opportunity, please go to the MTRP website and download and complete the Visitor Center Volunteer Application and either drop it off or send it to the Visitor Center, or scan and email to mtrp@mtrp.org. Questions? Email jmorrissey@mtrp.org or call 619-582-4502.

Trail Patrol: If you like taking long hikes at MTRP, then consider becoming a member of the park's Trail Patrol. These volunteers interact with park users and educate the public about park rules on foot or on mountain bike, assess and monitor trails, and submit reports to the park rangers about their observations from their patrol. With thousands of acres and more than 60 miles of trails, MTRP is a lot of territory to monitor and we appreciate the help from community members. For information on how to join the

MTRP Trail Patrol, please contact Ranger Aide Mansour Habis at 619-668-2744 or send email to MHabis@sandiego.gov.
Volunteer Work Crews: By participating on one of the park's regular work crews, you can get your exercise for the day and help the park at the same time. There are weekend crews, a regular weekday crew, and you can organize a group volunteering opportunity as well. If you would like to schedule a group volunteer opportunity, please contact David Lee at DNLee@sandiego.gov
West Sycamore Volunteer Crew: On the first Sundays of the month, join Ranger Dan Kimpel to assist with various projects at our West Sycamore property in Scripps Ranch. Meet near the trailer at the east end of Stonebridge Parkway. For more information and to RSVP, please send email to DKimpel@sandiego.gov.
Habitat Restoration Crew: On the second Saturdays of the month, assist Ranger Heidi Gutknecht with non-native plant eradication, habitat protection and revegetation projects. For more information and to RSVP, please send email to HGutknecht@sandiego.gov or call 619-668-3279.
Trail Improvement Crew: On the third Sundays of the month and on some Wednesdays, work with Ranger Andrew Miller with trail maintenance, construction

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Tickets $\$ 10$; visit mtrp.org to register
and erosion control projects. For more information and to RSVP, please send email to AJMiller@sandiego.gov or call 619-668-2745.
Park Beautification Crew: On the fourth Saturdays of the month, help beautify the park with Ranger Julie Aeilts. For more information and to RSVP, please send email to JAeilts@sandiego. gov or call 619-668-3201.
All work crews meet at 8 a.m. and work until noon at the latest. Rain cancels the events, and no crews take place in July or August due to extreme heat. The West Sycamore Crew takes off JulySeptember. Volunteers should bring work gloves, a water bottle to refill, and a snack. Be sure to wear long pants, sun protection and sturdy, closed toe shoes.

## MISSION TRAILS' APEX PREDATOR

Join the Mission Trails Regional Park community for a multi-media presentation about mountain lions by author Don


A volunteer planting plants at Mission Trails Regional Park (Courtesy REI)

Endicott, a National Association of Interpretation Certified Interpretive Guide and MTRP Trail Guide as well as public educator for the San Diego Natural History Museum and San Diego Humane Society's Project Wildlife

At the presentation, Endicott will provide an introduction to the natural history of Southern California's seldom seen apex predator. He will share the incredible attributes and signature behaviors of our big cats, show how relationships between mountain lions and people have changed over time, outline their key contributions to a healthy wilderness environment, and address the challenges and threats facing them.

SEE MTRPF, Page 13


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# iNaturalist Observation: San Diego wirelettuce 


#### Abstract

By PATRICIA SIMPSON

When I'm out in the field at this time of year, one of the plants that visitors are most curious about is Stephanomeria diegensis, commonly known as San Diego wirelettuce or San Diego wreath plant. This usually tall and twig-gy-looking native plant stands out in a Seussian way. In the spring, most people will dismiss it as just another common non-native invasive, such as prickly lettuce (Lactuca serriola) or another this-tle-like relative. Young plants bear broad dented leaves that spread


on the ground in a circle. But in the hot summer sun, San Diego wirelettuce starts growing up and up with a central stem that produces "twiggy" branches all the way around. Some larger plants may reach 6 to 8 feet in height.

San Diego wirelettuce acquires its full whimsical appearance when it blooms in the summer and well into the fall. The small clusters of delicate, mostly white, sometimes pinkish, flowers almost look like large snowflakes suspended in the air and since wirelettuce tends to thrive on

species: Stephanomeria exigua, commonly known as twiggy wreath plant or small wirelettuce. As the common name indicates, S. exigua is usually smaller in size, but the two species can be very difficult to tell apart. Examination of the seeds with a hand lens or macro-photographs is often necessary to tell the two apart.
In this observation of the month, Alan King took nice shots of the seeds and the iNaturalist community was able to confirm the identification of his plant
as San Diego wirelettuce. Visit bit.ly/2SL0UTZ.

Because of its long-lasting blooms, San Diego wirelettuce is particularly important to pollinators that have a life cycle extending into the cooler months of fall, such as some of our native bees.
Now that you know all about San Diego wirelettuce, you'll start noticing the plants on the side of the freeway. But please, keep your eyes on the road!
-Patricia Simpson is a trail guide at Mission Trails Regional Park.

## Our native Christmas Tree

By NORA BODRIAN

The perennial toyons are in full display this year: bright red berries decorated our trails for the holidays.
Toyon (Heteromeles arbutifolia) grows 10 - to 15 -feet high as a shrub or small tree and is found only in the chaparral, coastal sage scrub and oak woodlands of California and Baja California. The beautiful white flowers of spring transition to bright red berries from November to January. The leaves are elliptical and evergreen with serrated edges.
Due to these characteristics, it is also known as Christmas berry or California holly. Since there is nothing else "Christmas-y" in California, these festive branches


Toyon berries (Photo by Nora Bodrian)
were historically picked by early Californian settlers for holiday wreaths and decorations, until the 1920s when the state of California outlawed their harvest on public lands. Like many fire-resistant shrubs in our fire-prone state, the toyon is a crown-sprouter and will regenerate its shoot system after a fire.
Toyon is a member of the family Rosaceae, like pears, apricots, plums and apples. Botanically speaking, this means that the berries are not true berries, but rather miniature pomes, like pears and apples.
The seeds contain dangerous levels of a poisonous cyanide-forming compound. Animals will not eat unripe berries because they are so bitter and toxic, however once they have ripened into the attractive red color, animals can eat them and not be harmed. It is very common to find reddish coyote scat on the trails with digested berries.

Native Californians used toyon for food, medicine and tools. Toasted or boiled to remove the bitterness and toxicity, ripe pomes were a good source of food during the winter. The fruit can also be dried and saved for several months and cooked later into porridge or pancakes. The Kumeyaay pound the toyon bark and leaves to make an infusion to treat wounds, stomach ailments and women's conditions. Branches can be used to make bows and hair pins.

