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San Diego Community News Network

# San Diego Uptown News



(l to r) Co-owners Rich, Winnie and Guy Hanford behind the counter at Kensington Video, which will close at the end of February after 32 years. Not pictured is Pam, Guy's sister, the store's fourth co-owner. (Photo by Hutton Marshall)

## The final days of Kensington Video

By Karla Amador

When you walk into Kensington Video, you will notice an authenticity that is unique in its broad range of film genres stacking on shelves, from comedies to black-and-whites and even some rarely seen silent films. You will see walls covered with bricolage of some of the best films made in history, such as iconic bobble heads, mobiles, standees and movie posters, such as "Giant," the 1956 classic with James Dean. It feels like you're walking into a film connoisseur's haven and it's an excellent place for browsing if you're not sure quite what you're looking for. When in doubt, there's no need to hesitate as you can always count on Guy Hanford, the co-owner ready to assist at any given moment.

The store, one of the last of its kind, will officially close its doors on Feb. 28.

Ray Beattie, a loyal customer for 14 years and a high school history teacher, often comes in to rent film documentaries for his history class.

"It'll be sad when they officially close shop for good," Beattie said.

Guy, who operates the store with his parents, Rich and Winnie, and his sister Pam Hanford, said they are closing shop for many reasons, one of which is their mutual desire to retire.

"We are still a vibrant business, but we know that many people prefer coming into a store to browse, interact and discover new titles that our customers may have overlooked," Guy said. "However, the customer base has declined and the business is not what it used to be due to so many options for movie viewing, and a storefront has great difficulty in com-

see Video page 23

## New arrivals at Bread and Cie

Jeremy Ogul | Contributing Editor

Some of them fled their homes when the men with guns showed up. Some of them never knew a home, surviving only in tents scattered across barren refugee camps. Many of them left everything behind for the chance to get a basic education in the U.S.

language and American culture before they are placed in standard math, science and history classes with other students their age.

"We wanted to tell the story of their arrival and travel and how they came to be here," said Lynn Susholtz, the North Park-based artist who led the art project with teachers at Crawford. "It's not well



Saïda, a 14-year-old Kenyan immigrant who recently arrived in San Diego, is one of the artists whose work is on display at Bread and Cie. (Photo by Jeremy Ogul)

All of them are now new students at Crawford High School in City Heights, and their autobiographical artwork is on display this month in a show titled "Hello, My Name Is..." at Hillcrest's Bread and Cie.

The students come from some of the most impoverished and violent parts of the world: Ethiopia, Yemen, Vietnam, Somalia, China, Sudan, Vietnam, Guatemala, Burma and others. In their first year at Crawford High School, they take classes through the New Arrival Center, a district program that gives them a crash course in the English

known in most of San Diego that we have so many new immigrants from all over the world. Part of the purpose is to raise the visibility."

Each of the students used watercolor and felt-tipped pen to illustrate tags the size of index cards that hang by string from a clothesline along the café walls. Resembling name tags or luggage tags, the display suggests the thought of Tibetan prayer flags. Students illustrated one side of the tags with images of their past, present and future. On the reverse

see Arrivals page 21

## South Park TargetExpress delays opening

By Dave Schwab

The proposed opening of a TargetExpress store in South Park's remodeled Gala Food site on the corner of Grape and Fern streets has been delayed from summer until fall.

"We have adjusted our projected opening date to October 2015 in order to ensure the property meets or exceeds governmental codes and regulations," Target spokesperson Kristen Emmons said.

see TargetExpress, page 16

## Mid-City residents rally for Normal Heights dog park

By Catherine Spearnak

Ryan Zellers is so adamant Normal Heights needs a dog park that he spoke in favor of it before the San Diego City Council, and he doesn't even have a dog.

Zellers will get to exercise his support at noon this Sunday when the Normal Heights Community Association (NHCA) holds its first Mid-City Unleashed rally for an off-leash dog park in Normal Heights.

"The dog park would be the closest park for one-sixth of the licensed dogs in the city," said Ron Ferrero-Pham, president of the association. The park would be the city's 16th leash-free park. The total combined population for all the Mid-City communities, which could benefit from the park expansion, is

see DogPark page 21



Ron Ferrero-Pham, the organizer behind Mid-City Unleashed, stands with his boxer, Daisy, in Ward Canyon Park, which he and other locals hope will soon include an off-leash dog park. (Photo by Hutton Marshall)

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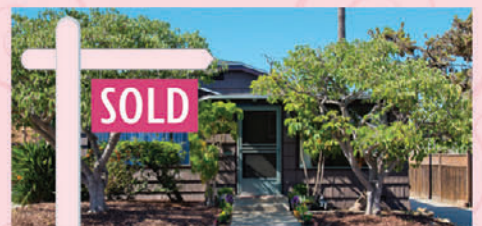
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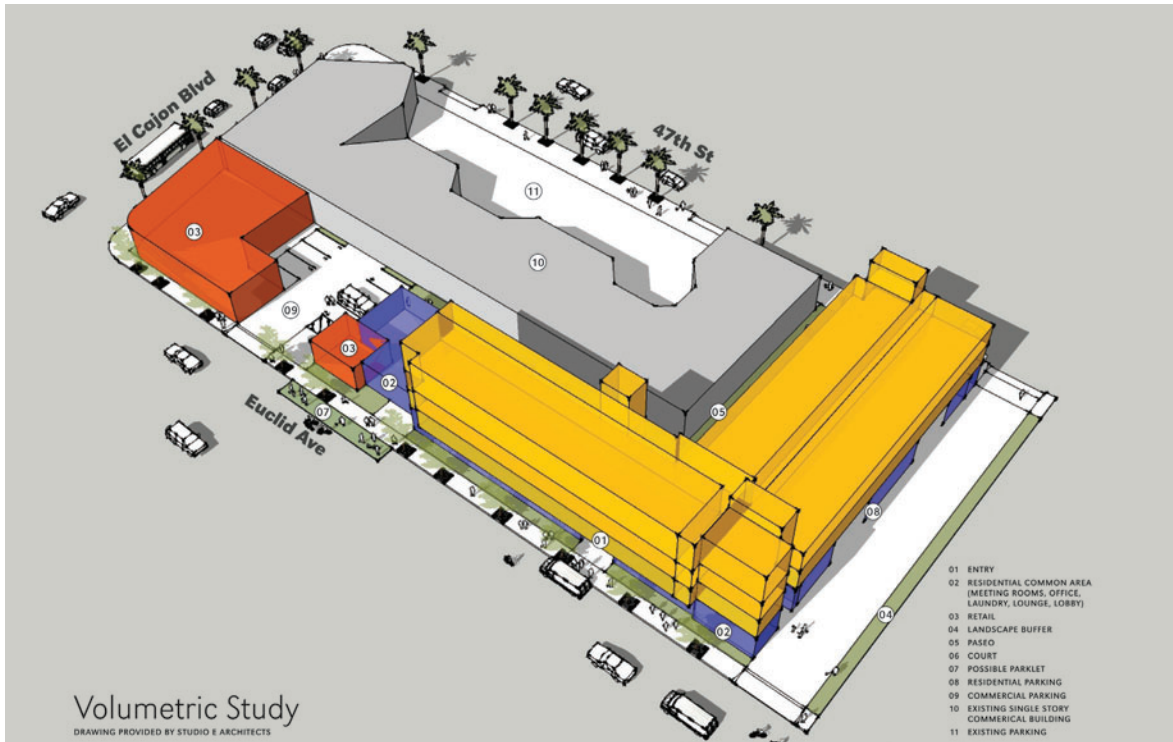
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A rough architectural layout presented to Talmadge residents on Feb. 11 for the Talmadge Gateway project (Courtesy of Studio E)

# KenTal planners discuss ‘Talmadge Gateway’ project

By Hutton Marshall

Talmadge residents convened Feb. 11 for what one community planner described beforehand as “the most significant meeting in a generation on the future of Talmadge.”

The monthly meeting of the Kensington-Talmadge Community Planning Group, held in a packed room in the new Copley-Price Family YMCA, centered on a 60-unit, mixed-use development for low-income seniors near El Cajon Boulevard and Euclid Avenue. While its significance to the surrounding area might not be apparent on the surface, to Talmadge residents, it marked what could one day become Talmadge’s long-awaited commercial center.

Talmadge, an 8,000-person residential neighborhood named after silent film stars Norma and Constance Talmadge, lies on the eastern edge of Kensington, a smaller but more commercially prosperous area just east of Interstate 15.

Residents at the meeting said Talmadge has long been overlooked by its neighbors, and that this development, while only planning for 3,000 square feet of retail space, could serve as a “gateway to the community.”

Starting off the meeting, David Moty, the planning group’s chair, reiterated the significance of the project, pointing out that it would follow San Diego’s City of Villages concept, which promotes development that encourages residents to work, socialize and shop in their home neighborhood.

Preliminary plans for the aptly named “Talmadge Gateway” project were detailed by architectural firm Studio E, commercial developers Wakeland Housing and the City Heights Community Development Corporation, which will secure funding for the project’s senior

housing component.

Studio E principals Erik Naslund and John Sheehan stressed that design elements presented were rough renderings subject to change. In their plans, a small commercial strip would occupy the northwest corner of El Cajon Boulevard and Euclid Avenue, while the building space further north on Euclid would serve as the residential component. With four stories in some portions, the building would be the tallest in the surrounding area.

Naslund, who formerly chaired San Diego’s Planning Commission, said the project relies on openness, transparency and connection to the community.

“All the work [by Studio E] is fitted hand and glove to the community in which it’s made,” Naslund said.

The project site lies on the cusp of Talmadge and a neighborhood often referred to as Little Saigon, a commercial district tightly packed with businesses catering to Vietnamese residents. The two areas are connected by El Cajon Boulevard, the main thoroughfare through the region. While the design puts the retail space on the corner of Euclid Avenue and El Cajon Boulevard — a midpoint between the two areas — several Talmadge residents expressed concern over the proximity of the retail space to the underserved, ethnically diverse and more crime-heavy stretch of El Cajon Boulevard.

Two times during the meeting, Moty urged the project’s architects to reconsider the placement of the retail space, requesting it be moved away from El Cajon Boulevard and further into Talmadge.

“I think you’re missing where your customer base is coming from,” Moty told the Studio E principals. “What’s on El Cajon Boulevard is not attracting the

residents of Talmadge.

“I actually think the spot you have that’s most valuable is the spot that’s the farthest away from El Cajon Boulevard,” he added.

Others disagreed with Moty, saying that the larger community should be brought into the conversation, and that the development should not cater singularly to Talmadge, a relatively affluent and less diverse neighborhood.

One Talmadge resident said moving retail away from the El Cajon Boulevard would hide it from much of the community.

“I’m not sure that people who didn’t live on Euclid [Avenue]

see KenTal, page 8

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# An optical affair

Trunk show raises glasses, awareness and funds

Morgan M. Hurley | Contributing Editor

Two Hillcrest businesses have joined their creative juices and are planning to serve up a stylish, eye-popping event that will function as both a charity fundraiser and a celebration.

Urban Optiks Optometry will present "Raise Your Glasses" — a vendor trunk show expo — on Feb. 24 from 5 – 9 p.m. at Martinis Above Fourth.

The expo will showcase 13 of Urban Optiks' 18 exclusive vendors, all coming together in one place to raise money for Optometry Cares, a nonprofit arm of the American Optometric Association (AOA) that offers eye exams and services to underserved individuals and assessments for infants born with eye issues.

Dr. Gary Klein, optometrist and proprietor of Urban Optiks, is excited about the expo, which will also celebrate the patients who have supported his business over the past seven years. He hopes to make it an annual event benefitting a different eye care-related charity each year.

"This is the first time we've done a trunk show outside of Urban Optiks, and we've never done anything this large before," he said. "This is big. [Trunk shows] are usually a buying experience for people who are in the business."

Generally, Klein said, when a trunk show is offered for the public, it's done at the retail store with one vendor's frame line, without competition. At the "Raise Your Glass" event, however, 11 different frame vendors will be participating side-by-side in a layout that encourages attendees to move from table to table talking to each vendor and perusing hundreds of frames — many manufactured in Paris — while enjoying live entertainment.

"It's really a rare treat that the vendors would all get together and do something like this," Klein said.

In addition, two high-definition digital lens manufacturers, Shamir Optical and Carl Zeiss Vision, will be on hand to explain the technology behind their high quality lenses.

"Really this whole thing snowballed because actually it's our seventh anniversary at Urban Optiks, so we wanted to have sort of a celebration and a 'thank you' to our patients for those years. We thought, 'What can we do that's fun? Let's try to get a trunk show

together and see if all our of our vendors who have supported us would be willing to do that,' and they were all on board about it," Klein said, adding that finding a worthy and relevant charity was the next thing on the agenda.



