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# San Diego Uptown News

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theater  
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## Affordable housing

### Is the city about to get serious about the problem?

Artist's rendering by Joe Cordelle of LGBT-affirming affordable senior housing planned at the northwest corner of Texas Street and Howard Avenue in North Park (Courtesy of Rodriguez + Associates Architects and Planners)

By Dave Schwab

Though it's no longer an "emergency" the City Council reaffirms every month, the lack of affordable housing in Uptown, Mid-City, Mission Valley and throughout San Diego remains a serious problem community leaders continue to grapple with.

"We're no longer declaring once a month that there's an affordable housing emergency, because we realized doing that was symbolic and wasn't really accomplishing anything," said District 3 Councilman Todd Gloria, who represents much of Uptown and Downtown. "The council and the city are very much committed to [resolving] this issue. We have some big things planned for addressing this this calendar year, though there is a substantial amount of work to be done."

"Affordable housing is a problem, and it's been a problem for years and we've seen it coming," said Vicki Granowitz, chair of the North Park Planning Committee. "That's why we've supported all the affordable projects that have come to us."

Granowitz said North Park community planners have tried to alleviate the housing shortfall by approving more "affordable and workforce housing."

"We traditionally think of affordable housing as low-income housing, but that doesn't consider lower market rate-housing, which is harder to get now because rents with the new [high-rise] buildings that are going in are much higher than we'd prefer," Granowitz said.

That San Diego is one of the increasingly more expensive places in the nation — and state — to live is indisputable.

In an August 2015 report from the California Housing Partnership Corp. (CHPC), a San Diego renter household needs to earn more than three times the state minimum wage in order to afford average asking rents. The report showed that inflation-adjusted median rents in San Diego County increased 25 percent from 2000 to 2013, while inflation-adjusted median renter household income declined 4 percent.

see Housing, page 19

## Five donation meters coming to Hillcrest

Ken Williams | Editor

Hillcrest will soon have five red meters that will allow people to donate change or make a gift by credit card to help the area's homeless.

San Diego has a huge homeless problem, and Hillcrest along with Downtown and the San Diego River corridor are among the most affected areas in the city.

The Hillcrest Business Association (HBA) voted Tuesday night to sign an agreement with IPS Group in Pennsylvania to provide the donation meters, which look exactly like parking meters except they are painted red.

Ben Nicholls, executive director of the HBA, told his board members that they essentially would be replicating the "Make Change Count" drive in Downtown implemented by the Downtown San Diego Partnership. The only difference,



A red meter for donations (Courtesy of the Downtown San Diego Partnership)

see Meters, page 11

## New chords

### 3S Underground Jazz hopes to revolutionize local music scene

By María José Durán

A new way to understand live music is thriving in University Heights. 3S Underground Jazz brings together the best musicians in town to perform in a very particular setting.

The audience can sit on one of many couches at the 3rdSpace venue and listen carefully, or chat lively in one of the adjacent rooms, or even go upstairs to the kitchen and prepare a snack.

This music event has been happening in University Heights on the first Tuesday of every month for almost three years. The session starts sometime after 8 p.m. and features a main band, followed by a jam session where musicians from San Diego or out of town improvise together.

For its first concert in 2016, Underground Jazz chose a repertoire full of classics. The music changes from soothing to upbeat in an instant and fills the whole room, basically without amplification. The sound is not too loud, nor too low. It feels organic and pure.

Up on the makeshift stage, there is a stand-up bass, drums, a piano,



A jam session by 3S Underground Jazz on Jan. 5 at 3rdSpace in University Heights (Photo by Matan Chaffee)

sometimes a saxophone or an acoustic guitar. Some nights there's singing, and others just the compelling melody.

On the night of Jan. 5, there was a flash-flood warning and not many people made it to the session. But Underground Jazz organizer Ben Wanicur told Uptown News that people usually pack the venue.

see Jazz, page 19

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# Peters invited to White House to discuss gun measures

By Andy Cohen

On Dec. 2, 2015, terrorists opened fire at a holiday party at the San Bernardino Regional Center, killing 14 people and wounding 21 others. That same day, several other people were killed in gun attacks in Houston and Savannah, Ga. A week prior, a gunman killed three people, including a police officer, in an attack at a Planned Parenthood clinic in Colorado Springs where the gunman held several people hostage during a six-hour standoff. On Dec. 3, U.S. Rep. Scott Peters took to the floor of Congress.

"Thoughts and prayers are not enough. Moments of silence are not enough," Peters said in his floor speech. "Maybe, Mr. Speaker, instead of a moment of silence the American people can get a moment of action; a moment of action that might keep their community from being next. Expressions of sympathies and condolences are nice, but ultimately are empty."

A week later, Peters again took to the floor, and over the course of four days read the names of the victims of mass shootings across the country since the Sandy Hook Elementary massacre in Newtown, Conn., that took the lives of 20 elementary school children and six adults. Talk is cheap, and Congress should act, he said.

"I wanted to remind people that we need to take action on this," Peters said in an interview with San Diego Community Newspaper Network. "The President did everything he could to enforce existing laws, but it's still going to leave a hole that Congress has to address."

On Tuesday, Jan. 5, President Obama introduced a series of executive actions that will expand background checks, close loopholes in the law that would now require sellers who conduct their business on the Internet and at gun shows to be licensed, and therefore require them to conduct background checks prior to selling a firearm, and to provide additional personnel to the FBI to be able to more quickly process those background checks. Obama's actions will also provide additional funding for mental health care.

Last week, Obama extended

an invitation to 15 members of Congress, including Peters, to meet at the White House along with Attorney General Loretta Lynch to preview the executive actions. "We don't want to give the



Scott Peters (Official U.S. House portrait)

impression that we've solved the problem," Peters said, indicating that additional action by members of Congress is still necessary.

"How do we keep this going? How can we improve the laws?"

In a preemptive criticism, House Speaker Paul Ryan released a statement excoriating Obama's actions. "This is a dangerous level of executive overreach, and the country will not stand for it," Ryan said. "The president is at minimum subverting the legislative branch, and potentially overturning its will."

"It takes a lot of onions to criticize the president for strengthening existing laws," Peters said in response. Congressional Republicans have insisted that enforcement of the laws already on the books is all that's needed, and that no other actions should be taken to curb gun violence.

"Enforcement of existing laws is exactly what President Obama is trying to do. Ninety percent of Americans think expanding background checks is a reasonable thing to do," Peters said.

Opponents of Obama's measures have derided them as "illegal

and unconstitutional." Republican presidential candidate Marco Rubio claimed: "The president has waged war on the Constitution."

Asked if he believed Obama's executive actions were within the purview of his authority, Peters, a lawyer himself, insisted they were. Attorney General Lynch was directly involved, he said, and the actions were issued to give direction to prosecutors in order to help them more effectively follow the law. "Nothing about this should be controversial," Peters said.

On the mental-health provisions, Peters noted that his Republican colleagues have insisted that mental illness is the leading cause of gun violence, and he challenged them to put their money where their mouths are and fully back the initiative to de-stigmatize mental illness and bolster efforts to provide treatment. "Are Republicans willing to back up their notion that this is all about mental health? That gun violence is not separate from mental health?"