Toyon is a great shrub for your xeriscape yard, as it is drought tolerant, evergreen, low maintenance and attracts many backyard birds. As the shrub can grow into a fairly large tree, one might trim it back after the berries have ripened. You know that the berries have ripened in your yard when they all disappear because the mockingbirds, finches and sparrows have eaten them all!
-Nora Bodrian is a trail guide at Mission Trails Regional Park.

## MTRPF

CONTINUED FROM Page 12

Don's presentation features still photos, audio tracks, and video footage of seldom seen behaviors, including nursing kittens and bonus footage of two trail encounters filmed by a hiker and a bicyclist. He will describe and demonstrate how to respond if you should meet a mountain lion on the trails.
Doors open at 6:30 p.m. for a book signing of Don Endicott's book " 50 Best Short Hikes: San Diego," with the presentation beginning at 7 p.m. Books will
be available for purchase at the event
An avid hiker and climber, Don Endicott has enjoyed over 50 years exploring and photographing wildlife and wilderness settings throughout California and the western States. Throughout that time, Puma concolor has been a nearly invisible but tantalizing presence, leaving behind tracks and other signs and has gifted Don Endicott with a couple of rare sightings.
-Jennifer Morrissey is executive director of the Mission Trails regional Park Foundation.

## MISSION TRAILS REGIONAL PARK WINTER CALENDAR*

Wildlife Tracking Walk: 8:30 a.m. first Saturday each month - Visitor Center
Guided Nature Walks: 9:30 a.m. Wednesday, Saturday, Sunday each week - Visitor Center
Guided Nature Walks Kumeyaay Lake Campground: 8:30 a.m., second and fourth Saturday each month KLC Campground
West Sycamore Nature Walk: 8 a.m. fourth Sunday each month - Stonebridge Pkwy in Scripps Ranch
Bird Walk: 8 a.m. third Saturday each month - January meet at East Fortuna Staging area.
Family Discovery Walk: 3 p.m. fourth Sunday each month - Visitor Center
Lake Murray Walk \& Talk: 9 a.m. third Tuesday each month. January meet by boat docks
Discovery Table Activity: 10 a.m. -1 p.m. second Saturday each month - Visitor Center
Live Hawk Talk Activity: 9 a.m.-noon, first Sunday each month, Visitor Center
Kids Nature Story \& Craft with a Ranger: 10 a.m. third Saturday each month - Meet at KLC Campground Picnic Structure. RSVP to 619-668-3279

Native American Flute Circle: 1-3 p.m. second Saturday each month - Visitor Center
Birding Basics Class: 1-3 p.m., fourth Saturday each month - Visitor Center
Art for the Park: Exhibition opening $2-4$ p.m. Jan. 5 for exhibit through Feb. 14 - Visitor Center
Stars at Mission Trails: 5-9 p.m. Jan. 3 and Feb. 7 - KLC Campground Day Use Lot
Star Party: 5-8 p.m. Jan. 18 -KLC Campground Day Use Lot
Stars at West Sycamore: 5-9 p.m. Jan. 17 -Stonebridge Pkwy in Scripps Ranch
Mystery Cat: Southern California's Elusive Mountain Lion: Book signing 6:30 p.m., lecture 7-8 p.m., Feb. 13 - Visitor Center
*Partial listing of Monthly Events at Mission Trails Park. Visit mtrp.org for full calendar of free activities, programs, updates and volunteer opportunities, or call the Visitor Center at 619-668-3281.
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## History in a cone

Restaurant Review By FRANK SABATINI JR.
inside a local diner and going through the rigmarole of full wait service. McDonald's and In-N-Out Burger hadn't hit the scene yet, and a then-fledgling White Castle didn't expand outside its Wichita, Kansas roots until many years later. scene in 1946, when grabbing a "fast" cheeseburger pretty much meant plopping down

## FOSTERS FREEZE

5129 Waring Road (Allied Gardens)
619-583-4694, fostersfreeze.com
Prices: Burgers and hot dogs, $\$ 2.49$ to $\$ 7.99$;
sandwiches, burritos and fish-n-chips, $\$ 2.59$ to $\$ 6.69$;
combo meals (with medium fries and medium drink), $\$ 6.59$ to $\$ 11.99$;
soft serve ice cream cones, $\$ 1.89$ to $\$ 3.49$;
milk shakes and root beer floats, $\$ 3.05$ to $\$ 5.99$;
sundaes and parfaits, $\$ 3.39$ to $\$ 5.99$; banana splits, $\$ 6.69$

Although if you were a West Coaster on the hunt for soft serve ice cream and wanted to precede it with a griddled burger with crinkle-cut french fries on the side, Fosters Freeze was the quick way to go.

Founded 74 years ago by George Foster in Inglewood, California, the company touts itself as "California's first fast-food chain." There are about 80 locations throughout the state, with one of them firmly residing in Allied Gardens for the past 60 years.
For anyone seeking refuge from today's quinoa-wielding food police, Fosters Freeze is where you come to commit culinary sins.

Aside from a slew of soft serve treats like sundaes, banana splits, parfaits, shakes and cones, the


Customers are afforded walk-up windows and an inside seating area. (Photo by Frank Sabatini Jr.)
 Frank Sabatini Jr.)


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## Fosters <br> CONTINUED FROM Page 14

menu board tempts you with illuminated photographs of burgers, chili dogs and the like. The calorie counts for both the sweet and savory offerings are obligingly listed, although you can bet they weren't only a couple generations ago.
Nothing is made from scratch, not even the chili. There are no salads, unless they exist on some secret menu. And local farms play no role in supplying the produce garnishing your "old fashion" quarter-pound burger - available also in double or triple form, and with or without partially melted American cheese.
But I didn't care where the veggies came from because the iceberg lettuce was cool and crisp, the tomatoes were juicy, and the slices of raw onions were sweet ish and fresh. Adding to the burger were a few coins of dill pickles and a smear of Thousand Island dressing, all sitting neatly inside a sesame bun. Decades ago, this qualified as a gourmet burger. Today, it's rather nostalgically delicious.
A "burrito" appears on the menu without description.
"What's in it?" I asked.
The young, friendly employee paused before saying with scant conviction that it's filled with chili and beef. His co-worker standing nearby listened on with childlike curiosity.
After chomping through the crispy deep-fried casing, I understood why.
Was it beef chili or beef chili with added beef? Or was it beef chili blended with pureed beans? I couldn't tell. Yet despite its mulched texture - similar to the beef-soy mixture that attracts junk-food junkies to the tacos at Jack in the Box - the burrito


A small-size cone of choco-late-dipped soft serve


Buy a
offered a mild thrill in terms of enthusiasm, wolfed flavor and easy handling.