Nearly all of the exclusive vendors at Urban Optiks will display their goods on Feb. 24. (Photo by Morgan M. Hurley)

The theme came together progressively. "Raise your [martini] glasses" to celebrate the anniversary, "raise" awareness to eye health issues and raise money for those in need.

Klein is proud of the four ways he said Urban Optiks "redefines eyecare" — fashion: with classic, modern and vintage-inspired frames from all over the world; technology: the latest in diagnostic and digital lens equipment; expertise: a highly skilled staff; and experience: personalized attention and care.

Four opticians round out the staff at Urban Optiks: Kristy Cambone, Nathan Caracer, Erika Caesar and Holly Linden. All will participate in the trunk show on Feb. 24.

One would never know they are walking into an eye doctor's office from the care Klein and his staff have taken to create a warm and inviting space in the Cairo building on Park Boulevard. Klein calls the motif "technology meets vintage." Klein's high-tech examination area is hidden from view, but it too is a primary focus of his practice.

"This is all boutique; this is special," Klein said. "This was a commitment to bringing in the best eye wear and the best technology available together in one location. You can't be everything to everybody, but if someone is looking for something

unique and different, of high quality and they want to get the best vision possible with the lenses we use, that's what we're about.

People wear their glasses every day they want them to look good and to last," he added.

Vendors participating at the trunk show include: Gold & Wood Paris, Tom Davies London, Face a Face Paris, Anne et Valentin Paris, ic! Berlin Germany, i.a.eyeworks USA, Claire Goldsmith London, Oliver Goldsmith London, Traction Productions Paris, Booth & Bruce England and Matsuda Japan.

The event will kick off with a "Very Important Patient" (VIP) reception from 5 – 7 p.m. with hosted hors d'oeuvres, cocktails and a pre-expo shopping experience to thank patients for their years of patronage. Others wishing to attend the VIP reception can do so for \$15.

The trunk show itself, free to the public, runs from 7 – 9 p.m.

Martinis Above Fourth is located at 3940 Fourth Ave., on the second floor. For more information and to register, visit [urban-optiks.com/raise](http://urban-optiks.com/raise).

—Morgan M. Hurley can be reached at [morgan@sdenn.com](mailto:morgan@sdenn.com). ♦



Glasses on display in Urban Optiks (Photo by Morgan M. Hurley)

## 11 Critical Home inspection Traps to be aware of weeks before listing your home for sale

Mission Valley- According to industry experts, there are over 33 physical problems that will come under scrutiny during a home inspection when your home is for sale. A new report has been prepared which identifies the 11 most common of these problems, and what you should know about them before you list your home for sale.

Whether you own an old home or a brand new one, there are a number of things that can fall short of requirements during a home inspection. If not identified and dealt with, any of these 11 items could cost you dearly in terms of repair. That's why it's critical that you read this report before you list your home. If you wait until the building inspector flags these issues for you, you will almost certainly experience costly delays in the close of your home sale or, worse, turn prospective buyers away altogether. In most cases, you can make

a reasonable pre-inspection yourself if you know what you're looking for, and knowing what you're looking for can help you prevent little problems from growing into costly and unmanageable ones.

To help home sellers deal with this issue before their homes are listed, a free report entitled "11 things you need to know to pass your home inspection" has been compiled which explains the issues involved.

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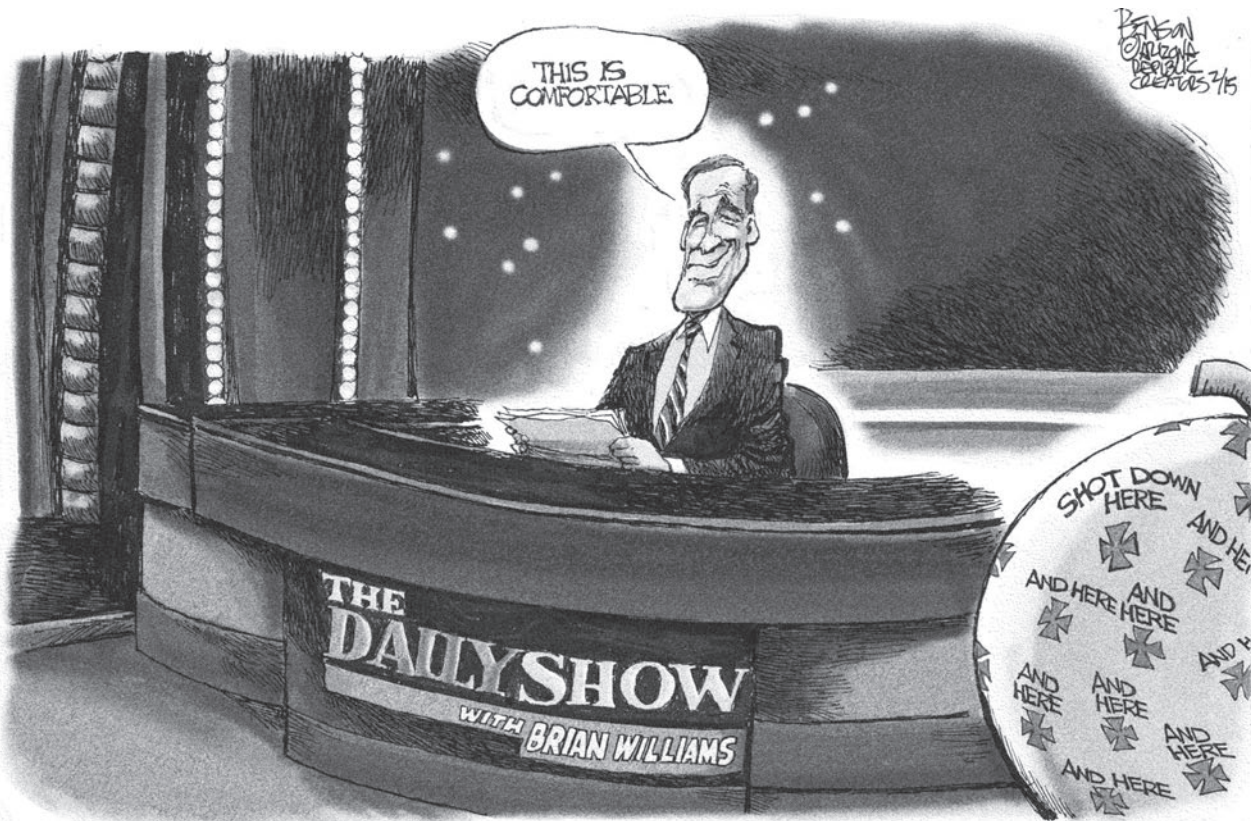
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## Editorial

### Black History Month: learning true history through culture

By Assembly Speaker Toni Atkins

February is Black History Month, which was first recognized in 1926 when Dr. Carter G.

Woodson, an African-American historian and educator, established Negro History Week. President Gerald Ford extended the celebration to a monthlong event in 1976, asking Americans to “seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history.”

Today, Black History Month is observed all over America, as schools, churches and communities honor the countless contributions that African-Americans have made to our society.

The theme for this year is “A Century of Black Life, History and Culture.”

This year’s theme invites us to learn about and celebrate the lives and achievements of African-Americans past and present. It also awakens our collective social conscience to the importance of giving our children a complete and accurate record of their country’s history.

Today’s school children are fortunate to be learning a more comprehensive record of American history. The stories of African-American heroes like Crispus Attucks, the

first American to be gunned down in the Revolutionary War, George Washington Carver who revolutionized the agricultural economy of the South, and Jackie Robinson whose contributions to the sport of baseball began the modern civil rights movement are an important part of our collective history which deserves recognition.

While previous generations were taught only part of our nation’s history, today’s students see a more complete picture, one that includes learning about the many African-Americans whose lives have helped shape American history. And while textbooks give us a record of historical events, art offers a more personal account of history and culture. Literature, theater and film allow audiences to step into someone else’s shoes — to see a snapshot of life as others experience it. That is why San Diego offers a wide variety of cultural events for Black History Month.

The San Diego African-American Advisory Council has teamed up with San Diego Urban Warriors to celebrate Black History Month with three days of theater, art, food and educational workshops highlighting Black history and culture. KuumbaFest, named after the Swahili word for creativity, runs Feb. 13 – 15 at the San Diego Repertory Theatre in Horton Plaza.

UC San Diego is also doing its part to

tell the multicultural history of America. With a celebration running from Jan. 25 to March 7, UCSD has assembled a program which brings together artists, musicians, historians, lecturers and filmmakers to celebrate the historical and artistic contributions that African-Americans have made to American culture. UCSD’s Black History Month festival also offers a modern perspective on black culture with receptions for the black queer community and other cross-cultural communities.

To move forward, we need to understand the past as it truly was. If America has always been racially and ethnically diverse, the nation has not always realized its multicultural history. And while we work to bring it out in the open today, there are others who are looking to downplay the contributions of all Americans. We must not let that happen. Let’s remember that black history and culture is American history and culture.

—Speaker Atkins proudly represents the people of coastal San Diego, from Imperial Beach, along the Mexican border, north to Solana Beach, and most of central San Diego. She previously served eight years on the San Diego City Council, and stepped in as acting mayor in 2005 after the resignation of the mayor. Atkins lives in the South Park/Golden Hill community of San Diego with her spouse Jennifer LeSar and their dogs, Haley and Joey. ♦

## Letters

### University Heights library

I am sympathetic with the efforts of the University Heights community, which is trying to “transform the historic Normal School Teachers Training Annex into a community center and replacement library.” [see “Lack of funding plagues UH library plans” Vol. 6 issue 3].

Normal Heights shares some library history with University Heights. In 1927, our first city library was a “used” building that had been the University Heights branch library located on the grounds of the old Garfield Elementary School between Louisiana and Mississippi streets on El Cajon Boulevard. When the new UH branch opened, this abandoned library building was moved to 3491 School St. at Mansfield in Normal Heights where it remained until late 1953 when it was closed, housed temporarily at 3435 Adams Ave., and consolidated with the Kensington Library on April 1, 1954.

For the record, Normal Heights has never had its own brand new, built-from-the-ground-up library. Also, for the record, I am

on the board of the Normal Heights Community Planning Group, but this letter is based on my own research and does not reflect the views of the NHCPG.

Suzanne Ledeboer (via email)  
Normal Heights

I am very supportive of the adaptive reuse of the Normal School Teachers Training Annex as a community center and library, however your article mentioned that one of the reasons for the need was the scrapping of a plan to build a new library in North Park. That is not true, the plans for a new library in North park are still alive and the Greater North Park Planning Group is planning to add it to their CIP list.

Sincerely,  
Lynn Whitehouse,  
North Park resident, former member of the North Park Library Task Force and former chair of the Greater North Park Planning Group.

Editor’s note: An article on North Park’s library plans is in the works.

### Fall year-round in University Heights

University Heights is such a wonderful place to live. I tripped and fell hard head first onto the pavement on Jan. 29 at Park Boulevard and Adams Avenue. I want to publicly acknowledge the five or six good Samaritans who immediately came to my assistance. I don’t think my hands and knees had stopped sliding across the cement before total strangers were there to ask me how hurt I was and how they could help. Thank you for caring and for your help. It’s comforting to live in a neighborhood where we care about one another. University Heights is a wonderful place to live or, if you must, to trip and fall.

Sincerely,  
Jim Ziegler  
619-260-1004 ♦

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FREE LEGAL ADVICE  
IN HILLCREST

California Western School of Law's Access to Law (ALI) Initiative recently began holding monthly legal consultations in Hillcrest free of charge. ALI will also provide low-cost legal services to residents who lack the means to afford legal assistance. The office of Councilmember Todd Gloria will provide funding for the service.

"Legal advice is often considered too expensive and unattainable for many San Diegans," Gloria stated in a press release. "I am proud to support California Western School of Law's Access to Law Initiative to remove the barriers to trustworthy legal advice, and appreciate the LGBT Center's willingness to host the monthly legal clinics."

Volunteer lawyers will be available for 30-minute consultations to help locals evaluate their legal problems on the second Tuesday of each month. The next clinic will take place on March 10 from 9 – 11 a.m. at The San Diego LGBT Center, which is located at 3909 Centre St.

In addition to the free services it provides, ALI helps lawyers in small and nonprofit firms develop additional skills and professional training. To schedule an appointment, contact Joshua Bruser at 858-342-0551, or visit [cwsf.edu/ali](http://cwsf.edu/ali) for more information.

CREATIVE CATALYST FUND SELECTS 2015 GRANT WINNERS

The San Diego Creative Catalyst Fund selected 10 local artists as recipients of its 2015 Individual Artist Fellowship Program, which

is a 12-month \$20,000 grant. The money is aimed to advance their careers while encouraging engagement in the community.