"This remains very important to people," Peters said, acknowledging that it's highly unlikely that any gun safety measures will be taken up by this Congress.

—Andy Cohen is a local freelance writer. Reach him at [ac76@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ac76@sbcglobal.net).

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# Wrapping up 2015

## Congressional Watch

Andy Cohen

On Dec. 18, Congress passed the \$1.1 trillion Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2016, otherwise known as the omnibus spending bill that will fund and keep the U.S. government open and running until September 2016.

This was the first major legislation passed under new Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI), and it passed, surprisingly, without much drama.

Perhaps Ryan was given the benefit of the doubt by his more intransigent Republican colleagues, who in essence forced the retirement of former Speaker John Boehner.

The bill did not contain any of the provisions members of the House Freedom Caucus — the hard right wing faction of the Republican membership who oppose nearly everything that even smacks of compromise with Democrats or President Obama — coveted, such as the repeal of “Obamacare,” or the defunding of Planned Parenthood. Nonetheless, it passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 316 – 113.

The spending bill extends some tax breaks for middle and low-income families, renewable energy development and for some businesses. It also boosts funds for the Pentagon (military) and for Pell Grants — much needed aid to college students.

The most controversial part — which almost, but not quite, derailed the bipartisan agreement — was the ending of a decades-long ban on the export of U.S.-produced oil, a boon

to domestic oil companies. But that was a compromise worth making for Democrats, who vehemently opposed the too-numerous-to-mention “poison pill” riders originally placed in the bill by Republicans.

The most important thing the spending bill does, however, is nearly guarantee that the government will not be shut down over foolish partisan squabbles during most of the 2016 election cycle — such as the aforementioned Planned Parenthood or decreasing taxes on the wealthy — at least until next September when the general presidential election will be in full throttle. That’s a good thing.

Locally, it means that our military installations — which fuel much of the local San Diego economy — will be fully funded. And of our local Congressional delegation, only Duncan Hunter (R-50) voted against the bill, effectively voting in favor of shutting down the federal government, just like during fall 2013.

Overall, it also means that the two sides can actually work together when it matters most ... at least for now, or until the honeymoon is over for Paul Ryan.

### In other news ...

Scott Peters (D-52) took to the floor of Congress to admonish Congressional leadership for not allowing a bipartisan bill with 185 co-sponsors — that would expand background checks on gun purchases to include gun shows and private sales — from coming to the floor to a vote. Over the course of four days, Peters took to the floor to read the names of the victims of gun violence that he and many other co-sponsors of this bill argue

might still be alive had Congress acted on some simple reforms.

“Thoughts and prayers are not enough,” Peters said from the floor of the House of Representatives. “Moments of silence are not enough. Maybe, Mr. Speaker, instead of a moment of silence the American people could get a moment of action. A moment of action that might keep their community from being next.”

In a story published by the San Diego Union Tribune, none of Peters’ opponents support the gun bills that have been introduced in Congress.

“Each of these names has something in common: They were defenseless in the minutes between the start of the shooting and when police were able to arrive,” said John Horst, a Republican candidate hoping to unseat Peters in 2016.

Horst told the Union Tribune that he would introduce a national open carry law that would allow every person legally entitled to own a gun to carry their firearms openly in a holster in all public areas.

Peters and his colleagues should be commended for their efforts to bring attention to this and other bills designed to make it more difficult for people who shouldn’t have guns to legally purchase them.

On Dec. 21, Peters awarded a La Jolla resident who served as an infantryman in World War II a medal for his combat service in the European theater.

“It was my honor to give Donald Breitenberg this long overdue recognition for his brave service,” Peters said. “Getting our San Diego World War II veterans the recognition they have earned is the very least we can do to honor our greatest generation and the sacrifices they made for our nation.”

Juan Vargas (D-51) joined a group of Congressmembers who penned a letter to the House Appro-

priations Committee imploring them to increase funding for refugee assistance and resettlement programs in the 2016 budget.

“Over 75 percent of those seeking refuge in the U.S. are women and children who are desperately trying to escape the danger that has removed them from their homes and continuously threatens their lives,” Vargas said in a press release. “Our screening process is rigorous and thorough; increasing funding would aid any areas where additional support is required. Providing the additional funds needed to support several refugee-related accounts would reflect our country’s moral leadership and counter ISIS’s barbaric acts.”

You might recall that in November, Scott Peters and 46 other Democrats joined with Congressional Republicans in opposition of allowing any Syrian or Iraqi refugees fleeing ISIS atrocities into the United States.

Darrell Issa (R-49) was announced as one of several international government representatives or policy makers who will be speaking at the 2016 Consumer Electronics Show, also known as CES, in Las Vegas in January. CES is one of the largest shows of its type in the world. A member of the House Judiciary Committee, Issa serves on the Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual Property, and the Internet, which has jurisdiction over patent and trademark law, information technology, and the Internet.

Issa made his fortune as CEO of Directed Electronics, the car alarm company that featured his voice on its Viper and Python car alarms, along with other electronics company investments, and has spearheaded efforts in Congress on patent reform.

—Andy Cohen is a local freelance writer. Reach him at [ac76@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ac76@sbcglobal.net).



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# Hillcrest Town Council opposes televangelist's project

**Ken Williams | Editor**

After a lively discussion about the proposed Morris Cerullo International Legacy Center in Mission Valley, the Hillcrest Town Council on Tuesday night voted 25-1, with two residents abstaining, to author a letter of opposition to the massive multi-use project.

Cerullo, 84, is a controversial televangelist based out of San Diego who is seeking city approval to build eight buildings totaling 315,000 square feet on 18.1 prime acres at 875 Hotel Circle South just off Interstate 8. The project would require the demolition of the Mission Valley Resort Hotel and other buildings that house local businesses. The Legacy Center's location would not only impact traffic in Mission Valley but would also affect Bachman Place leading up the canyon to the Hospital District, Mission Hills and Hillcrest.

The city's Planning Department is collecting the public's input through Friday, Jan. 15, on the project's Environmental

Impact Review (EIR). To make comments, visit [bit.ly/1XQvuJo](http://bit.ly/1XQvuJo).

Hillcrest resident Eddie Reynoso, who operates the San Diego LGBT Visitors Center in Hillcrest, made a motion to oppose the project based on the ministry's anti-equality stances; environmental impact; and impact on traffic, transportation and bicycling routes. Steven

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HillcrestTownCouncil.com

Marin seconded the motion, which was then approved.

The letter will be sent to San Diego Mayor Kevin Faulconer, the full City Council and the Mission Valley Planning Group, which currently holds the fate of the Legacy Center project.

The project will return to the planning group's Design Advisory Board as an agenda action item for the meeting at 3:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 4, at the Mission Valley Library, 2123

Fenton Parkway. Then it will go before the full planning group at its meeting at noon Wednesday, Feb. 6, also at the library.

San Diego Uptown News has also learned that the San Diego LGBT Community Center is mounting a social media campaign against the Legacy Center. The Center will be urging concerned citizens to attend the Feb. 6 meeting of the Mission Valley Planning Group.