My lunch companion, who came along with skeptical
$\qquad$
enthusiasm, wolf
down a classic patty melt on rye bread with no complaints. He also put a sizable dent in my paper basket of crinkle-cut fries topped with similar chili, shredded cheddar and diced onions. As for the grilled pastrami sandwich flashing a well-endowed picture of itself from a lighted promo panel, it came with less meat than expected and verged on the chewy side. Layered within were copious pickles and yellow mustard, thus making for a tart outcome.
We concluded our visit with cold blasts of sugar. And who doesn't when they come here?
A chocolate malt milkshake proved extra-malty in the most lovable sense. And a swirl of chocolate and vanilla soft serve extruded into a small-size cone and dipped in chocolate was no less exciting than the dipped cones I devoured in New York State as a kid from my local Dairy Queen. It had been a long time. The only difference

Within seconds he ran over with a cardboard container and extra napkins.

It was a super-thoughtful and highly appreciated gesture that seemed more old-fashioned to me than the burgers and shakes. Though next time, I'll opt for a spoon-friendly sundae or banana split.

## - Frank

Sabatini Jr. is the author of 'Secret San Diego' (ECW Press) and began his local writing career more than two decades ago as a staffer for the former San Diego Tribune. You can reach him at fsabatini@san.rr.com.


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# Allied Gardens/Grantville Community Council news 

## By SHAIN HAUG <br> HOLIDAY <br> CELEBRATIONS

On Dec. 11, two outstanding students, Jordyn Moravec from Foster School and Drake Bouchard from Marvin School, turned on the holiday
 lights at the Triangle. We are proud of their
(I to r) Drake Bouchard and Jordyn Moravec achievements.
The Dec. 12 Holiday Festival a full count of persons in the was a resounding success. The Lewis Middle School auditorium was nearly filled. The band gave us superb performances of traditional holiday tunes. The Marvin Elementary School chorus performed - more than just sang - several cheerful songs, and three students gave us readings on Hanukkah and Christmas. After the performance, the audience adjourned to the cafeteria for punch and cookies.

## TOWN HALL MEETING

On Tuesday, Jan. 28, at 6:30 p.m. in the Benjamin Library (corner of Glenroy Street and Zion Avenue) there will be a presentation by the local census team on the census procedures and the importance of
community.

## WEBSITE

Give us your suggestions for what we should include and exclude from the site. We need to know what is of value to you. Visit aggccouncil.org.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS

The board of directors meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at Benjamin Library. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, Feb. 4. We encourage you to join us.
-Shain Haug is the president of the Allied Gardens/Grantville Community Council. Reach him at aggccshain@yahoo.com and be added to the email contact list.

## Del Cerro Action Council news

By JAY WIILSON

The next meeting of the Del Cerro Action Council (DCAC) is Thursday, Jan. 25, at 7 p.m. at Temple Emanu-El.
As we all know, SDSU West is moving forward. In December, I attended a presentation on the initial design for the 60 -plus acres of the park area that will be built in the eastern portion of the property. This is adjacent to Interstate 15 and the Murphy Canyon Creek
and reaches from the San Diego River to Friars Road.
I attended a previous workshop at SDSU in September with about 75 citizens from the communities close to SDSU West. I was very impressed that the designers listened to what the participants in the workshop had recommended and incorporated virtually everything suggested. The presentation was very thorough and I asked Rachel Gregg, the SDSU director of Government
and Community Relations, if we could have a similar presentation at the January meeting of the DCAC. The park has something for everyone and the area is about 10 acres larger than the entire Lake Murray Community Park. This new and outstanding park will be just 10 minutes from Del Cerro. You will definitely want to hear about this incredible new park addition.

SEE DCAC, Page 23

## San Carlos Area Council news


#### Abstract

By Patricia mooney

Happy New Year and happy new decade. "2020" has a nice ring to it, intimating that the year will bestow perfect vision upon all of us.

Since this is the time of year when we are all treated to lists of 2019 highlights, people who passed, celebrities who made their mark, movies that reigned at the box office, etc., I thought I'd share my list of top 10 San Carlos moments. 1. The Mission Trails Interpretive Center concert series ended due to parking concerns in December 2018. The inaugural Second Sunday Concert Series kicked off at Mission Trails Church (4880 Zion) on Jan. 17, (Courtesy Patricia Mooney) starring troubadour and crowd favorite, Gregory Page. 2. In March, our speaker, Professor Emeritus Rolf Schulze, propelled us all back to when he was a child in late-1930s Germany when Hitler rose to




Enjoying the special envelopes and stamps for San Carlos' ZIP Code Day.
power. He spoke to a rapt audience and later autographed some of his books for interested SCAC members. "Dangerous Delusions" is available on Amazon.com.

SEE SCAC, Page 23

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# Moreno looking to finish strong at Patrick Henry 

By DAVE THOMAS |Missoon Times Courier

For Patrick Henry High senior Jonathan Moreno, finishing out his high school soccer career strong is definitely a goal during the 2019-20 season.
Moreno, who is one of the team captains, is a midfield player leading by his actions, according to head boys soccer coach Justin Clark.
"His role on the team requires him to be able to do it all on both sides of the ball and he is able to take command in the middle of the field," Clark commented. "I'm looking forward to Jonny growing into the position we have put him and become one of the strengths on our team. He will be someone we will count on in the biggest matches as we get toward the end of the season."
Patrick Henry, which was sporting a 4-1-2 record heading into the holidays last month, will count on Moreno and others to push them toward a CIF title as the season moves along.
Mission Times Courier recently caught up with Moreno for an interview.

## What age did you begin

 playing soccer and what got you interested in the sport?I started playing soccer at around the age of 5 . The thing that most got me into the beautiful game was my father because he would just kick the ball around with me at such a young age. One day, he took me to practice with a feam but I didn't like it at first. So, I told my dad that I would come back and play when I was 5 years old. Ever since then, I've been playing soccer.

What are your goals you want to accomplish both individually

## and as a team this season?

Individually this season, I just want to have as much fun as I can because it's my last year here and I want to enjoy it. As a team, I really hope we can make it to CIF and win it. I believe in our team this year a lot and we all work really well with each other most of the time.

## What else are you involved in at school besides soccer?

Besides soccer, I am not involved in any clubs or anything like that because soccer has always been my life. I wake up, go to school go to practice, do homework, and then sleep.

## Do you plan to go to college next fall and any hopes of playing soccer at that level?

I do plan on going to community college next fall and I do plan on playing at the college level if not higher.