Winners in and around Uptown include Roberto Salas (Normal Heights), Matthew Hebert (Golden Hill), Mike Sears (North Park), Todd Blakesley (North Park), Yale Strom (Hillcrest) and Brian Goeltzenleuchter (Talmadge). The fund encourages artists from a variety of media to take on a project outside their comfort zone.

"San Diego is home to nearly 10,000 artists who represent a substantial and untapped workforce capable of contributing significant value to our communities," Jill Hall, the chair of the Creative Catalyst Fund Fellowship, stated in a press release. "With each cohort of artists that receive the fellowship, we see multiple opportunities for leveraging their talent and creativity for the benefit of San Diego, our economy, and our culture."

Among last year's winners was Charles McPherson, a Talmadge resident, who composed and performed a jazz ballet, "Sweet Synergy Suite," with the San Diego Ballet Company after receiving the grant.

For more information, visit [sdfoundation.org](http://sdfoundation.org).

LOCAL MALL OWNER SEEKS SCHOLARSHIP APPLICANTS

The Simon Youth Foundation (SYF) is looking for applicants for its Simon Youth Foundation Community Scholarship program, which awards college scholarships to at-risk high school students. Any student in the graduating class of 2015 who lives within 50 miles of Fashion Valley or Las Americas Premium Outlets in San

Diego qualifies for the scholarship. The window of opportunity lasts until Feb. 25. The program will award a one-time scholarship of up to \$1,500 for students who plan to enroll in an accredited college, university, vocational or technical school. Students are selected based on financial need, academic performance, leadership skills and participation in school and community activities. Those who are the first in their family to pursue a post-secondary education will also be given close consideration. Additionally, 10 designated Simon, Mills and Premium Outlets centers will grant a \$2,500 Award of Excellence scholarship that is renewable for up to three years. To date, SYF has awarded more than \$12 million in scholarships to more than 3,700 students in its 16 years of operation. ♦

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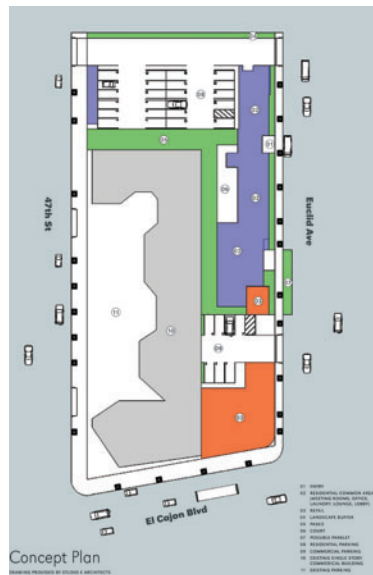
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## FROM PAGE 3 KENTAL

would ever know there's a retail area, since we'd never pass it," she said. "I think if you want to attract people to it, you need to make it visible to the majority."

Others brought up the needs of the seniors living in the complex. Project representatives said that they were more interested in catering retail space to the surrounding residents rather than the elderly tenants, since an assistance program led by St. Paul's would provide for much of their commercial and social activities. Barbara, a Kensington resident, disagreed, citing past experience working with St. Paul's seniors.



An ariel view of the preliminary Talmadge Gateway rendering (Courtesy of Studio E))

"They really do go out on their own and shop. They're not really homebound," she said. "So there isn't a really good supermarket around here for them, and I know it's really a sub-issue for you guys, but it's something to consider."

As with any other urban development, parking and traffic were commonly mentioned issues. Developers said they are required by the city to put in 27 parking spaces to accommodate the 60 seniors, many of whom they expect will not own a car. Because of this, a portion of these spaces will likely be open to public use. Still, Naslund said they don't want it to be a car-centric structure.

"We're not over-parking it," Naslund said.

Other matters discussed were what variety of tree to plant along the building's exterior (palm tree pods may cause health issues for seniors, while the Chinese elm was cited as the unofficial tree in parts of Talmadge), and Studio E architects floated the idea of installing a parklet — a removable mini-park — along Euclid Avenue's sidewalk.

Moty closed the meeting by reiterating the need to recalibrate the project to be more Talmadge-facing, describing the trek for Talmadge residents to El Cajon Boulevard as "a bridge too far."

"Bring it within the comfort zone and the safety zone of the people who want it," Moty said. "I think leaving it on El Cajon Boulevard will not lead to success. I think it will be a missed opportunity."

The project's developers have reached an unsigned agreement with current owners of the property, but have yet to purchase the site.

"We are at the absolute beginning of this," Naslund said.

—Contact Hutton Marshall at [hutton@sdcnn.com](mailto:hutton@sdcnn.com).



# The ‘original’ Hillcrest Fat Tuesday returns

Jen Van Tieghem | Staff Writer

Music, food and drinks — what more could you want from Hillcrest Fat Tuesday?

Well apparently you wanted to see the Mardi Gras-style street festival back in its original location and the Hillcrest Business Association (HBA) listened.

“Although last year was a blast, nothing beats the original,” said Megan Gamwell, HBA’s marketing and communications program manager. “There was an overwhelming amount of response from the community to return to the original location, so we could incorporate businesses that had become a staple of the event.”

Feb. 17 the event will take over University Avenue between First and Fourth avenues from 6 – 11 p.m., with two stages, two bars, an exclusive VIP area with a private bar, food vendors, beads, beads and more beads — 10,000 strands to be exact.

The 21-and-up event promises several New Orleans-inspired elements including Cajun food, a Zydeco band, stilt walkers, carnival-style performances and lots of imbibing.

The latter will come with some help from Fat Tuesday sponsor SKYY Vodka who will be serving limited-edition specialty cocktails.

That aforementioned VIP area will be located on Third Avenue between Fiesta Cantina and Urban MO’s with a rotation of food sponsors changing each hour, including Babycakes, East Coast Pizza, Fiesta Cantina and



(above) Revelers at 2014’s Fat Tuesday; (right) DJ John Joseph and his spinning skills will return. (Photo by Vanessa Dubois/SDPix)

MO’s Universe. VIP ticket holders will be able to choose a food item from one of these sponsors plus two drinks and access to an elevated viewing platform in the VIP area.

Even if you opt for general admission, you’ll still have plenty to do with thousands of beads being

distributed, vendors with festive masks, and food trucks on hand including: Mastiff Sausage Company, New Orleans Cuisine and Catering, and American Flavors.

“Some of the new elements include a Rich’s San Diego main stage,” Gamwell said. “Similar to what you saw at Nightmare on Normal Street,

which was a huge success.”

Tootie from Lips will host the main stage with performances by the ladies of Lips. An additional DJ stage will offer a varied music experience and plenty of reasons to dance.

Another tradition of Fat Tuesday that will continue for



the 13th year in a row is the donation of 50 percent of the event’s proceeds to the GSDBAF Charitable Foundation Annual Youth Scholarship Program.

VIP tickets are \$50 in advance and \$75 the day of; general admission tickets are \$15 in advance and \$20 the day of.

For a chance to win tickets and get a sneak peak sampling of SKYY Vodka’s special Fat Tuesday Cocktail Menu, check out one of the many pre-parties at participating venues around Hillcrest (see sidebar).

For more information and to purchase tickets for Fat Tuesday on Feb. 17, visit [HillcrestFatTuesday.com](http://HillcrestFatTuesday.com). Don’t forget to take pictures of all the fun and hashtag them with #HillcrestFatTuesday on social media!

—Jen Van Tieghem can be reached at [jen@sdcnn.com](mailto:jen@sdcnn.com). ♦

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Farrell says AVACEN improves her sense of well-being and helps her sleep. She uses it for 30 minutes, twice a day, usually in the evening. “When I do the machine in the evening, my sleep comes faster and it is definitely, definitely more restful,”



Farrell says she was skeptical about AVACEN when she started using it a year and a half ago. As a test, she stopped using it for a month and her pain returned.

“I stopped for awhile and the proof was that everything came back. A sharp pain in my fingers or stiffness. When I don’t use the machine, my fingers become very stiff. And I don’t play the piano well because I don’t have mobility in my fingers,” she said.

AVACEN Medical is dedicated to the innovation and development of drug free alternatives to treat pain associated with diseases such as arthritis, fibromyalgia and migraines. For more information and video testimonials go to [AVACEN.com](http://AVACEN.com).

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# The 60-minute drink test



Old Speckled Hen Black Ale and two Allagash Whites  
(Photo by Dr. Ink)

## Come On Get Happy! Dr. Ink

Siffy, attentive bartenders working behind terrazzo counter tops and twinkling tea lamps make for a loungey bar experience at Great Maple. Even if the dining room behind you is fully occupied with customers bit-

ing into pricey French dips and lobster poutine, the atmosphere is conducive for hanging out a while.

But what this charming brasserie-meets-diner lacks is a happy hour that runs longer than one hour to allow enough time to polish off at least two reduced-price beers without rushing. Better yet, it could toss in a few bargain cocktails and noshes to round out the visit.

Then the people would all come flocking for sure.

As it stands, the clock ticks quickly once you begin settling in over \$4 draft beers, priced normally at \$6.50. There are six brands for the choosing, their handles set among a full range of liquor bottles designated for making enticing cocktails that never come down in price throughout the day.

Great Maple's limited and under-promoted happy hour is available only at the bar, which runs along the back wall in two separate sections. Our trio snagged a corner area for easy conversation. Comfy stools and purse hooks at your knees indicate that somebody designed this bar with happy hour in mind. But on this particular Sunday, we were among only a few people soaking up the real estate.

Beers are poured in what seems like pint-size glasses. After tasting a couple of samples offered by our dapper, young bartender, my cohorts chose Allagash White and celebrated its reliable creamy finish and fruity undertones.

I chose Old Speckled Hen



Black Ale, which has some-

how

evaded me in several other bars that serve it. Just as the bartender described, the English ale featured all of the robust flavors of porter — chocolate, coffee and smoke — but without the textural richness that oftentimes prevents me from ordering a second one. Time permitting; I could have easily downed three of them at this attractive price.

The lightweight in our group needed sustenance and ended up ordering a quartet of hot, airy popovers from the regular menu. Priced decently at \$4, they're tossed in a bag containing Parmesan cheese and dispensed in front of you into a silver bowl. Beyond those, nibbles such as calamari, lamb meatballs and other drink-worthy items range from \$8 to \$17. No price breaks there.

Perhaps Great Maple doesn't need the extra business that other happy hours around town generate, considering the parking lot is usually full on most nights. The beer bargains aren't mentioned on the web site nor does the staff verbally promote them. But that shouldn't stop you from whizzing through if you're craving some affordable foam on your lips. ♦

**Great Maple**  
1451 Washington St.  
(Hillcrest)  
619-255-2282  
Happy hour: 5 to 6 p.m., daily



## RATINGS

### DRINKS: T T

Amid a fully stocked bar, only six draft beers are available during happy hour, with at least two of them ubiquitous.

### FOOD: T T T T

Cheese-dusted popovers, calamari with olives and French dips are above-board if you don't mind paying regular prices for them.

### VALUE: T T T

You save \$2.50 on draft beers. No other deals are available.

### SERVICE: T T T T T

Our bartender was polite, well-trained and offered us samples of a few different beers before we made our final choices.

### ATMOSPHERE: T T T T T

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(above) Thai spice steak sandwich (upper right) The “boring burger”  
(Photos by Frank Sabatini Jr.)

Restaurant Review

Frank Sabatini Jr.



A friend drew both ire and applause recently from a casual gathering of peeps when he uttered an ouchy to the group: “The most fascinating people I know don’t have Facebook accounts.”

Having been privy to such debates in the past, and being a partial user

of the network, I remain neutral. Yet in the case of an eccentric little eatery named Twist, which has cultivated a brisk following without social media, the point carries a quart of merit.

Moroccan co-owner Saad El Quarati and his American-Cambodian business partner, Judy Sy-Gonzales, opened Twist more than a year ago with sandwiches, burgers, wings and fries that defy tradition.

Based on their cultural back-grounds and world travels, it’s where you’ll find smoked Gouda cheese mingling with lemon grass on a Thai-inspired steak hoagie, and chipotle labne draping french fries strewn with feta cheese and Moroccan-spiced beef.

El Quarati maintains that outside of a user-friendly web site (twistsandwiches.com) showing off their fused meals, “We’re running the business like everyone did in the ‘90s, before cell phones, Facebook and Twitter existed, relying mainly on organic word-of-mouth.”

The duo, he points out, isn’t opposed to using social media; they simply don’t feel the need for it at this

time given there are only five stools parked at a small eating counter and two tables out front.

Asian, North African and Mediter-ranean ingredients enter into what is otherwise everyday American grub. The aforementioned Moroccan fries with minced chuck steak, for example, harbor 17 different spices such as coriander and cinnamon. The “pico de gallo” also crowning them is Moroccan pickle relish.

“It’s our big spin on carne asada fries,” says El Quarati.