Should the Mission Valley Planning Group approve the project, it would then advance to San Diego's Planning Department. The City Council would then have to give the final blessing before groundbreaking could take place.

To read full coverage by Mission Valley News, visit [bit.ly/1l7pVUH](http://bit.ly/1l7pVUH) and [bit.ly/1l7q4rd](http://bit.ly/1l7q4rd).

—Ken Williams is editor of Uptown News and Mission Valley News and can be reached at [ken@sdcdn.com](mailto:ken@sdcdn.com) or at 619-961-1952. Follow him on Twitter at @KenSanDiego, Instagram at @KenSD or Facebook at KenWilliamsSanDiego. ♦

# Notes from Toni

**Toni G. Atkins**  
Speaker of the Assembly



Every other January marks an interesting time in the Capitol. As you might know, the state Legislature works in two-year sessions. The current session began last January and concludes on Aug. 31, 2016. Since we're right in the middle, it's a good time to reflect on the first year's work and look forward to the coming year.

I'm very proud of the things we achieved for the people of California in 2015. As the state budget continued to rebound from the Great Recession, we were able to beef up our rainy-day reserves and pay down debt, and we pumped more money into public schools, higher education, and childcare support.

We created a new system for the regulation of medicinal marijuana, solving a problem that has dogged the state for 20 years. We've made much progress in our efforts to conserve water amid a prolonged drought.

We passed a crucially important climate-change law that pushes us more toward renewable energy and increases energy efficiency in our buildings. A few of my colleagues and I traveled to Paris last month to demonstrate to world leaders how California is leading the way in the fight against climate change.

And we created California's first state-level Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) to supplement the federal EITC and put more money into the pockets of the workers who need it most, benefitting roughly two million people.

Still, not all of the important work was finished. Our system of highways, roads, and bridges is in serious decay and we haven't settled how to pay for the needed repairs. Likewise, we must fill a billion-dollar shortfall in our Medi-Cal system, and more funding is needed to provide services for residents with developmental disabilities.

Nor have we decided on a permanent funding source for affordable housing. Housing affordability is a growing crisis in

California, one that's threatening to further erode the middle class and make it difficult for many working-poor families to escape poverty.

The issues are complex and difficult, but we need to address them.

I'll soon be assisting Assembly Speaker-designee Anthony Rendon's transition into the Speaker's office. The Assembly Democratic Caucus selected Mr. Rendon as the next Speaker. He was formally elected on Jan. 11 and will be officially sworn in on March 7, allowing for a two-month transition period. After that, during what will be my final nine months in the Assembly, I'll continue advocating for veterans, homeless people, the LGBT community, the working poor, and all San Diegans and Californians in my role as Speaker Emeritus.

Indeed, 2016 will be an interesting transitional year for me, and I am looking forward to it. I have high hopes for what can be accomplished for San Diego and California. I wish you all a productive and joyous year.

Around the district: You'll soon be hearing more about the EITC, as we launch the effort locally to make sure San Diegans take advantage of this tax credit and the related federal tax credit. For more information, including tools, calculators and charts, please see [caleitc4me.org](http://caleitc4me.org). You may also call 2-1-1 San Diego for appointments for Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) ... Having an issue with a state agency can be challenging. If you find you need help getting answers, please call my local district office at 619-645-3090. My staff would be happy to assist you ... Many new laws took effect in California on Jan. 1, including AB 1116, which stops manufacturers of smart TVs from capturing private conversations, and AB 774, which will allow craft beer tastings at farmers markets. For a more extensive list, please see my January e-newsletter at [tinyurl.com/nq4pvxo](http://tinyurl.com/nq4pvxo).

—Toni G. Atkins is the Speaker of the California State Assembly. For more information, please visit her website, [asmdc.org/speaker](http://asmdc.org/speaker) where you can sign up for her e-newsletter or get the latest news on legislation and other activities. You also may follow her on Twitter, @toniatkins. ♦

## Letters

### What a lovely tribute

Re: "So long, Joe, it's been good knowing you" [Volume 7, Issue 25 or at [bit.ly/1NMyr2l](http://bit.ly/1NMyr2l)]

Katherine Hon eloquently described the multiple, important roles Joe Schloss played in North Park for many years. In other articles, Ms. Hon has educated us about historically significant sites in North Park. As her tribute to Joe Schloss points out, the community has also been fortunate to have some special people contribute to its history.

—Betty Gillis via email

### More on Smart & Final

Re: "Smart & Final Extra! concept explained" [Volume 7, Issue 26, or at [bit.ly/1QX2R9b](http://bit.ly/1QX2R9b)]

We need a grocery store within walking distance in the neighborhood! We don't live in utopia and no one is going to get everything they want. A decent grocery store is better than an empty building any day of the week!

—Dee Elliott via our Facebook page, [facebook.com/SDUptownNews](https://www.facebook.com/SDUptownNews)

It looks as if the only ones that have a problem with Smart & Final are the unions. How hypocritical especially when they have no issues with Costco, which is union.

—Vince via our website, [sduptownnews.com](http://sduptownnews.com)

### An informative article

Re: "A Modern story" [Volume 8, Issue 1 or at [bit.ly/1Rkdf1j](http://bit.ly/1Rkdf1j)]

Superlative article spelling out the development of residential history of the 20th century. Places like Clairemont and Allied Gardens (where I began life) are our own little Levittowns. I learned some new architect names from the eras of whom I was not aware. Thanks for a great article!

—Lorelei via Facebook

### Thanks for the memories

Re: "Just like old times" [Volume 8, Issue 1 or at [bit.ly/1ONG3XD](http://bit.ly/1ONG3XD)]

I remember The Hungry Hunter as a kid, and went to Hunt-

er's several years ago with my grandpa. Thanks for the reminder of this great spot – sounds like another visit for me is in order!

—Benny Cartwright via Facebook

### Foodie news

Re: "Argentine picnic" [Volume 7, Issue 26 or at [bit.ly/1ZYHZA0](http://bit.ly/1ZYHZA0)]

Big fan of Andy's food and haven't even tried the Argentine feast yet. Check out my review of him on my new BBQ website. Nice write-up.

—Mercy at [BaronsBBQBeat.com](http://BaronsBBQBeat.com)

### A beautiful friendship

Re: "A special kind of friendship" [Volume 8, Issue 1 or at [bit.ly/1JlrdRN](http://bit.ly/1JlrdRN)]

This was a great story! Thanks, Anne!

—Benny Cartwright via Facebook

—Send letters to the editor to [ken@sdcdn.com](mailto:ken@sdcdn.com) or via the San Diego Uptown News website or our Facebook page. ♦

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**BRET SMITH**

**MOVE STRONG STUDIO B.A., B.S.,CPT**

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I was exposed to martial arts at a young age with classes at the local Boys and Girls Clubs. Fondly, I remember the days of walking into the training area and feeling so excited to learn new techniques, scenarios and applications.