## What advice would you have for any young boys wanting to come out for the team next

 season?If anyone wants to come out and try out for the Patrick Henry boys soccer team, come do it. It's one of my best experiences that I have done during high school. You make new friends, meet people with the same love of the sport you have, and you are just going to have so much fun. You will not regret it.
—Dave Thomas is a San Diegobased freelance sports writer. Reach him at hoopsthomas@yahoo.com.


## Soroptimists

CONTINUED FROM Page 11
"San Diego is the leader in the nation in fighting human trafficking," he concluded. "With our help, we could be just that much better."
The pre-Thanksgiving community breakfast is sponsored each year by Soroptimist International of La Mesa, a nonprofit volunteer service organization of women, active and retired, working together to improve the lives of women and girls.
Soroptimist, which means
"best for women," was started in Oakland, California in 1921
and now has clubs in about 124 countries and territories, including several throughout San Diego County.
In 2011, local Soroptimists formed STAT! (Soroptimists Together Against Trafficking), to assist victims and survivors.
As part of its work annually, STAT seeks out survivors of trafficking who are trying to improve their lives through education or training and presents them with Soroptimist "Live Your Dream" cash awards that recipients can use to offset any cost associated with their attaining higher education.
-Reach Dave Schwab at reporter@sdnews.com.


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Time to save.


The Henry Circle of Friends Club members at their Winter Wonderland Dance

## Circle of Friends annual dance

On Friday, Dec. 6, the Circle of Friends Club held their Winter Wonderland Dance at Ascension Lutheran Church in Allied Gardens.
Parents had the chance to see their children interacting in a fun, accepting, safe and wonderful environment. Students pitched in to set up, break down, contributed food and drinks and supported the club's objective of providing positive interaction both in and outside the school environment and to help the students with special needs grow socially.
"Ms. Reitman and I are always grateful when other
teachers support our efforts. Lisa Achenbach, our new speech and language pathologist joined us for the first time, and English teacher Katie Scarafone and our new moderate to severe special education teacher Chelsea Scarafone were in attendance - a moth-er-and-daughter teaching team," said club advisor Jim Achenbach. "I'm always really impressed when our support staff turns out."

The following special education technicians also came this year: Tiffany Newman, Stephanie Nenigar, Russ Hall and Jessica Villa.

## Student of the Month

We are proud to have Zyah Cephus named as Patrick Henry High School's Student of the Month for December. She received this recognition due to her involvement in many student activities on campus and the glowing recommendations from her teachers and advisors.
Zyah is one of the standouts in our Choir Department. She has a tremendous voice and she sang the national anthem at our fall pep rally!
She has also been a member of our cheer program for all four years at Henry. She is a student athlete who is a leader on and off the field and court.
Zyah can always be counted on to support her teammates, provide words of encouragement and sets
a good example for all. She is also the AVID Club secretary and the president of Henry's BSU (Black Student Union). This year as BSU president, Zyah helped organize a field trip to SDSU and is about to start a volunteer group at Green Elementary to help tutor/mentor the elementary school kids. This volunteer effort will include many more members of the BSU and the plan is to go there bi-monthly during late start Mondays.

One of Zyah's teachers said the following: "She has been a pleasure to teach, coach and have in class. She is one of those students who leads by example and her joy and enthusiasm are contagious. Zyah is an awesome leader in my


Zyah Cephus (Photos courtesy PHHS)
class and always brings a positive attitude. She's such a pleasure to have in class because she not only is super positive and kind with all of her peers, but she also works hard to create the best work she can. Some of her greatest gifts are bringing people together in community, an energetic FUN and infectious spirit, and she's always willing to help and go above and beyond what is asked of her. She is most-deserving of this honor."

## Unicef Club holds ‘Big Sleep Out’

PHHS's UNICEF Club hosted the first ever "Big Sleep Out" as a fundraiser on Dec. 7. The Big Sleep Out involved spending the night "under the stars" at Henry in the quad as an act of solidarity with the homeless population across the globe.

The fundraiser was hosted and endorsed by UNICEF (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund). UNICEF aids more than 1.990 countries faced with disaster. The Big Sleep Out was meant to give students a tiny insight into the reality of homelessness. Another hope was to send a message to the world's political leaders to enact compassionate policy or find solutions for homelessness locally and the global refugee crisis that affects us all.

Club advisor Nicole Sakelios and teacher Karl Bolton sponsored the event with the help of club president Layla Karim. The night included playing board games, watching videos about homelessness problems, eating pizza, and sleeping outside on a cold December night (which included rain).
"We had a great turnout, 25 of my fellow students came to Henry with their sleeping bags in hand, ready to spend have a sleepover under the stars at school," Karim reported after the event. "All participants, myself included, had such a fun, valuable experience watching movies, eating pizza, and playing spikeball. Although the ground was wet from rain and temperatures reached the 40s, the next morning we all debriefed the
event and came to the consensus that having a bed to sleep in and a roof over our heads are privileges that we should never take for granted. The act of sleeping outdoors on the hard concrete, in similar conditions faced by homeless every day, allowed us to show our solidarity with the 70.1 million refugees and homeless globally. Coordinating and participating in this event was a once-in-a-lifetime experience that has broadened my gratitude and completely transformed my outlook on homelessness. I'm extremely grateful for participants' cooperation, Henry faculty's support, and UNICEF Club officers for allowing me the opportunity to bring UNICEF's Big Sleep Out event to my community."

## Articulation night

PHHS is happy to host our annual eighth grade articula tion night to help families understand the process of enrolling their student for the fall at Henry. Everyone is invited to join us on Tuesday, Feb. 4, in PHAME (Patrick Henry Arts, Media and Entertainment) Center. The
meeting will begin at $6 \mathrm{p} . \mathrm{m}$. and is scheduled to last one hour.
At articulation night, you will learn about:

- New student enrollment (by appointment, call 619-286-7700) - Course offerings/selections
- Graduation requirements
- College entrance preparation
- The eighth grade tour and pep rally coming on March 20 from 10-11:30 a.m. (All families are welcome, please put this date on your calendar.) Students from Lewis and Pershing will arrive on a school bus but all local schools are encouraged to join us as well.
You will also have the opportunity to meet the PHHS counselors!


# PHHS robotics program needs mentors 

Patrick Henry Patribots program is looking for mentors. Can you help? Please fill out the form through the link provided below. They're looking for mentors in the following areas:

- Programming (Java)
- Design (SolidWorks/CAD)
- Electrical, pneumatics
- Build (fabricating parts)

SEE PHHS, Page 19


## Just Listed!

Beautiful and meticulously maintained 2 story home with 4 bedrooms and 3 baths, family room \& enclosed patio.