Indeed, the outcome is exotic and

busy, yet surpris-ingly cohesive. Ditto for the “Thai spice” marinated steak sandwich on a telera roll, which unleashes a torrent of flavors from pickled papaya, lemon grass, carrots and cucumbers. A puck of smoked Gouda

contributes a most unusual, yet wel-come element of dairy to the scheme.

Other sandwiches include the pulled pork “Asian swine” with hoisin syrup, tomatoes, cilantro and spicy aioli. Less twisty is the Chicken Ranch, which sent our taste buds to familiar grounds with the additions of applewood bacon, arugula and kicky ranch sauce.

There are four different burgers on the menu, one of them made with ground turkey breast topped with goat cheese, bacon and reduced cran-berry jam. The “twist” burger takes on prosciutto, goat cheese and bal-samic syrup while the “SD” traipses through the Southwest with panela cheese, avocado and chili cream.

Ironically, the “boring burger” was anything but dull. Fried shallots, smoked Gouda and bacon aioli made it worthy of the “like” button if there



instead tried the sweet chipotle version. They were the sticki-est wings I’ve ever handled, but their sweet-smoky flavor and reason-able crunch from request-ing them “extra crispy” kept us gnawing to the very

last bone. If you prefer sauce-less wings, the “twist” option features only a sprinkling of Mediterranean herbs.

Aside from plain fries and side salads, either of which comes with any food order, there are no vegetar-ian options – at least not yet. In a couple months, El Quarati plans on adding grilled eggplant sandwiches, tofu-mushroom burgers and vegetar-

ian sushi rolls, assuring they will be stamped with “funky twists.”

—Contact Frank Sabatini Jr. at fsabatini@san.rr.com. ♦

Twist

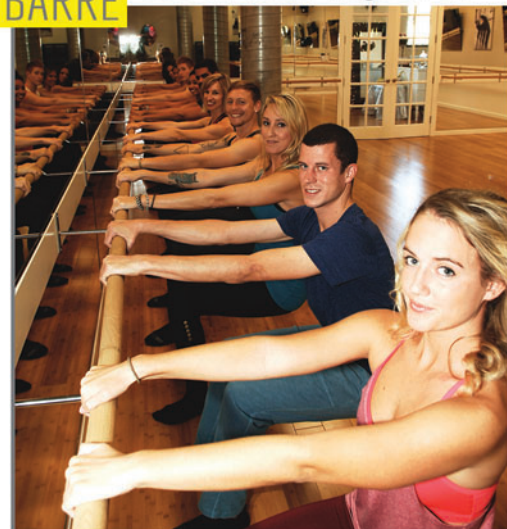
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# How dangerous is bicycling?

## The Spoken Word

Hutton Marshall



Biking is different for me now than it was as a kid. Back in the Texas suburbs during the '90s, I would ride my little Huffy bike around the wide, empty streets of suburbia without bothering to notice which lane I was in or whose driveway I was racing across. The sun was shining every day, even at night. Helmets were for klutzes and "bike infrastructure" was a foreign, unneeded concept.

[Insert ominous "20 years later" cutaway]

Today, I live in a different biking world. In the bustling, urbatopia of San Diego, I never go out riding without a helmet, because when I ride, I pedal down streets crowded with cars, pedestrians, dogs, potholes and more cars, plus a few more cars.

While I don't feel like it's all that dangerous if the proper precautions are taken, some treat my decision to bike-commute like some kind of martyrdom. It may be true that bicycling is a slightly riskier

endeavor than driving those popular steel boxes powered by exploding gasoline, but just how much more dangerous is it? And is there any avoiding it? [Warning: math ahead]

Let's start with a study published in 2007 by the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health, which measured the likelihood of an accident based on one's mode of transportation. The first thing I noticed from the study is that motorcycles are terrifyingly dangerous. Basically, when you get on a motorcycle instead of a bicycle, you're 25 times more likely to get into a fatal accident. Of course, this ignores a lot of big factors that affect the likelihood of an accident, which we'll get to shortly.

The study calculated that out of 100 million bike trips, 21 will result in a fatal accident. There will only be nine fatal accidents for the same number of car trips, which means that biking, despite being much safer than a Harley, is still more than twice as risky as driving, at least where dying is concerned. As a pedestrian, your odds fall somewhere in between the two: more dangerous than driving, yet considerably safer than biking.

When the study analyzes non-fatal accidents, motorcycles are

still three times more dangerous than bicycles, and five times more dangerous than cars.

This isn't to say any of them is a death wish. When we're talking about a nonfatal motorcycle accident, the most common of the bunch, there's only a one-in-10,000 chance that'll happen when you hop on your hog. For bicycles, there's about a 0.00003 percent chance of an accident, or roughly one in 30,000, every time you get on a bike.

So your odds of crashing on a bike are a lot higher than winning the California lottery (one in 175 million), but even if you biked to and from work every day for the last decade, the chance of you getting in a nonfatal accident would be about one in six.

Buses, by the way, are by far the safest way to travel in all regards, according to the study. So when in doubt, hop on the frequently stopping train to Safety Land on the MTS.

### How are these accidents happening?

There are some pretty strong trends that show who's getting in these accidents. In 2012, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration released data on the 726 fatal bicycle accidents that occurred in the U.S. that year.

In 29 percent of the accidents, the biker was hit by a car, which was by far the most common cause for biker injury. Sixty nine percent of accidents occurred in urban areas, and 30 percent occurred between the hours of 4 - 8 p.m. (i.e. rush hour).

Men, who make up 76 percent of U.S. bike riders, accounted for 88 percent of the fatal accidents.

At the beginning of this year, Circulate San Diego, a nonprofit advocating for active transportation, released a study analyzing where bicycle and pedestrian accidents occurred in our fine city. Perhaps the most shocking revelation in the report was that residents living in disadvantaged communities were are 10 times more likely to get hit by a car than residents of other San Diego neighborhoods.

The study also found that 30 per-

cent of pedestrian crashes occurred on just eight roads, the most dangerous being University Avenue.

What makes University Avenue so dangerous is in part revealed in a third study, published in the American Journal of Public Health, which analyzed hundreds of bicycle accidents in a six month span in Vancouver and Toronto. It found that the most dangerous roads to bike riders were those with wide streets, parked cars and no bicycle infrastructure (e.g. University Avenue).

Roads with bike lanes lowered chance of injury by 50 percent, and protected bike lanes reduced risk by 90 percent, which, for those immune to obviousness, is really, really good. The study also found that roads with downhill inclines, construction and streetcar tracks can increase risk by as much as 200 percent.

### How to better your odds

First of all, when you ride a bicycle, you should wear a helmet. I know, you look like a dweeb. It's inevitable, especially if you went out and bought one of those dome-shaped BMX helmets thinking it would look cool. Well you were wrong; it's dweeby too, if not more so. (There's nothing dweebier than trying unsuccessfully to avoid looking like a dweeb.)

The point is, in two-thirds of fatal bicycle accidents in 2012, the rider wasn't wearing a helmet. Wear your brain bucket, folks. There's a gross, real reason people call it that.

Also, let's talk about booze. Twenty four percent of bicyclists killed in 2012 had blood alcohol concentrations exceeding 0.08 g/dL, the legal limit for operating a vehicle.

A lot of people my age seem to share the sentiment that biking to a bar on a Friday night is a safe, responsible alternative to driving there. While it's true that you're unlikely to do significant harm to others while biking drunk, and the penalties if you get pulled over won't be as severe, the idea that it's eliminating risk can be a fatal folly.

Another piece of advice I received from a longtime bicycle advocate is to plan your route before you get on the road, otherwise you might accidentally find yourself on the side of the highway feeling like a soon-to-be mosquito on a windshield.



### Here are the odds:

**Getting in a bike accident (each time you ride):** One in 30,000

**Getting in a car accident (each time you drive):** One in 52,000

**Dying in a bike collision (each time you ride):** One in 4.8 million

**Getting struck by lightning in your lifetime:** One in 3,000

**Dying in a plane crash:** One in 11 million

**Dying in a skydiving accident:** One in 133,000

**Sources:** Johns Hopkins School of Public Health, National Geographic, Harvard University, United States Parachute Association

Google Maps has a bicycle function that takes bike infrastructure and elevation into account when calculating a route.

Finally, and this isn't necessarily on your shoulders, noble pedaler, San Diego needs to create a safer environment for bikers. The statistics show that improving bicycle infrastructure makes the biggest impact on increasing safety for bike riders. While SANDAG will begin installing a large network of bike ways throughout the city in the coming years, "it needs to happen faster," as the aforementioned bike advocate stated plainly.

Just don't get drunk and leave your helmet at home in the meantime. And stay away from University Avenue.

—Through a contest held by New Belgium Brewing, Hutton Marshall pledged to live car-free for a year and commute with a bicycle. Contact him at [hutton@sdenn.com](mailto:hutton@sdenn.com). ♦

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# Caged critters, the other pet

## Pets

Ann Eliopoulos



When most of us think of pets, we think of dogs and cats, and indeed, those are the domestic mammals most commonly kept as companions. However, there are multiple small mammals that serve as companions for people, and it's time for those animals to get their recognition.

For the record, most of these animals are not "starter pets." They are a lot of work to take care of at the level they need to thrive. As with any animal, these critters have specific habitat and dietary needs. Their environments require consistent routine maintenance and cleaning. They are not happy or healthy when kept continually in small cages or aquariums.

Just like any other animal, they need daily exercise, and because of their size, often need supervision when out and about. Electrical cords, cracks, crevices and holes all become potential sources of danger for little animals. Some of these little guys live only a few years, and some can live for 10 or more years, but they all need veterinary care when they are under the weather. The cost for their care may be significantly more than the original purchase price, which many people are not comfortable with.

So, if none of that has deterred you, and you still want a small animal to share your home with, let's look at some of the options out there. Because birds and reptiles are their own special category, I will save them for another time. Let's start with the animals that are illegal to keep in California: ferrets, gerbils, sugar gliders and hedgehogs. Yes, you may know someone who has one of these animals, and yes, they are cute, but they are not legal in this state. Enough said!

What's more appealing than a bunny? Those big ears and that wiggly nose? Precious! But are you prepared to have a large cage and room that has been rabbit-proofed to keep one of these as pets? Did you figure on having them spayed or neutered? They need to be! Gone are the days when a rabbit hutch outside is considered an acceptable home for these pets. They are susceptible to heat stroke and as prey animals, startle easily and can sustain injury.

As crepuscular animals (most active at dusk and dawn), they will need exercise during this time period — at least an hour a day.

They must have interaction and time with you every day to keep them socialized. Their cages require daily spruce ups and thorough cleaning once a week. In addition to Timothy hay, pellets and chew toys, daily fresh vegetables are part of their diet. Rabbits are prone to stomach and intestine problems with the wrong diet. They can live 10 years or more and should be considered on par with a cat or dog in terms of time and care required. They are engaging and curious and can make loving, trainable pets.

I do not think that hamsters make good children's pets. They are nocturnal animals (active at night) that generally do not appreciate being woken up in the middle of the day to play, especially if it is without warning, and may bite. Don't underestimate their size when it comes to their bite. All I can say is, *ouch!*

Because of their nocturnal nature, it is not uncommon to hear the wheel or whatever other exercise paraphernalia they have squeaking away at midnight. Hamsters are solitary and will likely fight with another hamster. They should be housed separately. Dwarf hamsters may tolerate others of their own kind, but not always. All hamsters can carry salmonella, which is something to consider with small children or people with compromised immune systems. Proper housing, bedding and nesting materials, diet, exercise and handling are critical to keeping these little ones healthy. With proper care, they will live two and a half to three years.

Guinea pigs are gentle, outgoing, funny little critters. They make squeaking and squealing sounds to

communicate. As with rabbits, these guys need daily exercise and interaction. They also need to be groomed, especially the long-haired varieties. They require a large cage, a hiding box, pellets, Timothy hay and fresh fruits and vegetables. They need vitamin C in their diet, so nutritional balance is critical.

Because of their social nature, these guys do better with another pig to keep them company. Make sure you get the same sex! Guinea pigs live an average of five to seven years.

Rats are some of the most intelligent and engaging of the small mammals. If handled and kept socialized, they are less likely to startle or bite. Rats are even more social than guinea pigs, and should not be kept alone. Opposite sex rats should not be kept together if the male is not neutered. Trust me, you'll know who the male is because proportionate to body size, he has some of the largest testicles in the animal kingdom.

Rats will have activity throughout the night because they are nocturnal by nature, but because of their social inclination, they will happily engage activity during the day. They groom themselves constantly and contrary to popular opinion, are fastidious little animals. Unfortunately, their lifespan is only two to two and a half years.

Again, all of these animals will likely require vet care in their lives. Veterinarians who specialize in these little guys are your best choice to help keep them healthy and a part of your life for as long as possible.