To participate in our Expert Advice section, call:  
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## Guest Editorial

### Renters insurance: worth every penny?

Alan Pentico

Would you be able to replace all your belongings if they were destroyed in an accident? Could you afford to stay in a hotel room for a week or two while you looked for a new place to live after a fire? If a judge found you responsible for an injury that happened in your home, would you be able to pay the victim's medical bills?

If you're a renter and you answer to any of those questions is "no," you need renters insurance.

Some landlords require tenants to show proof of renters insurance; others make it optional. Either way, we always encourage renters to obtain their own insurance. The landlord's insurance covers only the property and liability of the landlord, not of the tenants.

Many renters have not fully considered what's at stake. Let's take a look at recent news coverage in San Diego.

On Oct. 6, a cigarette ember ignited some rags in a car in Normal Heights, feeding flames that scorched a nearby apartment. On Oct. 13, a faulty air conditioning unit caught fire in the window of a La Mesa home. On Oct. 19, food left unattended on a hot stove started a fire in a Point Loma house.

In each of these cases, the damage to a renter's clothing, furniture, electronics and other property would likely be covered by insurance, if you had it.

Fire is not the only threat covered by renters insurance. Water damage that results from something sudden, such as a pipe bursting in the wall, would also be

covered. And insurance doesn't just cover the cost of replacing damaged property; it can also cover the cost of finding alternative housing (like a hotel room) while your unit is repaired.

Even if you take every precaution to prevent accidents in your own unit, you can't control what your neighbors in a multi-unit building do. A neighbor's negligence could start a fire or flood that spreads to your own home. That was the case on Oct. 21, for example, when a fire in a National City garage spread through a two-story building, displacing approximately 20 people.

Renters also need to consider their liability for injuries that happen in their home. For example, if a guest trips over an object in your living room and breaks his

wrist, you could be held liable for any losses he incurs as a result of the injury. If you have pets, you could be liable for bites or other injuries they cause to guests or neighbors.

Whether you live in a single-family home, a backyard studio, a condo or an apartment, renters insurance is valuable. It can also be surprisingly affordable. Many renters can get an adequate policy for \$15 to \$30 per month, and further discounts may be available for bundling your renters insurance with car insurance. If you don't yet have renters insurance, take five minutes to get a quote and find out more today.

—Alan Pentico is the executive director of the San Diego County Apartment Association. ♦



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## San Diego Uptown News



### Readers Poll

#### Poll Results

**What do you expect happens in Election 2016?**

- 83%** Democrats keep the White House
- 8%** Republican elected President
- 9%** Too early to predict

#### New Poll

**Is the city doing enough to encourage affordable housing?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

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# Buy small, build big, hold for the return

By Eric Domeier

There is a class of real estate investor who, with relatively modest financial leverage, seeks to capitalize on San Diego's perpetual growth. Not a mass-scale developer, these individuals may want to consider a one- or two-parcel project with a 10-year vision. While not an easy course, small-project real estate development can still be a source of sustainable family wealth. And in our area, City Heights has the greatest potential.

## The business of land development

The basic residential development equation has always been to convert under-utilized land into higher-density housing. Thirty years ago, this meant turning farmland into residential tracts and selling them. The land was inexpensive. And square-foot costs for labor and materials were competitive. In the end, where the project might cost \$135 per square foot to develop, it was selling for \$185 per square foot. Life was good for the mass-scale developers.

But two things happened in the last 10 years.

The first is the implementation of SB-375. In 2008, the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act (SB-375) went into effect and changed the development game. With a clearer understanding of how sprawl leads to environmental degradation, SB-375 is putting an end to single-family tract development in California. The state has re-directed growth to existing urban communities.

The second thing that hap-

pened is that construction costs went up while sale values went down. The end result is that it often costs as much or slightly more to build than the project's market value. Combined, these two changes in the market have made business very difficult for the mass-scale developer.

But for the modest investor with the long-view, opportunity remains. These are found in under-utilized city parcels. There are properties that currently have 1,500 square feet of structure on them, but are allowed to have as much as 10,000 square feet. This is a parcel ready for conversion from single-story, low-density to a multi-story, mixed-use, medium-density project.

And rather than building a project for sale, these projects can be built for retention and rental. The investor retains the project and allows the rent to pay for itself. In time, real estate values will rebound and the investor will own a very marketable piece of property.

## Zoning

The city organizes every parcel of land in our community into zoning classes. Each class carries a designation and many are unique to the neighborhood. Areas such as City Heights and Normal Heights have some particularly attractive opportunities.

In particular, parcels designated as CUPD-CT-2-4 and CU-2-4 have excellent development opportunity. These zones are intended to accommodate medium-density, mixed-use projects. But these same lots are currently under-utilized as single-story residential and commercial.



Sound real estate development opportunities still exist in our communities, including in City Heights. While not for the faint of heart, diligence and hard work can pay off in the long term. (Courtesy of Eric Domeier)

In these zones, a standard 2,500-square-foot lot can accommodate a 10,000-square-foot project. This can include up to four residential units and as much as 7,500 square feet of commercial space. There is, of course, a many-paged laundry list of requirements by the city to achieve this opportunity, not the least of which is parking. But it is development-by-right, meaning the investor does not need to obtain any special approvals from the city. Which is a good thing. Because there are enough standard approvals required to keep the project in a planning phase for two years.

## Property values

An additionally attractive quality of the Mid-City area is property values. Still considered an outlier to the urban elite, the neighborhoods maintain a seedier image. Nonetheless, these areas are not very different than the 1990s North Park.

According to broker and attorney Eric Townsend, "City Heights is poised to be a great area for investment based on gentrification trends."

Current owners of parcels in the earlier-mentioned CT-2-4 and CU-2-4 zones are in the catbird seat. With such a property in the portfolio, they are in the best position to finance and convert the property into a lucrative long-term profit.

But where the owners of these lots seek to sell, they often overplay their advantage and fail to move the property. It is important to note that the as-is property has potential value only. And the potential is only realized after significant work and expertise to make it into a medium-density, mixed-use property. This includes additional investment equal or greater to property cost, sound decision making, and gritty determination to labor through the entitlement process. It is the buyer

of the as-is property who takes on all of this risk, where the seller assumes no risk beyond what is typical to any real estate transaction.

## Opportunity

While Wall Street investment markets bob and weave, the safest bet for long-term money may be in San Diego real estate. And Mid-City might be a good fit for the long-term investor. With under-utilized parcels and reasonable property values, opportunity exists. The buy-build-hold model of real estate development could reap strong margins in the 10-year picture. Buy small, build big, and hold for the return.

—Eric Domeier lives in North Park and practices architecture from his Grim Avenue office. Visit his website at [dome-arch.com](http://dome-arch.com) or call him at 619-531-0010. ♦

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## UPTOWN FOOD BRIEFS

BY FRANK SABATINI JR.



Get a free taco Saturday nights at Puesto. (Courtesy of Katalyst PR)

Saturday-night “fiestas” are being held weekly from 9 p.m. to midnight at **Puesto** in **The Headquarters at Seaport**. The new, ongoing promotion provides guests with one free taco with the purchase of a “Puesto perfect margarita.” It’s an unlimited deal that includes such tacos as chicken al pastor, zucchini and cactus, carnitas, and more. 789 W. Harbor Drive, 619-233-8880.