Great location on a corner lot close to Lake Murray and Benchley-Weinberger Elementary.


## Patrick Henry cheer competes in first CIF competition

The Patrick Henry cheer team went to its first CIF competition on Dec. 7, at Carlsbad High School where the team took third overall in the "Spirit Side-Line" category.
Henry had a perfect score on its side-line spirit cheer. The cheer team would have been more competitive, however 10 minutes prior to the final performance, there was an injury that caused a few last-minute changes, including re-working two whole stunt groups, that caused the team to lose a few points overall.

I'm super proud of our team for the first efforts in the competitive arena," said cheer coach advisor Terri Clark. "They worked really hard over the past month."

- Marketing (sponsor letters, etc.)
- Financial (budgeting)
- Carpentry (building the practice field)

Times and commitments are flexible, anything from five hours and up. With some areas,
such as marketing or finances, it can be a mix of classroom time with the kids and email for follow up.
We are going to need people to support the team from Jan. 4 -April 1. Meetings occur at 9 a.m.-9 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays, and after school until 9 p.m.
To volunteer, fill out the online form found at bit.ly/39yx8bb.

## Henry choir shines on KUSI performance

The award-winning Patrick Henry High School Choir performed on KUSI's "Good Morning San Diego" on Thursday, Dec. 5. The local school's on-air performance of "Christmas on Broadway" and "Silver Bells" were featured in the annual "Songs of The Holiday Season" that aired Dec. 24 at 8 p.m. and Christmas Day at 11 a.m. on KUSI.
Each year, only a few school choirs out of hundreds are selected for this wonderful opportunity. It's the second year Patrick Henry High's Bel Canto choir has been tabbed to perform live on air and at least the fourth year in a row they were featured in the annual holiday program.

The group's in-studio performance earned applause from the cast and crew of the morning show and an emotional reaction from one of the experienced


PHHS Bel Canto Choir onstage at KUSI studios

volunteers on hand to usher the students on and off stage
"It's the first time in 10 years that a choir has made me cry," said Debra Brallas, after hearing Bel's rendition of "Christmas On Broadway."

A community member, Barbara Martinez, sent Principal Gillingham the following note after hearing the performance, "I heard your choir sing this morning on KUSI. I would like to say I thought they were just awesome! They were so sharp and the medley was perfect. Please pass on to the gifted group of students and the faculty involved how wonderful they sounded, as well as the stunning presentation as the students performed. It was a real pleasure."
The upbeat holiday medley was also featured in the group's Winter Concert held Dec. 12.

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## Winner of nine Tony Awards in 1965 and still touching audiences

Henry presents ‘Fiddler on the Roof' at PHAME!
worldwide today with its humor, warmth and honesty, "Fiddler on the Roof" is a musical theater tradition.

Set in the little village of Anatevka, the story centers on Tevye, a poor dairyman, and his five daughters. With the help of a colorful and tight-knit Jewish community, Tevye tries to protect his daughters and instill them with tradition in the face of changing social mores and growing anti-Semitism of Czarist Russia.
Rich in historical and ethnic detail, this universal theme cuts across barriers of race, class, nationality, and religion, leaving audiences crying tears of laughter, joy and sadness.

The vision of this production's creative team is to preserve the honesty of the period, yet create an experience for the audience that is both uplifting and historically accurate. "Fiddler on the Roof" is one of the best written stories in musical theater history. Its universal themes of the importance of tradition in community, the conflict between generations, the struggle of co-existing cultures, and the strength of family touch us all.
Bringing this vision to PHAME! will be artistic director Christine Carr, technical director Matthew Kalal, costume designer Jan Wilson, choreographers Chelsea Montgomery and Astrid Pett, and music director Luis Sherlinlee.
Also helping lead the way are the following students: stage manager Joel Tanner, assistant stage
manager Brianna Aguilera, or chestra conductor Ethan Ackland, lighting tech Laura Schull, sound tech Cori Andrews-McIntosh, and actor/singer Diego Luis Sherlinlee as Tevye. In addition is a very very talented group of actors, singers, dancers, musicians and crew who will be working hard to complete this wonderful show! Don't miss this universal story of hope, love and acceptance, a stunning, joyful and jubilant musical masterpiece. "Fiddler on the Roof" runs Feb. 6-8 at 6 p.m. in the PHAME! theater on the Patrick Henry campus. There will also be a special matinee performance Sunday, Feb. 9, at 2 p.m Tickets will be sold at the ticket office 30 minutes prior to showtime. Check the Patrick Henry website for more details to come

## Patrick Henry Teacher of the Year

Patrick Henry High School is proud to announce that World Language Department chairperson and Spanish teacher extraordinaire Mr. Edward Stanko was named as our Teacher of the Year for 2020!
Stanko was born and raised in San Diego. From birth to 4 years of age, he spent weekdays with his grandparents while his parents
were busy working; his grandparents, David and Mary Diaz, would speak to him and spend time with him in Spanish, and it was during these years that his exposure to the Spanish language and culture began. All throughout his childhood, he would be exposed on a daily basis to Spanish and English, and would experience the culture - including his favorite tradition
of the tamalada - when his family would gather to make tamales a traditional Mexican food made during the holidays.

When Stanko was a freshman at Mt. Carmel High School, a California Distinguished School in San Diego's North County, he began his formal study of Spanish

SEE PHHS, Page 23

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# Happenings at the Allied Gardens/Benjamin Library 

By KATHRYN JOHNSON

Are you interested in helping our community? Would you like a voice in the programming and initiatives of your library? If so, our Friends of the Library group would love your help as a board member. They are currently recruiting for various positions and only require attendance at a once monthly meeting and assistance at their quarterly book sales. For more information, please contact he library at 619-533-3970.
Winter Reading Challenge 2020: Readers of all ages are welcome to join us for a winter reading challenge that started Jan. 1. Read five books or five hours. All finishers will receive a pencil pouch, admission for two to the Maritime Museum, and a Subway sandwich coupon.

## PROGRAMMING FOR ADULTS

Be sure to stop in for your program calendar, which details all our regular, ongoing programs such as Life in Stories, Mindfulness \& Meditation, Mystery Buffs, and Fitness Fun.
Using Herbs for Detox \& Pain Relief: Start 2020 with the amazing powers of herbs and plants, aka "our forgotten allies." Join us Saturday, Jan. 11, at 10
a.m. Participants will also gain insights into how to choose medicinal plants to heal and detoxify.
Vegan Adventures: Tuesday, Jan. 14, at 6 p.m. Are you a longtime vegan looking for new recipes or someone new to veganism and not sure where to start? All are welcome to this free, live cooking demonstration and sampling. January's theme will be Asian lettuce wraps and orange chicken and rice


Book Club: On Tuesday Jan. 14, at 1 p.m. the Book Club will discuss "A Gentleman in Moscow" by Amor Towles, the New York Times bestselling author of "Rules of Civility." This a transporting novel about a man who is ordered to spend the rest of his life inside a luxury hotel.