—Ann Eliopoulos is a veterinarian at Bodhi Animal Hospital in North Park. ♦

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Rudy Pollorena Jr., creator of Craft Beerd; (inset) Craft Beerd's new custom glassware (Courtesy of Rudy Pollorena)

## Craft Beerd brings 'beer art' to North Park

### Suds in the city

Cody Thompson



Ever since I joined this wonderful world of craft beer in San Diego, I have heard a simple quote summing up our entire craft culture: "Craft beer people are good people." And I have been lucky enough to see it come to life time and time again.

Whether it is recording a podcast, conducting an interview or simply enjoying a beer in each other's company, I have had the distinct pleasure of meeting and befriending many of these "good people" within this industry. A perfect example is the man you are about to meet. He is not only a strong craft beer advocate, but also a true gentleman and innovator within this industry.

In 2013, with a heart full of passion and a glass full of craft beer,

North Park resident Rudy Pollorena Jr. decided it was time for a change.

"In 2013, I was a freelance graphic designer, designing random corporate logos for various companies, and I eventually grew tired of creating art for something I wasn't truly vested in," Pollorena said. "So, I created what is now known as the 'San Diego Beer Matrix' as a portfolio piece to showcase my fun side and my passion for craft beer. Once I posted that design on Facebook, people started

to share it and it went viral."

Not long after its reveal, people began asking for the piece in print and clothing form. The San Diego Beer Matrix, a typography design showcasing most local breweries at the time of its creation, was the first of many in Pollorena's quest to redefine what "beer art" can truly be.

"The main idea was to create quality, fun and refreshing craft beer-inspired art. I purposefully coined the term 'beer art' with Craft Beerd, mainly so my art could be on any medium, not just T-shirts," Pollorena explained.

"From requests of T-shirts to art prints, I couldn't keep up with the demand. I would make a batch, and it would sell out. I was humbled to the fullest," he continued. "From that point on, I validated my love for craft beer through art and decided to keep

making new designs."

Since 2013, Pollorena has reshaped the world of beer-related apparel, art and other items through Craft Beerd. His work can be found proudly hanging in many local establishments including Hamilton's Tavern, Fathom Bistro, Carnitas' Snack Shack and Urge Gastro-pub to name a few. It can also be found worn on the rising number of backs of his loyal fan base. He'll even add custom glassware to the mix soon.

Craft Beerd has also designed custom prints for local breweries including some San Diego favorites such as Alpine Beer Company, Societe Brewing Company and Acoustic Ales and Brewing Experiment.

"The people who create craft beer inspire me and I can relate to them even if I am not specifically making beer," Pollorena said. "When you sip on a good craft beer, you can taste their blood, sweat and beers."

When it comes to pride and respect, Pollorena is filled with both for our local craft beer community.

"The beer culture permeates throughout the city on a daily basis," he said. "I live right on 30th Street, which is the mecca for craft beer. All within walking or riding distance of each other are Fall Brewing, Poor House, Tiger! Tiger!, Belching Beaver, Rip Current, Young Hickory, Ritual Tavern, Toronado, Hess, Waypoint, Modern Times, Hamilton's. It is beer Disneyland right in my own backyard."

2015 promises to be a great year for Craft Beerd as Pollorena prepares to celebrate his second anniversary in March with a week-end full of events. From March 6 - 8, you will find anniversary events happening at Fall Brewing, Societe Brewing and the Best Coast Beer Festival. While Rudy will be celebrating his two years of hard work, he has something even more beautiful to celebrate this coming year.

"That same week, I am getting married to my beautiful fiancé, Amy Ledesma, who is a major reason why Craft Beerd is successful," Pollorena said.

To learn more about Rudy Pollorena Jr., Craft Beerd and to see his works of art, visit CraftBeerd.com. Or visit a local craft beer spot and you just might get to have a beer with the man himself.

—Contact Cody Thompson at [cody@threebzine.com](mailto:cody@threebzine.com). ♦

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# On the road with Desert Noises

By Dustin Lothspeich

"She holds up pretty good. Sometimes she likes to give me a lot of shit. And we get in a fight and then we make up. Kiss and make up. Making up is the best part, you know?"

Desert Noises' singer/guitarist Kyle Henderson is talking to me on the phone from Boston in the middle of that epic (or not so epic, depending on who you ask) snowstorm they had recently, and he's not talking about his girlfriend — that comes later. In fact, he's waxing poetic about his other steady squeeze: a 1963 Truetone semi-hollow-body electric guitar, made once upon a time by Kay Musical Instruments for Western Auto stores. It's a gorgeous sunburst model with all sorts of knobs and vintage gadgetry. But rocking such an old, finicky instrument night after night on the road could prove to be a risky and perilous endeavor.

"A lot of people say that [it's risky] but it's just, like, my guitar. If she decides to crap out, that's just what she decides to do. But that's actually the only guitar I used on the last record."

The record he's referring to, "27 Ways," is the jewel in the Desert Noises crown thus far. It may be premature to say, considering the Provo, Utah-based band (comprised of Henderson, bassist Tyler Osmond, lead guitarist Patrick Boyer and drummer Brennan Allen) only has a couple other releases under their belt — their 2009 self-titled debut EP, a 2011 full length, "Mountain Sea," and 2012's three-song "I Won't See You" EP. But it doesn't change the



Desert Noises will play at the Casbah with Wild Child on Feb. 21. (Courtesy of Desert Noises)

fact that their latest is indisputably their best, combining early '70s rock hooks and current alt-country melodies; soaring vocals; huge, anthemic guitars; and a thunderous rhythm section rumble.

It'd all be for naught if they had lackluster lyrical content, but they've got that covered too, with Henderson sounding at his best with his voice curled around contemplative, romantic words. Luckily for us, they've been coming easily to him lately too.

"I'm writing a lot about the new relationship I'm in. That's been something awesome for me. I don't think I necessarily wrote a lot of 'love songs' before; or rather, they don't sound like love songs but they do have that meaning, completely. I just try to be as honest as I possibly can about the feeling. And sometimes I'll just hit those lines where I go, 'I don't even know how I said that.' Sometimes it just works out. But for the most part,

they are autobiographical."

Does his girlfriend mind being the focus of his newfound inspiration?

"I think she kinda likes it, you know? [laughs] I was in a really bad space for a while and I was having a really hard time writing. And ever since I started dating my girlfriend, I've had a lot of inspiration — I've written more songs in the last month than I've written in the last six months, to be honest. A lot of times, that's how I've noticed it's been. Sometimes when I get into a good situation, I'll look back and reflect on the bad situations and write about that, even though that can get me in trouble in the relationship I'm currently in. They're like, 'Why'd you say this?' and 'why'd you say that?' No, no, it's not about right now, I promise [laughs]. I promise I'm a good guy."

That kind of reflection fits nicely into the band's M.O. As much as "27 Ways" is the sound of four musicians pushing the envelope

Saturday, Feb. 21  
The Casbah (Little Italy)  
8:30 p.m., 21+  
Tickets are \$12 in advance  
**Wild Child**  
**Desert Noises**  
**Goodnight, Texas**

of guitar-led music in a landscape full of hipster posturing and overly saccharine folk pop revivalism, it's also the sonic document of a band settling into its musical identity, both as individuals and as a group.

"I Won't See You" was definitely a period of change," Henderson admitted. "When you hear that EP, you think, 'Whoa, this band is definitely different than before.' A lot of that was [Allen] stepping in on drums for sure, but all of us had been touring for a while at that point. ['27 Ways'] was everyone coming into their own skin. It was recorded, literally, in the middle of tour. We were on the road for a solid two months, and we ended up in El Paso. We played the show there, then drove to the studio later that night, loaded in and recorded live for four days."

There are some bands who tour — and then there are bands, like Desert Noises, that tour. A lot of us assume touring is the great party on the go; a never-ending stream of debauchery, alcohol, groupies, gas station bathrooms and loud music (OK, some of those are true). And while there's a certain charm to it, Henderson admits (with a certain amount of weariness in his voice)

that it can be tiring — even though he knows the amount of time they spend on the road bumps them into a different echelon of band altogether.

"We've been everywhere pretty regularly, at least for the last three years, really. We've just been working hard to get our name out there for a long time ... But I think that just being on the road has set us apart. I think that's why we kind of stand out in some ways; just by how much we've played as a band in so many different settings and different cities, in front of different crowds, good times, bad times — that experience kind of pushes us apart from other bands — maybe."

It's absolutely true. After witnessing the band live three times in the last two years, they've gotten better, tighter and more confident with each performance. And they have a lot to live up to at The Casbah when they return to San Diego on Feb. 21; the last time they were in town, at the 2014 San Diego Music Thing — they were the de facto stars of the entire three-day festival. And that was no small feat with Cults, Meg Myers, Waters and a hundred others on the lineup. That the band consistently turns heads and converts casual listeners into hardcore Desert Noises fanatics instantly can be attributed in part to the band's glowing onstage charisma, no matter where they're playing or who they're playing to. They always look like they're having the time of their lives.

"Whether it's two people or 5,000, we always try to bring the same energy," Henderson said. "That's always been our goal. And having the best time you possibly can — that's what it's all about."

—Contact Dustin Lothspeich at [dustinlothspeich@gmail.com](mailto:dustinlothspeich@gmail.com). ♦

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# I am not rock, I am Island Boy

Richard Hunter-Rivera on performance, the body, and being alone

By Rutger Rosenborg

## Cosmic junkyard

Following Richard through the eclectic maze that leads to his creative workspace at Space4Art feels rather like walking through some cosmic junkyard.

You start on 15th Street in East Village, where a homeless man struggles up a barbed wire fence to escape a vacant lot and find his tent amidst the dozens of others surrounding the block. Leaving the man teetering on the top of the fence, you pass through the art gallery — cement floor, two-by-four ceiling, white walls forming their own maze — and out into your own vacant lot of dried grass. There are cottages to the left and a stage to the right that looks like it sprung into existence from nowhere.

Richard leads you to the last place you expect: a hall behind the stage, lined with the white doors of artist studios that resemble storage units more than artistic hideaways. Once inside his hideaway, you're met with yet another world: the sleek grays and blacks of a well-kept music studio.

This private, maintained microcosm within the eclecticism of the universe outside seems apt for the way that Island Boy exists as a project for Richard, and the way that his music reveals itself (or doesn't) to his audience.



Richard Hunter-Rivera, or "Island Boy"  
(Photo by Jessica Sledge)

## The public and private performance

Island Boy developed as Richard grew more and more tired of playing in rock bands and began to trust his own voice. Publicly, he turned away from the communalism of the "acoustic" music he was playing, finding solace in the interiority of his electronic music.

By its very nature, electronic music blurs the lines between recorded and live performance, the predictable and the spontaneous — even the private and the communal.

Richard straddles these divides. He writes on the same interface with which he performs, turning his PA speakers all the way up to mimic the same dynamism that a live band might have. During a performance, he feeds off the energy in the room, timing his transitions and "builds" (outside the studio,

the droning of a loud saw suddenly stops, leaving silence and a textural absence; he begins to stutter, unsure exactly how to pluralize the word "build-up") to move with the unpredictable rhythm, the surprised murmur of the crowd.

This is the communalism of his music now — the audience, the performance. Privately, he still performs with others — he jams, writes and listens with his friends — but not with the public in mind, not with the possibility of criticism, of failure. He's hoisted that possibility upon his own shoulders.

## Electronic bodies

As Richard acknowledges, a lot of electronic music is derided for being too "perfect," for being inorganic and computerized. About the electronicism of the Top 40, he remarks, "It's not all auto-tuned bullshit." At base, the derision comes from a very simple question: Where is the body?

For Richard, writing comes from the body first. Start with the kick, the snare, the bass and dance. Move the body. Find the groove. "Generate heat." If something sounds too perfect, move it a few ticks over "until you find the imperfection that moves the body." In a strange way, only then is it actually perfect.

The body's importance in Island Boy's music holds true in a live setting as much as it does in a creative one. Richard sways, bobs, folds over — all in a world of his own and not his own.

## "Sometimes I get lonely"

Being in a solo project means being alone for significant periods of time. It affords Richard the ability to accept gigs quickly and

freedom from asking people to invest time into putting together the songs that he hears in his head for little or no pay. Nonetheless, he does get lonely and occasionally longs for collaboration.

If you ever decide to contact Richard through email, you'll notice that his address is "islandboy-andgirl@gmail.com." The "girl" is Jessica Sledge, his fiancée, a visual artist who contributed in a large way to "Basic Instincts," Island Boy's recent album. According to Richard, Jessica comes in and out of the project; they collaborate to spend time together, and his email address is homage to that fact. And yet, he remains "island boy."

Although Richard loves San Diego, it's not home for him. He lived in Italy for a while, and he spent much of his childhood in Puerto Rico. He vacillates between calling Puerto Rico the only home he's ever known and admitting that he doesn't really know what home feels like.