Based on last year’s success, **Cueva Bar** in University Heights will continue its “meatless Mondays” series through 2016 on the second Monday of every month, with various guest chefs contributing to the vegetarian dinners. Joining chef-owner Oz Blackaller on Feb. 8 will be Nick Brune from Eco Caters. The dinners start at 6 p.m. and cost \$40 to \$45, depending on their menus. They include beer pairings, tax and gratuity. Tickets must be purchased in advance via Cueva’s website. 2123 Adams Ave., 619-269-6612, [cuevabar.com](http://cuevabar.com)



A new sports bar called 1919 is coming to the Gaslamp Quarter (Treehouse Hospitality Group)

Replacing **Nicky Rotten’s** in the Gaslamp Quarter is **1919**, which its promoters are touting as “a different kind of neighborhood sports bar.” Due to open in February, it’s named after the year of the infamous “Black Sox Scandal,” when eight Chicago White Sox players who were up against the Cincinnati Reds in the World Series were caught intentionally losing games in exchange for money from gamblers. The concept will encompass classic American comfort dishes, creative cocktails, nostalgic design elements, and 25 high-definition flat screens. 560 Fifth Ave.



A North Park newcomer (Courtesy of Encontro North Park)

Another potential hotspot designed by acclaimed craftsman Paul Basile has sprouted in metro San Diego, this time in the heart of North Park under the name **Encontro**. The chic, casual space, which opened Jan. 2, features an open kitchen, plus wine and craft beers on tap. Homemade sausages, portobello fries, and handmade shakes using **Hammonds Ice Cream** are among the culinary standouts. All of the meat proteins are prepared on a grill prominently displayed at the front of the dining room. This is the first project by Encontro North Park LLC, which comprises a group of local entrepreneurs. 3001 University Ave., 619-291-1220, [encontronorthpark.com](http://encontronorthpark.com).

**Eclipse Chocolate Bar & Bistro** in South Park continues its “chocolate threeway” series at 7 p.m., Jan. 28, in conjunction with **Urbn St. Brewing Co.** For \$20, guests will receive a guided tasting of three chocolate truffles paired with three artisan cheeses and three craft beers. 2145 Fern St., 619-578-2984, [eclipsechocolate.com](http://eclipsechocolate.com).

Nearly 180 restaurants stretching from North County to Coronado are taking part in **San Diego Restaurant Week** on Jan. 17 – 24. Deals will vary among the establishments, with three-course dinners priced at \$20, \$30, \$40, and \$50, and two-course lunches ranging from \$10 to \$20. No passes or tickets are required, although reservations are recommended. Some of the restaurants taking part are: La Bonne Table in Hillcrest; The Red Door in Mission Hills; The Smoking Goat in North Park; Coastera in Shelter Island; Bellamy’s Restaurant & Wine Bar in Escondido; Donovan’s in the Gaslamp Quarter; Stake Chophouse in Coronado; and more. For a complete list, visit [sandiegorestaurantweek.com](http://sandiegorestaurantweek.com).

The recent opening of **Madison** in University Heights reveals a cedar arched ceiling, colorful, geometric inlaid tiles, and Mid-Century Modern appointments conceived by local design team Anna and Dave Sindelar. The restaurant, which occupies the former Lei Lounge, features a full bar and a menu of modern Mediterranean fare with Southern California influences. Helming the kitchen is Chef Mario Cassereri, who concurrently works at **BICE** in the Gaslamp Quarter. The venture was co-launched by Matthew Sieve after managing **Isabel’s Cantina** and **Barrio Star** for the past four years. 4622 Park Blvd., 619-269-6566, [madisononpark.com](http://madisononpark.com).



The Westgate’s Irving Gonzalez (Courtesy of Chemistry PR)

Through experimenting with fermentation, the new lead mixologist at **The Westgate Hotel**, Irving Gonzalez, has added novel twists to traditional Mexican drinks such as the tepache and pulque. Hailing from the avant-garde **Hacienda Guadalupe** in Ensenada, Mexico, he brings to the bar some of his native staples: tamarind, horchata water, and agave. Or if you want to talk beer with Gonzalez, you’re in good hands because he’s also a homebrewer. 1055 Second Ave., 619-238-1818.

—Frank Sabatini Jr can be reached at [fsabatini@san.rr.com](mailto:fsabatini@san.rr.com). ♦





(l to r) The top-selling orange chicken; war won ton soup; and sliced pork appetizer (Photos by Frank Sabatini Jr.)

# Behind the imperial façade

## Restaurant Review

Frank Sabatini Jr.



San Diego’s oldest dining establishment likely is Chop Suey | Peking Restaurant in North Park, where Cantonese-style dishes have been served from steel carts since 1931.

Today, family members of the late founder, Leo Fong, run the business, which predates the openings of other local legends such as The Waterfront Bar (1933), Tobey’s 19th Hole Café (1934), The Chicken Pie Shop (1938), and Hob Nob Hill (1944).

The restaurant stands out from its modern-day surroundings with a faux Chinese-dynasty entrance framed in bright-red columns and curvy lines hovering overhead. Trimmed in neon lights, it’s exactly the kind of place past generations flocked to for what they termed as “Oriental food” at a time when dishes like egg foo yung, chop suey and almond chicken posed as exotic alternatives to the American diet.

Those dishes remain in place along with many others such as the war won ton soup, should you require a break from trendy Vietnamese pho and Japanese ramen available everywhere else. This is just as embracing, as the word “war” or “wor” translates to “de-luxe,” meaning it’s stocked heavily with solid ingredients.

Served in a metal helmet-shaped bowl, our spoons maneuvered through soft pork dumplings, bamboo shoots, sliced pork, Napa cabbage, and scallions. We tossed in fried noodles along the way to add further texture. The broth was beautiful, a clear and safely salted chicken stock infused with the combined flavors of everything in it.

Our delightful waitress, Stephanie, is the granddaughter of Fong and a freelance photographer by day. Several of her pictures of the restaurant are displayed throughout the dining room amid ornate lanterns and red circular booths, which many years ago were individually partitioned off with silk screens.

We took her cue for the barbecue pork; an appetizer prepared exactly the same as when the restaurant first opened. It featured numerous slices of the meat, a few of them chewy, but all offering slow-roasted flavor and sweet edges.

Another starter, foil-wrapped chicken, was equally enjoyable but required a little work unraveling the tender poultry nuggets from



## Chop Suey Peking Restaurant

2877 University Ave.  
(North Park)  
619-295-2610  
chopsueysd.blogspot.com  
Prices: Appetizers and soups, \$7 to \$12; entrees, \$8 to \$15; family-style dinners, \$10 to \$20 per person; lunch specials, \$5.50 to \$6.5

their tightly sealed purses. The meat is marinated, then wrapped and refrigerated before going into the deep fryer upon order. As a result, your fingers encounter the residual oil on the foil, but it’s worth the trouble.