Free Tax Help Returns: Starting Monday, Feb. 3, we will once again host AARP to assist patrons with their taxes. This free tax preparation service gives special attention to taxpayers over the age of 60 but is also open to taxpayers of all ages with low and moderate incomes. Mondays, 9:30 a.m. -4 p.m. and Fridays, 12:30-5 p.m. Feb. 3-April 10. No appointments. First come, first served.

## PROGRAMMING FOR YOUTH

With school back in session on Jan. 6, we'll return to our regular youth programming schedule: Baby Storytime, Toddler Storytime, Yoga Storytime, Preschool Storytime, Homework Help, Tween Scene, Tween Gaming. Please come in for a calendar or check it out online at bit.ly/2SZTPiy.
Chinese New Year Celebration: Saturday, Feb. 1, at 11 a.m. We will celebrate the year of the rat with stories, crafts and a Lion Dance!

Schedule alert: All San Diego Public library branches will be closed on Jan. 20, for Martin Luther King Jr Day.
-Kathryn Johnson is managing librarian of the Allied Gardens/ Benjamin Brach Library.

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## San Carlos Library news

## By DAVID EEE

The staff of the San Carlos Branch Library would like to wish everyone in our community a happy 2020. We are very excited for the new year and are looking forward to the exciting programs and events we have on deck in the coming months. We look forward to seeing you at the library!
Art show: Oil paintings depicting scenes of Southern California will be featured by landscape and plein air artist Ken Roberts from Jan. 8 to Feb. 4. A San Diego native, Roberts spent his youth hiking and camping in the desert and mountains of San Diego's back country. A resident of San Carlos, he can be seen painting on location at Lake Murray and Mission Trails. His reception will be on Jan. 18, noon-2 p.m. Refreshments will be served.
Center for Sustainable Energy: Join us for a workshop presented by the Center for Sustainable Energy on Jan. 17, at 2-3 p.m. They will outline the fundamentals of solar electricity and solar water heating. It will provide homeowners with valuable consumer awareness tips that will help them feel confident when evaluating solar technology for their homes. CSE is a mission-driven nonprofit organization providing clean energy program design, management and technical advisory services.
Author talk: On Jan. 24, at 2-3 p.m., author Matt Coyle will discuss his new Rick Cahill crime novel, "Lost Tomorrows." Coyle knew he wanted to be a crime writer when he was 14 and his father gave him "The Simple Art of Murder" by Raymond Chandler. He graduated with a degree in English from University of California, Santa Barbara. His foray into crime fiction was delayed for 30 years as he spent time in various careers.
Poetry open mic: Join People Enjoying Poetry (PEP) on Jan. 25 at their new time of 2-4 p.m. for the bi-monthly poetry open mic. PEP will now be meeting on the fourth Saturday of every other month. Share your own work or read someone else's poetry. We'll collaborate to create a collection of poetry and the group will offer feedback at the poet's request.
All about seals: Come learn all about seals on Jan. 22 from 2:30-3:30 p.m. Learn what kind of animal the harbor seal is, what seals do, and how to tell the difference between a seal and a sea lion. Presented by Pam Thomas from the Seal Society Sierra Club San Diego. Ages 5-10.
Paws to Read: Read aloud to therapy dogs on Jan. 25 at 11


Author Matt Coyle will discuss his latest crime thriller "Lost Tomorrows" Jan. 24. (Images courtesy San Carlos Library)
 a.m.-noon. Studies show that children can improve their confidence and reading skills by reading aloud to animals. Dogs make the perfect nonjudgmental audience. All therapy dogs are provided courtesy of Love on a Leash, a foundation for pet-provided therapy.
Challenge Island: Challenge Island encourages creativity critical thinking, and social skills while instilling a love of science and engineering. On Feb. 12, from 4-5:15 p.m., kids will learn about the job of an archaeologist as it relates to the movie character, Indiana Jones. They will then design a course to roll a boulder around a temple corner. Ages 8-12. Registration required. Call 619-527-3430 to sign up.

## DATES TO REMEMBER

- Jan. 15, 4-5:30 p.m.: San Carlos Friends of the Library monthly meeting
- Jan. 20: CLOSED for Martin Luther King Jr. Day.
- Jan. 31, 1:30-3:30 p.m.: Friends of the Library only, Used Book Pre-Sale.
- Feb. 1, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m.: SCFOL Monthly Used Book Sale.
- Feb. 13, 12:30-2 p.m.: Library Book Club, "In the Garden of Beasts" by Erik Larson.
-David Ege is the branch manager of the San Carlos Branch Library.

ONGOING EVENTS

‘Constructed
Mythologies: Luis González Palma' Through Jan. 26 "Constructed Mythologies: Luis González Palma" celebrates this prolific and influential Latin American artist, who is well known for an expansive practice investigating the cultural identity of his native Guatemala, sociopolitical constructs, and spirituality to convey complex emotions that define the human condition. His approach is layered with religious iconography, poetry, magical realism, and physical interventions, as well as bold colors and shapes referencing art historical movements. Art Exhibition in the SDSU Downtown Gallery, 725 West Broadway. Thursday through Monday 11 a.m. -4 p.m. (closed Tuesday and Wednesday).
Free admission.

## FEATURED EVENTS

Friday, Jan. 10

## God of Carnage

 Through Feb. 9"God of Carnage" relates an evening in the lives of two couples, residents of a Brooklyn neighborhood, who meet to discuss a playground incident. Alan and Annette's son hit Michael and Veronica's son in the face with a stick, resulting in two broken teeth. The four of them agree to discuss the incident civilly, but, as the night wears on and drinks are imbibed, the polite veneer breaks down. The couples initially spar against each other, but the men gang up. Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. at the Lamplighters Community Theatre, 5915 Severin Drive, La Mesa. Tickets are: adults $\$ 23$; seniors, students, active military $\$ 20$; groups of 10 or more \$18. Visit lamplighterslamesa.com.


Tool
And on Jan. 12
Prog-rock icons Tool bring their mind-bending music
and light show to San Diego for two nights - Jan. 10 and 12. 7:30 p.m. at Viejas Arena, 5500 Campanile Drive. Tickets start at $\$ 79.50$, available at bit. $\mathrm{ly} / 356 \mathrm{gVHt}$.