As important as the island of his homeland is to his identity and the identity of his unique brand of atmospheric, Afro-Caribbean electronica, the tension and interaction between that island and the world outside of it has become the real formative force in Island Boy's music. Take the track "El Dembow Me Salvó" off "Basic Instincts." The rhythm of his island saved him, and it continues to do so, even though he is always far, far from home.

## Life imitating art

Much of Richard's (and Jessica's) vocals are disguised by effects on "Basic Instincts." This technique has become commonplace in some of the most popular electronic indie music, from Youth

Lagoon to Washed Out. Rather than becoming the focal point of the song as it is in traditional pop music, the voice blends into the textures around it. Richard explains it this way: "Some people are introverted, and they don't want to be bombarded with information and messages; they'd rather just be meditative."

On the other hand, it makes sense to him that Top 40 songs privilege the voice over the music around it.

"The voice is how we communicate, so people want to hear the lyrics; it connects us to the human element of music," he said.

For him, however, the song is not as important as its structure. A song's structure is what allows it to breathe without vocals in every section. A good song, for Richard, will capture you with its structure and keep you there with its lyrics. A good song is just as much about its framework as it is about the singularity of its voice.

Island Boy is in the last stages of another album. This one will offer more clarity, more minimalism. He's been experimenting with taking some of the effects off of his voice. As opposed to the thematic conceptualization of "Basic Instincts," the new one "just sort of came together." It will come out in the spring of this year.

Although Richard conducts much of his music — and the business surrounding his music — by himself, there are always friends and loved ones collaborating with him in some way. Richard remains "island boy" in many respects, but perhaps that's only because he is able to bump — sometimes merge — gracefully into the floating worlds around him. ♦

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FROM PAGE 1

## TARGETEXPRESS

Emmons was responding to recent remarks by project opponents the Neighborhood Market Association (NMA), and Care About South Park, a community grassroots group, characterizing the project as being "stalled" rather than "delayed."

Detractors claim the corporation's plans threaten area mom-and-pop businesses, which they say are the backbone of the neighborhood.

Target initially announced plans to reopen the former Gala independent grocery store, which closed in October, following an extensive remodel in July 2015 as a TargetExpress, a condensed version of a typical Target store.

"The news of Target stalling its move to South Park has been anticipated by the members of the NMA and Care About South Park for some time now," said NMA President Mark Arabo. "We will continue to work with the owner of Gala Foods to see what measures can be considered so that the residents of South Park are dutifully served."

Arabo said interested parties are exploring possible options in "putting a stop to the rise of corporate influence in South Park."

"And, while there were many detractors, and numerous challenges, I am happy to say that the little guy has won the day," Arabo said. "We look forward to continue working with both the small-business community, and neighborhoods, to make a better San Diego."

"We do not want a TargetExpress in our neighborhood, and we hope Target is having second thoughts about coming to South Park," said Care About South Park spokesperson Sabrina DiMinico, who noted the

neighborhood is not anti-Target but rather pro-small business.

"South Park's local independent shops and markets are the very reason people want to visit and live here," DiMinico said. "If a Target store occupies our largest and most visible property, our neighborhood will lose its charm and vitality, and our small businesses will suffer."

DiMinico argued that a new corporate entity in South Park could change the community's character. She added that the corporation needs to be more forthcoming to the community about its plans.

"Corporate reps have met with some South Park business owners and have conferred with hand-selected residents in private, but they have only attended two public meetings open to the entire community," she said.

DiMinico said Target's appearance Oct. 8 at the Greater Golden Hill Planning Committee meeting was "unannounced to give an unscheduled presentation."

She claimed Target didn't listen when it appeared at the Dec. 17 Burlingame Neighborhood Association gathering where "many residents clearly stated their opposition to a Target in South Park."

"Target is now stalling on the release of their renovation plans," claimed DiMinico noting the Greater Golden Hill Planning Committee "tried repeatedly to get Target on their January meeting agenda, but this required advance submission of preliminary plans and drawings, and Target refused to comply."

DiMinico said Target has repeatedly requested community feedback, but when asked to actually provide their plans to the community and follow planning group rules, they "refuse and tell us it's a 'courtesy' that they are sharing information with us." Emmons said previously that Tar-

get is "committed to partnering with local community, business and political leaders, as well as neighborhood groups, and keeping them informed as we move forward with our South Park TargetExpress store."

Some of the TargetExpress features are proposed to include:

- A wider assortment of basic hardware supplies, an unmet community need
- Commissioning a local artist to create artwork inside the store
- Organic produce sourced from California whenever possible
- Maintaining the building as it currently stands on the property

Emmons reiterated plans for the new TargetExpress do not include a Starbucks outlet that might compete with existing independent businesses in the area.

"Based on feedback from the community, we will not make architectural or structural changes to the exterior of the building, and will make updates to the interior," Emmons said. "We will play up the building's natural light by removing the existing window blinds. Additionally, once the store opens, we will continue to apply things we've learned from the community, such as adding baking supplies, belts and sunglasses based on guest feedback."

Emmons said Target has been, and will continue to be, responsive to the community in listening to their concerns and acting upon them.

"The TargetExpress store format is designed to fit into the communities that surround the stores, and part of ensuring that happens is listening to our local guests," she said. "While we are still in the early stages, what we've heard from the South Park community has already influenced our plans for the store."

—Contact Dave Schwab at  
reporter@sdnews.com. ♦

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9/6

### Uptown's Sudoku Puzzle

Enter digits from 1 to 9 into the blank spaces. Every row must contain one of each digit. So must every column, as must every 3x3 square.

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Answer key, page 19

## Uptown Crossword

### Overhead

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12
13					14					15			
16					17					18			
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60							61					62	
63								64				65	
66								67				68	

CREATORS NEWS SERVICE By Charles Preston

- ACROSS**

  - 1 Eggshell
  - 5 Computes
  - 9 Clip's partner
  - 13 Weighty
  - 14 \_\_\_ Collins, CO
  - 15 Take off
  - 16 MOMA favorite
  - 17 Unbounded joy
  - 18 Honeysuckle tree
  - 19 Mighty \_\_\_ oak
  - 20 Fortuitous
  - 22 Spare
  - 24 Exec's note
  - 25 Brooder
  - 26 Sort of soup
  - 31 Fax's kin
  - 34 Spill the beans
  - 37 Aniseed liqueur
  - 38 *Lakme* highlight
  - 39 State a price
  - 40 Mouth, slangily
  - 41 Do- \_\_\_: moolah
  - 42 Importune
  - 43 Be generous
  - 44 \_\_\_ Madre
  - 46 Java
  - 47 Laid off
  - 50 Montaigne opus
  - 53 Really expensive
- 58 Suzie Wong actress

60 Gum up

61 City on the Oka

62 Shakespearean role

63 Wrest

64 Tiber feeder

65 Just makes do

66 Frogner Park city

67 Kind of party

68 Like the leaves of *Ulalume*
- DOWN**

  - 1 Norse writings
  - 2 Knock off
  - 3 Ease up
  - 4 Unsettled
  - 5 Throw
  - 6 Big name in politics
  - 7 Imagine
  - 8 McQueen or Martin
  - 9 Animation frames
  - 10 Fill the hold
  - 11 Hot spot
  - 12 Perky
  - 15 Town near Tanglewood
  - 21 Gush
  - 23 King's title
  - 27 With no holds barred
  - 28 Atmosphere
- 29 Muslim lady's garment

30 Trot along

31 Gobs

32 " . . . \_\_\_ saw Elba"

33 Rickey need

34 Prickle

35 Record

36 Downed

39 Printer's spacing gizmos

43 . . . . .

45 Ransack

46 Circadian woe

48 \_\_\_ share

49 Bird of a feather

51 Up and at it

52 Gun-collector's prize

53 \_\_\_ buco: veal dish

54 Parisian ones

55 Straggle

56 Pasta choice

57 Olympian queen

59 Pry

Answer key, page 19

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Sudoku

Puzzle from page 18

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

Overheard

Crossword from page 18

E	C	R	U	A	D	D	S	C	L	O	P		
D	E	E	P	F	O	R	T	L	E	A	V	E	
D	A	L	I	G	L	E	E	E	L	D	E	R	
A	S	A	N	H	E	A	V	E	N	S	E	N	T
E	X	T	R	A	M	E	M	O					
		H	E	N		O	X	T	A	I	L		
T	E	L	E	X	B	L	A	T	O	U	Z	O	
A	R	I	A		Q	U	O	T	E	T	R	A	P
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				I	D	L	E	E	S	S	A	Y	
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# Moxie presents a rediscovered classic



Ruff Yeager and Monique Gaffney (Photo by Daren Scott)

## Theater Review

Charlene Baldridge



"Wow!" is all one has to say about what might have been. And also, "How fortunate that history has a chance to rectify the wrong that was done."

Dedicated to women play-

wrights and theater artists, Moxie Theatre discovered Alice Childress's 1955 off-Broadway play titled, "Trouble in Mind," which has an interesting history to say the least. It plays through Feb. 22.

We all think of Lorraine Hansberry's Pulitzer Prize-winning "Raisin in the Sun" as the first play written by an African-American woman to reach Broadway (1959). What most don't know is that the

Obie Award-winning "Trouble in Mind," but for demanding producers and a stubborn playwright, would have been the first to make it to the Great White Way.

The play within "Trouble in Mind," titled "Chaos in Belleville," is a melodrama set in the South that concerns a lynching. As it is rehearsed, friction occurs between white producers and the director and the largely African American company. Prior to the intended Broadway move of "Trouble in Mind," producers insisted on a happier ending (likely one that put the powerful in a better light) and a change in title. Childress refused. Hence, the play was largely forgotten until recently. It is much performed at major regional theaters.

Directed by Moxie Founding Artistic Director Delicia Turner Sonnenberg, "Trouble in Mind" is fast moving and involves nine characters at loggerheads, the most fascinating and fractious are the intractable leading lady Wiletta Mayer (Monique Gaffney) and the implacable director Al Manners (Ruff Yeager), surely two of San Diego's most accomplished actors.

Other characters are the memory-challenged theater custodian (Tom Kilroy), a young actor in his first important role (Vimel Sephus), Millie, the ingénue (Cashae Monya), a seasoned black actor

(Victor Morris, whose speech about a lynching he witnessed is chilling), the well-meaning white cast member, Judy Sears (Samantha Ginn, the height of subtle, comic cluelessness), the browbeaten stage manager (Justin Lang), and Judy's character's father in the play-within-the play (Nick Young).

The comedy proceeds from character and the characters are splendidly portrayed. Wiletta and Millie, particularly, are coming off years of portraying maids and servants with floral or gemstone names. They are eager to be seen as major characters by then contemporary audiences.

Adding to the enjoyment is Angelica Ynfante's impeccably detailed set, the backstage of a Broadway theater in 1957. Eye candy fashions are created by Jacinda Johnston-Fischer, adorning female and male bodies alike, with the prizewinner being Gaffney's era-appropriate, draped floral number in Act II. Missy Bradstreet is the wig designer, her most characterful being Ginn's peek-a-boo blond tresses. Sherrice Mojgani is responsible for lighting and Rachel LeVine for sound.

Even beyond its historical significance, "Trouble in Mind" is a true find and

a marvelous vehicle for the prodigious talents on display here.

—Charlene Baldridge has been writing about the arts since 1979. Follow her artistic endeavors at [charlenebaldridge.com](http://charlenebaldridge.com). She can be reached at [charb81@gmail.com](mailto:charb81@gmail.com). ♦

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(left) Samantha Ginn in "Trouble in Mind" (above); "Trouble in Mind" is the tale of high racial drama behind a "play within a play." (Photos by Daren Scott)

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Ian Lowe and Joe Kinosian. Photo by Joan Marcus.



FROM PAGE 1  
DOGPARK

approximately 144,000 residents. The park is actually the expansion of the Ward Canyon Neighborhood Park, located on Adams Avenue near the border between Kensington and Normal Heights at the I-15. The park would serve the neighborhoods of Normal Heights, Kensington, City Heights, Talmadge and even Mission Gorge, which currently has no dog park. As it stands, the two closest dog parks to the proposed park are at Morley Field in Balboa Park and Grape Street Park in South Park.

Five hundred to 700 supporters are expected at the rally, set for noon to 2 p.m. Sunday at Ward Canyon Park, Ferrero-Pham said.

“There has been a lot of buzz about it on social media,” he said. The highlight of the rally may be an appearance and speech by Councilmember Todd Gloria, who will speak at 12:30. Gloria has requested \$1.2 million for initial engineering and design plans to get the \$7.9 million dog park off the ground. It would include a full basketball court, community center and community garden.

Gloria is optimistic that the amount will be approved by Mayor Kevin Faulconer’s office in June because the city’s budget environment is better than it has been in years.