The restaurant’s top-selling orange chicken is a relative new-

comer. It was added to the menu in the late 1990s. Unlike the sticky, cloying versions found in other Chinese restaurants, the glaze was mouthwatering, sporting a tasteful balance of citrus and sugar that added a juicy essence to the battered chicken pieces — all breast meat and bigger than golf balls.

We skipped over the chop suey in lieu of lo mein, which basically omits the customary celery and onions. Available with a choice of proteins, we chose chicken to augment the hefty pile of wok-seared wheat noodles strewn also with bean sprouts and cabbage, and accented in the cooking process with a gentle measure of soy sauce.

Uncomplicated and standard, it was nonetheless satisfying. And it is among the dishes that parents traditionally order for their kids as a gateway meal to other Asian cuisine.

Large families are a common sight here, and the menu caters to them well with feast-size dinners ranging from \$10 to \$20 per person. But unless you’re more than four-strong, portion sizes on most dishes are generous enough to go around. As a twosome, we went home with leftovers.

The restaurant’s longevity is fueled by its clean, retro atmosphere, friendly service, and classic American-style Cantonese recipes that have sadly become harder to find these days amid the ongoing proliferation of Thai and Japanese dining spots.

“It would be cool if we could make it to 100 years, but we’ll see,” Stephanie said, revealing that her parents will someday retire, and that her siblings have already carved out careers outside of the restaurant business.

In keeping with its annual tradition for celebrating the Chinese



(top to bottom) The front door; foil-wrapped chicken; and chicken lo mein



New Year, the restaurant will feature performances by the Lucky Lion Dancers at 6 p.m. on Feb. 12, 21, 27 and 28.

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

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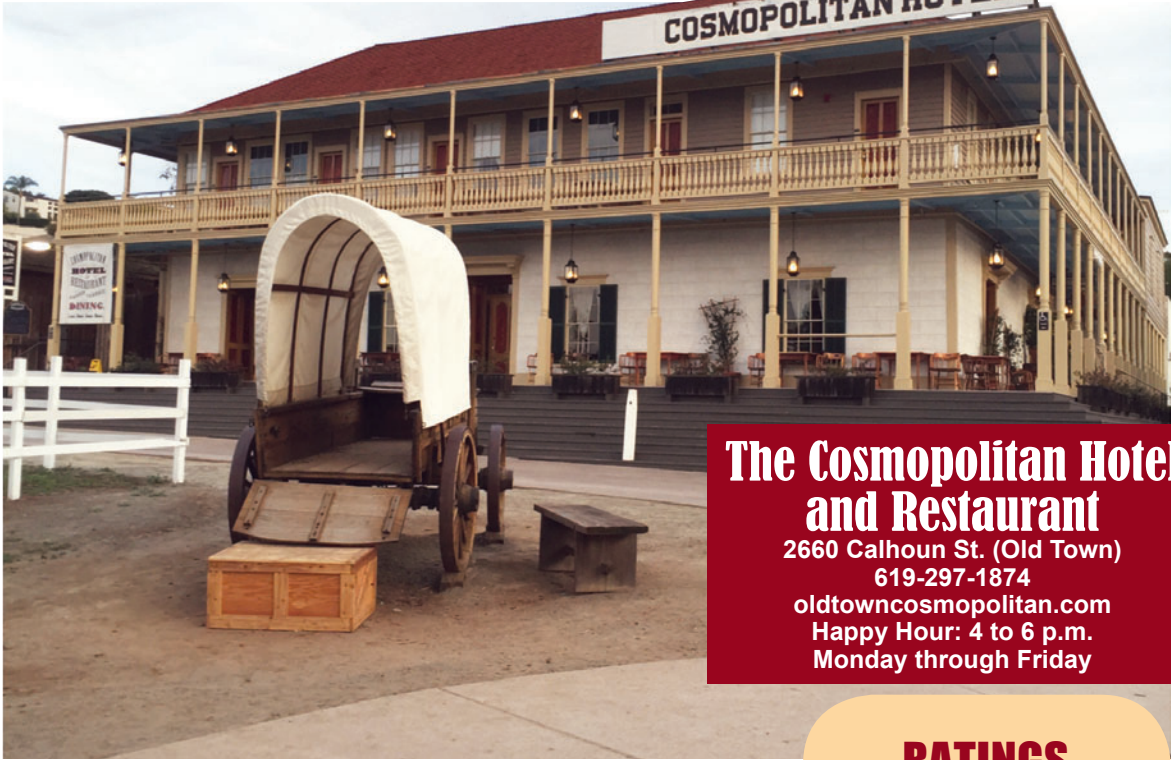
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Old Town's historic landmark features two bars (Photos by Dr. Ink)

# Bar hopping within a single address

**Come On Get Happy!**  
**Dr. Ink**

The saloon at the historic Cosmopolitan Hotel and Restaurant in Old Town is always a big draw for me with its ornate, wooden bar shelves, striped wallpaper and 19th-century relics strewn throughout the room. It's a place where you can easily imagine regional travelers parking their stagecoaches outside and poking in for a whiskey when the hotel served as a crash pad for them.

The property is rife with history. What started out as a modest adobe home built in the early-1800s by pioneer Juan Lorenzo Bandini eventually expanded a few decades later under a different owner, at which point it came to include a billiards room, barbershop and the saloon, as well as a second level for guest rooms.

Today especially, it's a fine place to drink and eat, thanks to an additional courtyard bar added some decades ago, and the subsequent renovations that were made throughout the structure.

On a recent happy-hour visit, I started at the saloon with a glass of cabernet sauvignon by Sawbuck. It's the house wine discounted from \$8 to \$4. But as the saloon's lone bar customer

that day, I was less interested in fiddling with my cell phone than I was in rubbing elbows with fellow drinkers. So I moved to the courtyard bar.

There, a small gaggle of locals and tourists provided a social outlet as I switched to a margarita, which also usually sells for \$8, but drops to \$5 during happy hour.

The friendly bartender, clad in a black vest and dress slacks, concocted the cocktail in two fast steps by shooting up a shot of Milagro Tequila with margarita mix dispensed from a soda gun.

Skeptical at first where the mix originates, he assured it's house-made, and that it isn't too sweet or overly tart. He was right. It didn't taste harsh like the lip-puckering commercial stuff used often in other places. And the smooth Milagro with its herbal notes made it all the better.

On a previous visit, I soaked up a good deal of Stone IPA (\$4 during happy hour) with a memorable burger and fries (\$7). This time, the artichoke-mushroom dip with house-made chips called.

Priced at \$5, it was as rich as the burger with plenty of chips piled alongside a mini casserole of chunky artichoke hearts, mushrooms, spinach and tomatoes, all buried beneath a sturdy layer of baked cheese. Tasty, but perhaps too much of a buzz kill when you're drinking responsibly.

House chips with mushroom-artichoke dip; and the house margarita



## RATINGS

DRINKS: **★★★★**

The house margarita uses smooth twice-distilled Milagro Tequila, which gives the drink a spicier flavor than most. Beer is limited to four taps, a mix of crafts and domestics, and wine is limited to only a few Sawbuck varietals.