Saturday, Jan. 11


Brew Community Market The Brew Community Market brings the community together by creating this diverse venue of local artisans, craft home goods, hand-made jewelry, bath soaps, scented candles, and more. The Brew Community Market is located in the parking lot to the side of the Brew Coffee Spot building, 6101 Lake Murray Blvd. in La Mesa, and hosts up to 25 different vendors. This is a monthly event. Come shop 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. from many local businesses in the community. For more information, visit brewcoffeespot.com.

Sunday, Jan. 12
EDITOR'S PICK


Gregory Page Hovelian concert International performing songwriter and recording artist Gregory Page Hovelian returns to the stage at Mission Trails Church on Jan. 12 with new songs and old favorites to share. Gregory's genre-bending original music has taken him to major music festivals all over the world, including the Woodford Music Festival in Queensland, Australia and London's 02 Arena. He records for the V2 record label in the Netherlands. Recently, Gregory toured North America with Jason Mraz and later in January, he will travel to New Orleans as an official showcase artist at the Folk Alliance International New Orleans. The free Jan. 12 concert will be held at Mission Trails Church, 4880 Zion Ave., from 3 to 4 p.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 14


Cafecito Networking The San Diego County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce presents an opportunity to meet new "Referral Partners" who can help you grow your business. There are no fees or attendance requirements. But the chamber asks participants to support the local venue selected. The main focus is to bridge the gap from various groups and networks in the South and East (San Diego) County with other professionals who are interested in increasing their referability. 8-9:30 a.m. at Brew Coffee Spot, 6101 Lake Murray Blvd. register at bit.ly/2YSCusY.

## Sunday, Jan. 19

## 'When Mom

Chooses to Die
Hemlock Society of San Diego presents first-hand accounts of experiences with California's medical aid-in-dying law. Witnesses, including two daughters and a friend (Faye Girsh), will recount their experiences with planned deaths via California's End-of-Life Option Act. A representative from End-ofLife Choices California will tell participants about their organization and a group discussion will follow the presentation. The event will be held at Vision, 4780 Mission Gorge Place, from 1:30 to 3 p.m. Free program and free parking. Visit hemlocksocietysandiego.org.

Saturday, Jan. 25


Homebrew Kombucha
Hands On Workshop The Fermenters Club will host a class that will cover how to make kombucha safely at home, including secondary flavoring. Participants will get a flight of seasonal kombucha flavors to taste. The experience also includes instruction on how to make kombucha at home; a live kombucha culture (SCOBY) to take home; and a take-home 16-ounce bottle of kombucha that you will flavor
in class with seasonal fruits and herbs. $\$ 50$ for one person, $\$ 95$ for two available at bit.ly/2FfZBoc. 10:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at The Home Brewer, 2911 El Cajon Blvd.

Thursday, Jan. 30


Adventures By The Book Adventures By The Book will host a "Southern Lunch Ad venture" with New York Times bestselling Southern authors Kristin Harmel, Mary Alice Monroe and Kristy Woodson Harvey on a panel moderated by NYT bestselling author Kristina McMorris. Harmel is a No. 1 international bestselling novelist. Her latest novel is "The Winemaker's Wife." Monroe is a NYT bestselling author of environmental fiction; her current book is "The Summer Guests." Woodson Harvey is a NYT bestselling author; her current book is "The Southern Side of Paradise." McMorris is a NYT bestselling author; her current book is "Sold on a Monday." Noon at Claim Jumper in La Mesa, 5500 Grossmont Center Drive. The event is ticketed \$38 per person) and is open to the public. Visit adventuresbythebook.com


BIG Salsa Festival Through Feb. 3
BIG Salsa Festival San Diego is a four-day Latin event featuring some of the greatest names in performing arts and music! Each day is packed with dance classes, amazing performances, live band concerts, and Latin dance parties into the early morning hours. Once you experience BIG Salsa Festival, it will surely become one of the premier events your look forward to every year. If you've always wanted to learn how to dance, this is the perfect beginning. If you are looking to improve and advance your techniques, BIG San Diego offers classes for beginners, challenges for the advanced, and everything in between. Come learn from the best the world and our local community has to offer. At the San Diego Marriott Mission Valley, 8757 Rio San Diego Drive.

Ticket prices and times vary Visit bigsalsafestival.com

Friday, Jan. 31


Inside the Actor's Process: Love Scenes Through Feb. 1
Grossmont College Stagehouse Theater presents: In a world that feels saturated with negativity, a showcase of the best parts of life is long overdue, even if sometimes the characters in these love stories betray mixed motives, less-than-stellar ideals, and imperfect behavior. This behind-the-scenes look at how the theatrical artist engages with love stories includes vignettes featuring contemporary lovers, classic lovers, and everything in-between. What makes love scenes so magnetic? The times may change, but more than anything else, our need to find someone to connect with never does. 7:30-9 p.m. Friday and Saturday; an additional 2-4 p.m. performance on Saturday at the Stagehouse Theatre, 8800 Grossmont College Drive, El Cajon. \$10 tickets available bit.ly/2u995iH.

Saturday, Feb. 1


Brew Community Market The Brew Community Market brings the community together by creating this diverse venue of local artisans, craft home goods, hand-made jewelry, bath soaps, scented candles, and more. The Brew Community Market is located in the parking lot to the side of the Brew Coffee Spot building, 6101 Lake Murray Blvd. in La Mesa, and hosts up to 25 different vendors. This is a monthly event. Come shop 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. from many local businesses in the community. For more information, visit brewcoffeespot.com.

CONTINUED FROM Page 5

## out in the community, mak-

 ing it convenient to donate.To be eligible to donate blood, you must be at least 17 years old, weigh at least 114 pounds and be in general good health. Anyone who is eligible to donate blood and has O-negative or O-positive type blood is encouraged to make an appointment immediately at SanDiegoBloodBank.org or by calling 1-800-4MYSDBB. Walk-ins are also welcome.

## STEMM FOUNDATION MINI GOLF CHALLENGE

The Henry Cluster STEMM Foundation has announced the fifth Mini Golf Challenge for all schools and youth groups which will be held on Saturday, April 18. The 2020 event will be held at the Mission Trails Church at 4880 Zion Avenue in Allied Gardens and is open to all school and youth groups.