He also said the Normal Heights neighborhood’s support for the dog park will help the project gain traction, similar to the neighborhoods of Mission Valley and Skyline, which were able to get fire stations for their neighborhoods.

“When a community seizes upon a project, they can get it done,” Gloria said.

Ferrero-Pham will present Gloria with 1,200 signatures collected in Normal Heights from people supporting the dog park.

Normal Heights resident Martha Fuentes and her Maltese poodle, Sheba, plan to attend the rally, although she thinks Sheba won’t like all the other dogs at the proposed park. But she favors the park and thinks it will be a nice place to let the neighborhood dogs run loose and get exercise.

Dog owners in Normal Heights now set their dogs free at Adams and Franklin elementary schools. Parents especially don’t like it because their kids step in the dog aftermath.

“So there are really a lot of people interested in this park besides

dog owners,” Ferrero-Pham said.

The drive for the dog park and Ward Canyon Park expansion is led by residents themselves, said Normal Heights Community Planning Group Chair Caroline McKeown.

“We’re just so pleased the community association has taken this over with their grassroots efforts,” she said.

The goal now is to get the park funded by the City Council, which she said is Gloria’s job. Supporters need to be loud, get on social media and go to council meetings, she said. Getting Gloria’s input was a major victory for moving forward with the park, she said.

“That’s a huge step for us because it hasn’t been on his wish list before,” McKeown said.

The park expansion would have some other benefits for the community, said Zeller, one

dog park supporter who has no dog. He is also a member of the planning group. Traffic on the I-15 off ramp at Adams Avenue would be slightly rerouted, removing one traffic light.

“The smoother traffic flow that will occur from the elimination of the signal and the extension of two lanes for the off ramp should improve flow and safety, especially in periods of heavy traffic,” Zeller said.

Free live music will be offered by Gloria Aparicio. The San Diego Humane Society will have an adopt-a-pet booth, and Petco and Banfield animal care will be offering free goodie bags for those attending, Ferrero-Pham said. Free water and popcorn will be available, and of course dogs are welcome.

—Contact Catherine Spearnak at [Catherine.spearnak1@gmail.com](mailto:Catherine.spearnak1@gmail.com). ♦

FROM PAGE 1  
ARRIVALS

they wrote about their memories, feelings and hopes.

“Many of the students who have been in the refugee camps have seen and gone through tremendous trauma,” said Viraj Ward, one of three teachers at Crawford’s New Arrivals Center.

Indeed, a few of the tags depict soldiers holding weapons. Others depict wild animals, doctors, mosques and schools.

“Images are something they relate to even when language might be a barrier,” Ward said.

Some of the writing on the tags was done with help from translators, because most of the New Arrival Center students speak little English. Some students as old as 16 have never had any formal education, Ward said.

Saida, a 14-year-old student from Kenya, knows that story well.

“Girls are not allowed to go to school because it is too dangerous,” she wrote on the back of one of the tags she painted. “Sometimes people rape the girls. Some people do drugs. School is really expensive. Only the older children went to school and they would come home and teach us.”

At the opening night of the exhibit, Saida practiced her English with Bread and Cie patrons. She said she was excited to see her story on display.

“It makes me very happy because I’m here. I study. I’m free,” she said.

Despite their limited English, some of the students speak multiple other languages. Najat, for example, is a refugee from Sudan who speaks Arabic, Swahili, Somali, Masalit and English. Still, she will have to take foreign language classes at Crawford in order to meet California high school graduation requirements.

Another student, Hector, painted one of his tags with a colorful parrot, which is one of the things he misses most about his home country of Honduras. One thing he doesn’t miss is the hardship that resulted from flooding.

“Our house would fill up with water and we would have to leave,” he wrote.

Hector wrote that he is not sure what his future holds. He wants to be a good U.S. citizen and “maybe join the military.” Other students dream of being doctors, math teachers and artists.

San Diego Unified School District Superintendent Cindy Marten described the project as “completely inspiring.”

“I think the whole city needs to come out here and see this,” Mar-



Autobiographical artwork on display at Bread and Cie (Photo by Jeremy Ogul)

ten said as she browsed the tags in the exhibit. “Children need to know that we care about them.”

Marten, who was principal at Central Elementary School in City Heights before stepping up to lead the district, said the project serves as an excellent example of the district’s mission to recognize and honor the distinct gifts and stories each student brings to the classroom.

In addition to giving students a chance to express themselves, the “Hello, My Name Is...” show is also a fundraiser. Anyone is welcome to take home one of the tags for a suggested donation of \$10 or more. The money will be spent on new art supplies, field trips and other forms of academic enrichment for the students who took part in the project.

Bread and Cie never takes commission from the art that is sold from its walls, and owner Charles Kaufman pays to install the monthly exhibitions. The intent is to give underrepresented local artists a chance to shine, Kaufman said.

“This is the ideal of what we had intended and wanted to do,” he said.

The students’ art will be on display through March 2.

—Contact Jeremy Ogul at [Jeremy@sdcnn.com](mailto:Jeremy@sdcnn.com). ♦

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# Calendar of Events

## FEATURED EVENTS

### Celebrity Dr. Seuss Reading Saturday, Feb. 14

On the second Saturday of each month this year, San Diego History Center (1649 El Prado, Balboa Park) invites a different local celebrity to read their favorite Dr. Seuss selections. The events are in conjunction with the Center's exhibit "Ingenious! The World of Dr. Seuss," which runs through the end of 2015. For this Valentine's Day edition, former San Diego Mayor and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce Jerry Sanders and his wife Rana Sampson will be the guest readers presenting the Seuss

classic "Oh, the Places You'll Go!" starting at 2 p.m. Children 10 years and younger in attendance will receive a free hardback copy of "The Cat in the Hat" and a coupon for a free ice cream from Rita's Italian Ice. Visit sandiego-history.org for more information.

### Bark in Balboa Park Sunday, Feb. 15

Pets on leashes and animal-lovers are invited to this unique concert by San Diego Civic Organist Dr. Carol Williams at Spreckels Organ Pavillion (1549 El Prado, Balboa Park). The performance will include classics, marches and animal-themed tunes played by Williams on the Spreckels Organ. The organist will have her own four-legged accompanist on hand – her Airedale rescue pup,

Dietrich Buxtehude Bell. San Diego County Humane Society representatives will also be in attendance with adoptable dogs and cats for attendees to meet and learn more about. A "Pets and People Parade" across the stage of the pavilion will round out this benefit show, which will take place from 2 – 3 p.m. All donations collected at the event will benefit the Humane Society. Visit spreckelsorgan.org for more information.

### Second Annual San Diego Improv Festival Thursday, Feb. 19 – Sunday, Feb. 22

The San Diego Improv Festival drew 95 applications this year, with 30 of the best teams selected for inclusion in the four-day festival. The event is presented and hosted by Finest City Improv (4250 Louisiana St., North Park), which is adjacent to the Lafayette Hotel. Artists from New York, San Francisco, Toronto and other cities will join four of Finest City's improv teams for performances, workshops and parties. Featured performers include King Ten, an ensemble from Los Angeles, and a two-person team, Dummy, from Chicago. Performances begin at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 19 and workshops start at 3 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 20. For a full schedule of events, tickets and more, visit sdimprovfestival.com.

### Book Signing: Raquel Perez Saturday, Feb. 21

Author and native San Diegoan, Raquel Perez will be signing her historical novel, "Legends of the Californios: Nana's Stories of our Family Roots" at Old Town Gift Co. (2754 Calhoun St.) from 4 – 6 p.m. Perez will discuss the collection of stories, which are set in different time periods throughout California's history, and the inspiration behind her characters, settings and more. Admission for the event is free and copies of the book will be available for purchase. Visit raquelperauthor.com for more information on the book and upcoming signings.

### Book Sale Saturday Feb. 21

The Friends of the Mission Hills Branch Library host this book sale at the library (925 West Washington St.) on the third Saturday of each month. The event takes place from 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. with an assortment of books for sale. Stock up and support the library! For more information visit facebook.com/mhlibrary or library92103.org.

## RECURRING EVENTS

### Mondays:

**Singing Storytime:** 1:30 p.m., learn what's going on inside your baby's mind, strengthen your bond and sing songs together at Mission Hills Library, 925 Washington St., Mission Hills, free. Library92103.org.

**Open Mic Night:** 7:30 p.m., the mic is open to you at Lestat's Coffee House, 3343 Adams Ave., Normal Heights, free. Lestat.com.

### Tuesdays:

**Curbside Bites:** 5 – 8:30 p.m., gathering of gourmet food trucks at 3030 Grape St., South Park. Curbsidebites.com.

**"Grab a Mic":** 6 p.m., an open mic night hosted by singer/actor Sasha Weiss. Sign ups at 6 p.m., show at 7 p.m., Martinis Above Fourth, 3940 Fourth Ave., Hillcrest. Martinisabovefourth.com.

**Tasty Truck Tuesdays:** 6 – 9 p.m., Smitty's Service Station hosts several food trucks under their well-lit shade structure, 3442 Adams Ave., Normal Heights. Sdfoodtrucks.com.

**Open Mic Charlie's:** 7 – 10 p.m. (except the third Tuesday), open mic night at Rebecca's Coffee House, 3015 Juniper St., South Park, free. Rebeccascoffeehouse.com.

### Wednesdays:

**Wang's Trivia:** 7 p.m., free trivia competition for prizes, tournament for \$1,000. Drink specials during trivia range \$3 – \$6. Wang's North Park, 3029 University Ave., North Park. Wangsnorthpark.com.

**Wednesday Night Experience:** 7 – 8 p.m., uplifting and spiritually inspiring experiences for all, weekly at Universal Spirit Center, 3858 Front St., Hillcrest, love offering requested. Universalspiritcenter.org.

**Young Lions Music Series:** 7 p.m., each week features a new "young rising star" chosen by Gilbert Castellanos. Castellanos will also join in during the first set, the Expatriate Room, Croce's Park West, 2760 Fifth Ave., Bankers Hill, \$5 cover. Crocosparkwest.com.

**Storytelling:** 7 – 8:45 p.m. the first Wednesday of each month featuring members of Storytellers of San Diego at Rebecca's Coffee House, 3015 Juniper St., South Park, donations welcome. Ages 12 and up. Storytellersofsandiego.org.

**Wednesday Jazz Jam Session:** 7:30 p.m., Gilbert Castellanos hosts the Jazz Jam Session with special guest musicians at Seven Grand, 3054 University Ave., North Park, free. Sevengrandbars.com.

### Thursdays:

**Gentle Yoga for seniors:** 2:45 – 3:45 p.m., presented by The Center and Silver Age Yoga Community Outreach (SAYCO) at The San Diego LGBT Center, 3909 Centre St., Hillcrest, free. Thecentersd.org.

**North Park Farmers Market:** 3 – 7 p.m., in the parking lot behind CVS at 32nd St. and University Ave., North Park, free. Northparkfarmersmarket.com.

**Kornflower's Open Mic:** Signups at 6:30 p.m., open mic (no poetry or comedy) 7 – 10 p.m. Family friendly event at Rebecca's Coffee House, 3015 Juniper St., South Park, free. Rebeccascoffeehouse.com.

**Kirtan Musical Meditation:** 8:15 p.m., chant and sing contemporary mantras celebrating love and life at Pilgrimage of the Heart Yoga, 3287 Adams Ave., Normal Heights, donation requested. Pilgrim-ageyoga.com.

### Fridays:

**Preschool Storytime:** 10:30 a.m., at Mission Hills Library, 925 Washington St., Mission Hills, free. Library92103.org.

**Fridays on Fifth:** 4 – 9 p.m., various restaurants and bars offer discounts and specials for a social hour on Fifth Avenue between Washington Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, Hillcrest. Fridaysonfifth.com.

**Cinema Under the Stars:** 8:30 p.m., Classic movie screenings at 4040 Goldfinch St., Mission Hills. Tickets start at \$15. Topspresents.com.

### Saturdays:

**Old Town Saturday Market:** 9 a.m. – 4 p.m., on Harney Street and San Diego Avenue, Old Town, free. Oldtownsaturdaymarket.com.

**Golden Hill Farmers Market:** 9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m., on B Street between 27th and 28th streets, Golden Hill, free. Sdmarketmanager.com.

**Children's Craft Time:** 10:30 a.m., at Mission Hills Library, 925 Washington St., Mission Hills, free. Library92103.org.

**Melodies in Balboa Park:** 1 – 5 p.m., the San Diego Youth Symphony and Conservatory ensembles fill Casa del Prado with classical music, 1549 El Prado, Balboa Park, free. Sdys.org.

**Celebrity Book Readings:** 2 p.m., local celebrities will visit the "Ingenious! The World of Dr. Seuss" at the San Diego History Center on the second Saturday of each month to read their favorite Seuss stories to those in attendance, 1649 El Prado, Balboa Park, free. Sandiegohistory.org.