FOOD: **★★★★**

The kitchen puts out juicy, meaty burgers, although in a more recent visit, the artichoke-mushroom dip with house-made potato chips proved tasty and filling.

VALUE: **★★★★**

Prices on most drinks and noshes during happy hour drop down by \$3 on average, and without any reductions in their volumes.

SERVICE: **★★★★**

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ATMOSPHERE: **★★★★**

Choose between two bars: the indoor saloon that transports you to the mid-1800s, or the outdoor bar lounge set within a flora-filled courtyard with rustic-style bar stools and love seats.

Other food and drink deals include bacon-bourbon wontons, three-cheese quesadillas, and well drinks for \$5 — not bad for a popular San Diego landmark that envelopes you with architectural details from a bygone era. ♦





# Reasonable resolutions

## Fitness

Blake and Gwen Beckcom



### Setting yourself up for success in any year

The new year has begun, and new resolutions are well underway. Before deciding what type of bandwagon you want to jump on to lead a healthier and fit lifestyle, it's important first and foremost to establish solid groundwork to ensure you're setting reasonable resolutions for yourself that can be realistically achieved.

Seven out of 10 resolutions don't work because people think they can just turn on a light switch after they make them. Right now, your light switch is off and it can be months, and most of the time years, that you've spent ingraining bad habits into your life like not exercising, eating unhealthy or being stressed out. As a human being, you can't just change your emotions and habits overnight from being off to on.

To switch up the odds that may be stacked against you in succeeding with your resolutions this year, make sure to include the following criteria into your planning so that you can successfully transform your health goals, ambitions and resolutions into a new lifestyle for the long-term.

### Small steps, big results

Contrary to popular new year approaches, resolutions shouldn't be an all-or- nothing approach. The foundation to building successful resolutions that last for the long-term relies on making incremental realistic changes to your lifestyle on an ongoing basis.

For instance, instead of saying that you're going to start working out and restricting all unhealthy food items all at once, a more successful approach is to pick one goal to focus on for the first couple of weeks and then add the second goal only after you get a good handle on managing the first one. It also is important to realize, and plan for, that you are going to hit bumps along the way to accomplishing your resolutions.

The best way to stay on course is to not worry about the past — it's already gone — or stress out about the future — it's not here yet. Only think about today and focus on what steps you can take now to get closer to achieving your goals.

Within six to seven weeks, up to 70 percent of people who make resolutions drop off. People are putting too much on their plate, it stresses them out and when they hit an obstacle like not working out for a few days or having a bad day eating healthy, they just give up. You have to give yourself enough time to work it out and figure out how to break your bad habits. If you do it in small increments, it's less stressful and more manageable. In time, small steps will equal big steps.

### Enjoy life

Resolutions can have negative connotations associated with them and they can automatically put you into a negative mindset when the first of the year arrives if they aren't approached appropriately. Turn the negativity associated with making resolutions — taking away the food you enjoy, doing exercises you don't like — into a more positive experience by adapting your resolutions to fit what you enjoy and what makes you happy.

For example, if want to start exercising next week, pick out something that you like to do first. Whether you enjoy bicycling, swimming, walking, doing aerobics classes or playing sports, focus on becoming consistent with one of your favorite activities. Eventually, after you've gotten into a more active routine, you can then branch out to try different workouts or activities when you're ready for a new challenge or adventure.

The same concept holds true with changing up your diet as well. Rather than starting to eat healthy, cold turkey, and forcing yourself to eat foods that don't taste good to you, gradually wean yourself off your guilty indulgences — whether it's sodas, sweets or salty treats — until you eventually substitute all of your cravings with healthier alternatives that agree with your nutrition goals and your taste buds.

### Strong support system

When you set out to make changes to who you are and the life you live, you have to surround

yourself with a strong support group who will accept the changes you want to make for yourself and encourage you to do whatever it takes to successfully meet your goals.

Your personal support can be anyone — a family member, friend, mentor or even a personal trainer. You just need to have someone who supports what you're doing and is available for you to turn to when you need advice or guidance. If you hang out with the wrong group of people, those resolutions will go right down the drain.

### Celebrate your results

Although living a healthy and fit lifestyle takes continuous effort and dedication, it should take only about four weeks or so of doing all of your workouts and eating right before you start realizing the results of sticking to your resolutions. The results, though, won't necessarily be ones that you can see on the outside, but rather ones that make you feel better inside about the accomplishments you have achieved and the person you are becoming.

You ARE going to start feeling better on the inside before you starting seeing differences on the outside. The key is to stay at it consistently and not give in or give up. You will become proud of yourself and begin to feel confident in your abilities. You also will start to believe that what you're doing is really worth it. That's when the BIG MO kicks in ... MOMENTUM, baby.

Whether it's internal or external results that you accomplish first from your resolutions, it's important to celebrate all of your successes to keep you on course and motivated to continually strive to achieve your ultimate goals for the year. The key to successfully accomplishing any type of resolution is to keep your expectations realistic and to set up a path to achieving your goals that fits with your specific personality and interests.

—Blake Beckcom runs Fitness Together Mission Hills with his wife Gwen. Contact them at [fitness-together.com/missionhills](mailto:fitness-together.com/missionhills). ♦

## FROM PAGE 1 METERS

he said, was that the five red meters in Hillcrest would be mobile, so that the HBA could take them to the Hillcrest Farmers Market on Sundays or to festivals and special events that draw large crowds.

The Downtown red meters have raised more than \$10,000 over the past four years, according to an [inewssource.org](http://inewssource.org) article published recently by San Diego Downtown News.

Nicholls also said the cost to the HBA would almost be free, since the red meters are being donated. "The real cost is staff time" and the credit-card processing fee, he added.

In other business, the HBA announced that Chris Long, who lives Downtown, was the winner of the Hillcrest shopping spree worth \$1,500 in prizes and gift certificates. The HBA sponsors the annual SHOP Hillcrest for the Holidays raffle between Nov. 25 and Dec. 24.

The HBA also voted to apply for a \$220,360 grant from the Uptown Community Parking District. The grant would cover the cost of the HBA to take over the Access Hillcrest website, mobile app and social media campaign as well as the transportation contract for the Lunch Loop and farmers market, among other proposals. Nicholls said the HBA likely would need to add a part-time employee or an intern to handle those additional duties.

Nicholls informed the board that Old Town Trolley does not

plan to renew its contract with the parking district to operate the trolley service for Access Hillcrest, Lunch Loop and farmers market. That news set off a lively discussion about switching from lumbering trollies to nimble electric carts, like the kind run by MO's Universe to serve customers of Urban MO's, Baja Betty's, Hillcrest Brewing Company and Gossip Grill.

In addition, the HBA voted to apply for an event permit with the city to conduct a Normal Street demonstration from May 12-15. The HBA has proposed turning the medians along Normal Street — from University Avenue to Washington Street — into a linear park. HBA member Michael Brennan said events would include a lecture on May 12, movie night on May 13, a craft beer crawl on May 14 and the farmers market on May 15.