There is no registration fee for student or youth group teams. Teams design and build a mini golf hole that reflects this year's theme, and bring it to the mini golf course on the day of the event. During the Mini Golf Challenge, team members will interact with attendees (the golfers) to share what it was like working as a team, how they came up with their ideas, new knowledge they've ac quired during the process, and other aspects of their experience. Event attendees will vote on the "Favorite Hole" and the winning team will bring back to their school the Henry Cluster STEMM Foundation Mini Golf Challenge Trophy for display.
Teams may range in size from two to six students. Teams will work with an adult mentor volunteer (a teacher or parent/guardian) to collect the starter kit, design and build the hole, set up and take down the hole at the Mission Trails Church, and prepare submission materials. Detailed registration packets will be distributed to adult team mentors, and will also be available for download.
Scott Bailey, president of the HC STEMM Foundation

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Two major projects for Del Cerro are still on hold. The first is the proposed Maintenance Assessment District (MAD). The city is still working on several proposed MADs throughout the city that were submitted prior to the one for Del Cerro. The second project is the

SCAC
continued from Page 16
3. Assembly member Shirley N . Weber and the California state Assembly honored me with an award as Business Woman Leader in the 79th District. A few months later, Dr. Weber honored San Carlos Area Council President Mark Schulze as Male Business Leader in the 79th District. Congratulations, Dr. Weber, on being honored as San Diego Union Tribune's 2019 San Diegan of the Year for her work on AB 392, which was signed into law by Gov. Gavin Newsom in August. This legislation changes when California police officers can use deadly force from when it is "reasonable" to when it is "necessary" to prevent imminent death or serious bodily injury to the officer or to another person.
4. At our meeting in May, cannabis nurse Elisabeth Mack, RN, MBA, spoke to a riveted crowd with not an empty seat in the room. Nurse "E-Mack" delivered information valuable to all interested in improving our health and well-being without succumbing to prescribed drugs that address certain symptoms while creating unwanted side effects.
5. The sunshine along with a breeze off of Lake Murray, the music, the food and drinks, the scent of kettle corn wafting through the park, the sounds of laughing children - it added up to a fantastic Fourth of July for all. President Schulze and I ran into

## PHHS

Continued from Page 19
and excelled in it all through high school. It was during his junior year of high school that he knew he wanted to teach Spanish. He majored in World Literature at UC San Diego, received his teaching credential from CSU San Marcos, and in 2018, earned his MAT (Master of Arts in Teaching) from SDSU. He is currently working on his second master's degree in Foreign Language Teaching from Michigan State University via their online program.
Stanko's philosophy of teaching language is simple: "As language teachers, we need to be teaching in the language, making it accessible to all students, rather than teaching about_the language." He believes in the power of comprehensible input, showing students that it is possible to understand

All People's Church and they are waiting on some additional information from the city as well.
Crusaders Soccer's spring recreational division, Little League and Navajo girls fastpitch softball are all finishing registrations and in February, there will be a great number of children practicing during the week and playing games on the weekends at virtually every park and grass field in
the Navajo area. Drive carefully, there is always the possibility of a child running out into the street to chase a ball
Happy New Year and join us on Thursday, Jan. 25, at 7 p.m. for the next quarterly meeting of the Del Cerro Action Council at Temple Emanu-El.
-Jay Wilson is secretary of the Del Cerro Action Council.

Jay Wilson at the Allied Gardens July summer concert the follow ing evening. Jay said that the Lake Murray Fireworks committee had met its $\$ 85,000$ goal by the end of the evening.
6. At our August meeting, City Council member and mayoral candidate, Barbara Bry, spoke about her history as a San Diegan, journalist and City Council member for District 1 She's focused on short-term vacation rentals and their impacts on our communities, the controversial scooters that crisscross and litter the San Diego cityscape, and the future status of Balboa Park. She vows to fight the commercialization of the park and says parking should remain free for park visitors.
7. The 2018-19 winter rains brought us a golden array of California poppies everywhere. A photo I shot of Cowles Mountain overlooking waves of poppies was featured on 9-21-19 day at the U.S. Post Office, Navajo Station on a commemorative envelope. On that Saturday, when the date coincided with our ZIP code, our Navajo post office celebrated with a few words from SCAC President Mark Schulze and Postmaster Lisa Baldwin, followed by refreshments and a special cake.
8. President Schulze and I enjoyed a night at the theater watching "33-1/3: House of Dreams." a life's work of San Carlos dentist, Brad Ross. His father was Stan Ross, who was the proprietor of Goldstar Records, which churned out hit after hit for 33-1/3 years
of its existence. " $33-1 / 3$ " is also a reference to the speed at which a vinyl record would rotate on a turntable. It was a remarkable play with all the music we grew up to: Cher, Tina Turner, Ricky Valens, The Beach Boys and so much more.
9. Supervisor Nathan Fletcher spoke to us at our meeting in November about all the issues that the Board of Supervisors has been working on. This includes homelessness, mental health, veteran affairs and increasing ridership on MTS. Studies have found that expanding the freeway merely leads to an increase in usage and congestion. Seattle provides an example of light rail bussing, bike lanes, with walk paths and housing closer to where people work. Solving our traffic congestion problems will also address air quality issues.
10. In December, the SCAC hosted a Holiday Potluck party as a nice wrap-up to the year.

So farewell, 2019. We are looking forward to a lovely 2020. Please join us at our next meeting on March 4, at 6:30 p.m., at the San Carlos Branch Library, 7265 Jackson Drive.
If you wish to be added to the Interested Persons List, have a topic you would like to learn or give a presentation about, please contact San Carlos Area Council Vice President Patricia Mooney at patty@crystalpyramid.com.
-Patricia Mooney is vice president of the San Carlos Area Council. Email patty@crystalpyramid.com.


Edward Stanko (Courtesy PHHS)
and communicate with Spanish, and that communication is not simply a conjugation list of verbs in the different tenses. He emphasizes that language is much more than what we traditionally think of such as translating and conjugating accurately; language is
culture, communication, and the ability to see the world and its peoples through another lens.
As the World Language Department chair, Stanko has shared his teaching philosophy with the department and district through special pull out meetings. He is credited for transforming the language department from using worksheets and book work toward using real world texts, articles, songs, and short stories that carry interesting facts for the students grappling with translating the information. It has made learning language fun and interesting as students are able to respond to the new vocabulary as it's introduced in the text.

Mr. Stanko is admired and loved by his students because he makes learning Spanish fun and interesting every day.
-Elizabeth Gillingham is principal of Patrick Henry High School.

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## PUZZLIES <br> ANSWERS ON PAGE 15

## SUDOKU

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

| 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  | 8 |  |
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| 2 |  |  |  |  |  | 8 | 6 | 1 |
|  |  | 1 | 4 |  |  |  |  |  |
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