**Comedy Heights:** 8 – 10 p.m., local comedians take the stage next to Twiggs Coffeehouse at 4590 Park Blvd., University Heights, free. Comedyheights.com.

### Sundays:

**Free Pancake Breakfast:** 8:30 – 9:45 a.m., every second Sunday this neighborhood breakfast precedes worship service and Sunday school at Normal Heights United Methodist Church, 4650 Mansfield St., Normal Heights. Email nancy@nhunited.org.

**Hillcrest Farmers Market:** 9 a.m. – 2 p.m., under the Hillcrest Pride Flag, Harvey Milk and Normal streets, free. Hillcrestfarmersmarket.com.

—Email calendar items to Hutton@sdcnn.com. ♦



**COMMUNITY INPUT 2015**

**UPTOWN COMMUNITY PARKING DISTRICT**

**Parking Related Project Ideas**

- Increase Parking Supply**
  - Angled or Head-in Parking
  - Shared Use Parking Facilities
  - Validation & Valet Programs
  - Residential Permits
- Manage Parking Demand & Enhance Utilization**
  - Employee Parking Solutions
  - New Meter Locations
  - Enforcement Hours & Rates
  - Live Parking Availability & Mobile App Guidance
  - Special Event Parking & Traffic Flow
- Enhance Parking Improvements**
  - Curb Painting & Repair
  - Median Beautification & Parklets
  - Street & Landscaping Projects
  - Transit Stops & Routes
- Promote Alternate Forms of Transportation**
  - Community Parking Shuttles
  - Bicycle Parking & Sharing
  - Pedestrian Improvements
  - Smart Car Infrastructure
  - Car Share Programs
  - Streetcar Feasibility

The Uptown Community Parking District re-invests parking meter funds into our communities for parking related projects.

We are seeking input from the community for projects in your neighborhood.

Join us at one of our upcoming sessions or email, [Elizabeth@ParkUptownSD.org](mailto:Elizabeth@ParkUptownSD.org)

**Bankers Hill Neighborhood Parking Committee**  
Mon Mar 2, 5:00-6:30 PM  
Merrill Gardens - 2567 Second Ave  
Mon Feb 16 & Mar 16, 6:30-8:00 PM  
SD Indoor Sports Club - 3030 Front St

**Five Points / International Restaurant Row Parking Committee**  
Fri Feb 27, 9:00-10:30 AM  
Shakespeare Pub & Grille - 3701 India St

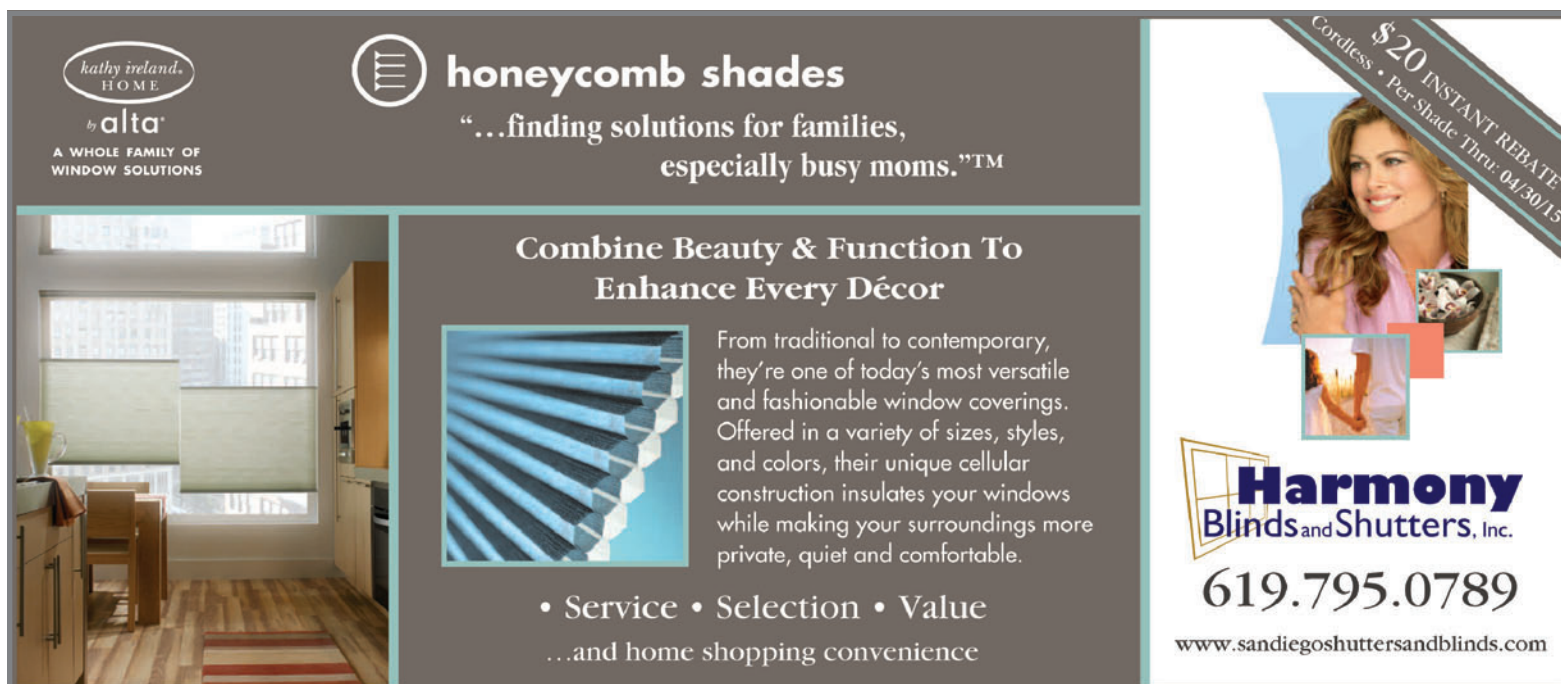
**Hillcrest Parking Committee**  
Thu Feb 26 & Mar 26, 5:00-6:30 PM  
HBA Office - 3737 Fifth Ave #202

**Mission Hills Parking Advisory Committee**  
(Parking discussion is part of the Mission Hills BID meeting)  
Wed Mar 18, 3:30-5:30 PM  
Mission Hills Books & Collectables - 4054 Goldfinch St

Learn more by joining us at our neighborhood partner's monthly meetings ~ Hillcrest Town Council, Hillcrest Business Association, Bankers Hill Business Group, Metro CDC, Mission Hills Town Council, Mission Hills BID, Bankers Hill Community Group and Western Slopes Association



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FROM PAGE 1  
VIDEO

peting with an Internet business.” Guy explained that the cost of doing business is very expensive compared to an Internet supplier located in a warehouse in a low-rent rural area with minimum-wage employees.

“We’re not bitter whatsoever and are sad to see so many businesses like ours disappearing from the communities,” Guy said.

Winnie, known simply as “Mom” around the store, said every day has been an adventure since its opening. She said they have been operating in Kensington since April 1, 1984; just about 32 years, and have outlasted their corporate competitors, such as Blockbuster and Hollywood Video.

“We know our last days are going to be hard,” Winnie said.

A family-owned store carrying 70,000 titles — many of which are far from popular among the masses — is no easy feat. Guy and Winnie take pride in the cultural treasury they’ve built.

“I personally bought every title in the store and searched throughout the country and even outside the country to secure many titles. The research was never-ending and was a passion I enjoyed pursuing every day,” says Guy.

What also makes browsing titles so lively is that you will notice near the register, a DVD case stocked with movie titles that were selected by Mom, titled “Winnie’s Picks,” which she changes periodically for customers unsure what to rent. She pulls from a self-compiled list of 500 movie titles.

“People may come in here and



depend on the choices I’ve made because they may not know what to rent,” she said.

Therese Rossi, who has been renting here for 18 years, said the owners work so hard to keep this place going with so many titles to choose from. She said she enjoys seeing the great mix of titles on the shelves of Winnie’s Picks and has discovered titles that she’s never heard of.

“I enjoy her eclectic style in taste, including ‘Kramer vs. Kramer’ and ‘Wilde,’” she said.

That day, Rossi chose “A Passionate Woman” from Winnie’s Picks. The BBC documentary series was a new discovery for her, thanks to Winnie.

“She has earned my respect for her good taste in films,” Rossi said. “I’m going to miss having the movie in my hand and what she has changed or added to her shelf.”

With movies on demand and online services to stream movies instantly, such as Netflix and Amazon Prime, Kensington Video is unfortunately a dying breed in the digital age. Many of the customers



(above) Winnie Hanford’s voluminous recommendation section, “Winnie’s Picks,” has been a mainstay in Kensington Video for years; (below) Kensington Video was treasured in the community for its vast collection of rare films. (Photos by Hutton Marshall)

who enjoy the store’s wide selection are millennials, said Guy.

When asked about what the millennials thought of the store’s closure, Guy mentioned that said the younger generation probably feels the most cheated out of enjoying Kensington Video, since their discovery of it was relatively recent.

“The millennials love movies and are very knowledgeable

on classics, such as silents and foreign films,” Guy said. “Many of them adore Cary Grant and Audrey Hepburn. When they walk into the store, they love the old school look. One of our customers has recently purchased standees, empty cases, VHS videos and promotional items because they are turning their one bedroom apartment into a video store replica. Obviously, they are old school and love our store. They will miss us and of course we will miss them too.

Sylvia Smith, who lives in San Carlos, has been coming to the store for 15 years and has been en-

tempt to rent online. If all goes well in developing an online business, he will cater to film buffs seeking rare, obscure, eclectic titles.

“I’ve worked so hard at collecting all of these titles and it would be so hard to sell the titles that were hard to collect,” Guy said.

In order to keep the spirit alive for film lovers, Winnie plans to host a film community group near the Kensington Library once a week to talk about film, where she’ll also continue to recommend her own selections.

“It would be a great way to stay in touch, since we were able to make an impact to the community,” she said.

Rossi mentioned her next best place to rent film rarities would be the library, although it won’t have the same affect she felt when she would browse at Kensington Video after all these years.

“Since I live in the neighborhood, I do hope to stay in touch with Winnie by attending her film club,” she said.

Currently, the family is in negotiations with potential renters, hoping to find a business that will be a strong asset to the community.

“The building belongs to our family, and the space could potentially turn into a restaurant,” Guy said.

For anyone who was able to partake in the Kensington Video renting experience, it will be a story you will have to tell your grandchildren, because the experience may soon vanish forever.

“I sometimes wonder if the theaters will be next. I hope not,” Guy said.

—Contact Karla Amador at [karlaamador79@gmail.com](mailto:karlaamador79@gmail.com). ♦

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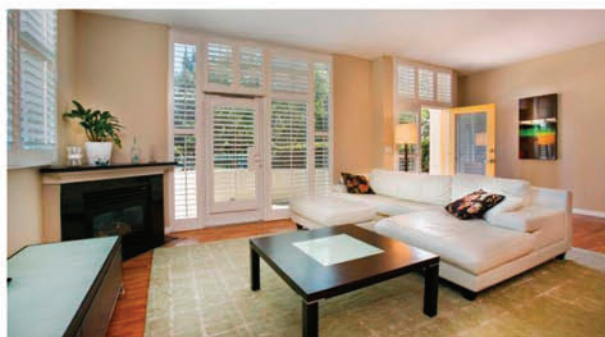
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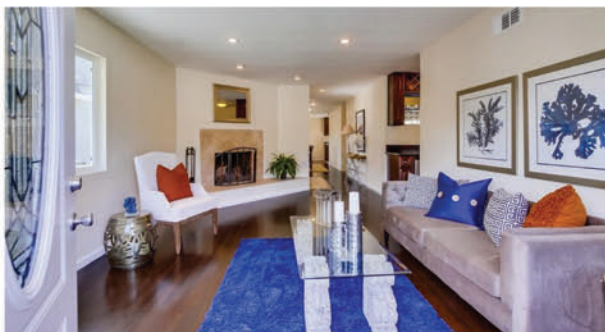
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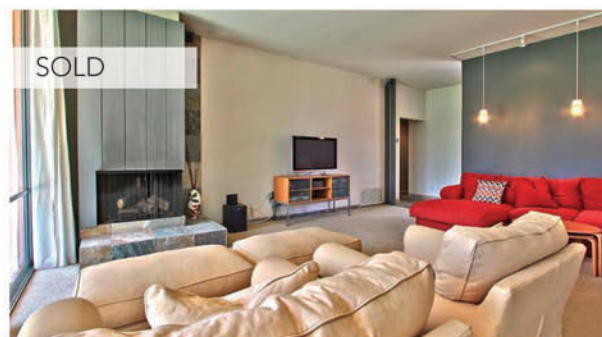
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