—Ken Williams is editor of Uptown News and Mission Valley News and can be reached at [ken@sdcdn.com](mailto:ken@sdcdn.com) or at 619-961-1952. Follow him on Twitter at @KenSanDiego, Instagram at @KenSD or Facebook at KenWilliamsSanDiego. ♦

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Jenn Colella as a flight captain with the cast of La Jolla Playhouse's "Come From Away" in June, one of the best plays in 2015. (Photo by Kevin Berne)

Theater  
Review

Charlene Baldridge



Theatrically, it's time to take a look back upon the year 2015, name a few favorite productions here in San Diego County, and take a look forward into 2016, finding what looks worthwhile and perhaps taking some time to fret over what seems troubling.

Please be aware that although I see most everything (I attended 115 theatrical productions, musicals, concerts and operas in town this year, not counting at least 10 Fringe Festival shows), there are some things I missed because scheduling is sometimes impossible.

Here's what I found to be excellent:

Marsha Norman's "night Mother," at ion theatre company, so good I paid to see it again as skillfully directed by Glenn Paris and starring Sylvia M'Lafi Thompson as the mother of a daughter hell-bent on suicide, played by Yolanda Franklin.

Stephen Karam's 2011 off-Broadway hit, "Sons of the Prophet," at Cygnet in January, directed by then-new associate artistic director, Rob Lutfy. It was a touching, wildly inscrutable, deeply comic play about a Pennsylvania man of Lebanese descent confined to a wheelchair by an undiagnosed illness, brilliantly played by newcomer Alex Hoeffler. The pace was 1,000 mph and the play chock-full of challenging characters, who repeatedly missed out on love.

By far the most outstanding new musical of the year was La

Jolla Playhouse's world premiere of "Come From Away," in which a huge ensemble company told the story of the planes and people that were forced to land in Newfoundland on 9/11.

A truly ravishing visual experience was the Old Globe's "In Your Arms," a dance musical with vignettes written by 10 major playwrights, directed and choreographed Christopher Gattelli. Best musical revival was San Diego Musical Theatre's "La Cage Aux Folles" with endearing performances by Robert Townsend, David Engel and James Vasquez.

I adored Jeanine Tesori's "Violet," sensitively directed by San Diego Repertory Artistic Director Sam Woodhouse.

Other laudable productions: "The Twenty-Seventh Man," Old Globe Theatre; "Oedipus El Rey,"

San Diego Repertory Theatre; "Freud's Last Session" with Francis Gercke and Robert Smyth at Lamb's Players Theatre; "A New Brain," with Tom Zohar and his real-life husband Anthony Methvin, directed by Kim Strassburger at Diversionary Theatre; "Healing Wars," La Jolla Playhouse; "The Quality of Life," produced by Intrepid Theatre at the old Carlsbad Cinema; and "The Vortex" and "Hay Fever" in repertory at Cygnet.

And just for fun: "Return to the Forbidden Planet" at New Village Arts and "Silence of the Clams" at Diversionary; and "The (Curious Case of the) Watson Intelligence" at Moxie Theatre; and "Chapatti" at North Coast Repertory Theatre.

see Theater, page 13

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FROM PAGE 12  
**THEATER**

Intrepid Theatre Company is certainly the outstanding theater company of the year, having engendered the two most indelible performances of the year — Jeffrey Jones as the dying protagonist in “The Quality of Life,” and Eileen Bowman as Judy Garland in “End of the Rainbow,” at San Diego Rep. Both shows were directed by Christy Yael-Cox, who built wonderful supporting ensembles for each.

**Good news and worrisome news for 2016**

The re-enlivened InnerMission Theatre produced two fine shows in Diversionary Theatre’s new Black Box.

In worrisome news, Mo’olelo “lost” its newish artistic director, Lydia Fort, and more recently announced postponement of the

remainder of the season. A pity.

**Watch for these two new promising play festivals in January and February.** The first, the Old Globe’s New Voices Festival, Jan. 15 –17, with readings as follows:

- 7:30 p.m., Friday, Jan. 15: Sheri Wilner, Julia Jordan, and Adam Gwon’s musical, “Cake Off”
- 4 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 16: Jiehae Park’s “peerless,” directed by Delicia Turner Sonnenberg
- 7:30 p.m. Jan. 16: “The Blameless” by Nick Gandiello, directed by Globe Artistic Director Barry Edelstein;
- 4 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 17: Mona Mansour’s “Unseen,” directed by Johanna McKeon.

All four readings take place in the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre. Tickets are free but require reservations, open to the general public beginning Tuesday, Jan. 5 at noon, through the box office at 619-23-GLOBE.

For the second, La Jolla Playhouse received a \$20,000 NEA



grant to enhance this year’s DNA New Work Series, which takes place Feb. 15 – 27.

Plays will be announced in early January. Visit [lajollaplayhouse.org](http://lajollaplayhouse.org).

**Put these on the calendar now:**

San Diego Repertory Theatre: John Patrick Shanley’s “Outside Mullingar” now through Feb. 21. Visit [broadwaysd.com](http://broadwaysd.com).

- Old Globe: David Ives adaptation of the 18th century French farce, “Metromaniacs,” directed by legendary director Michael Kahn, Shiley Stage Jan. 30 – March 6. Visit [theoldglobe.org](http://theoldglobe.org).
- San Diego Musical Theatre: Lynn Ahrens, Stephen Flaherty and Terrence McNally’s “Ragtime” — one of the best musicals of the 20th century. Feb. 5 – 21 at Spreckels Theatre. Visit [sdmtm.org](http://sdmtm.org).

—Charlene Baldrige has been writing about the arts since 1979. You can follow her blog at [charlenebaldrige.com](http://charlenebaldrige.com) or reach her at [charb81@gmail.com](mailto:charb81@gmail.com). ♦



(clockwise from top left) The cast of San Diego REP’s “Violet” in September (Photo by Daren Scott); the cast of the tragic “Sons of the Prophet” at Cygnet last January (Photo by Daren Scott); and a scene from “In Your Arms” at the Old Globe in September (Photo by Carol Rosegg)

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Will McCullough (center) gives a thumbs-up to his fellow volunteers with Boy Scout Troop 53. His parents, Catherine and David, are first and second from right, back row. Scoutmaster Hank Levien is front row, center. (Courtesy of Catherine McCullough)

## Saving the Golden Hill Fountain Grotto

### PastMatters Katherine Hon

There's an old riddle: When is a door not a door? The answer — when it's ajar. Here is a local variation: When is a fire pit not a fire pit? The answer — when it's a fountain. If you are thinking that's not funny, many Golden Hill residents and members of the historic preservation community would agree with you.

This story starts 126 years ago in the southeastern corner of Balboa Park, then called City Park. As historian Susan Bugbee wrote in her 1988 article, "Golden Hill Fountain, a Splashing Success" for the Neighborhood Reporter, Golden Hill residents Matt Heller and Leroy Wright were inspired by Kate Sessions planting landscaping along Sixth Street and

planted their small part of City Park in 1890. A subsequent seven-year drought spoiled this first attempt to landscape Golden Hill Park. But in the early 1900s, forces gathered to create a beautiful gathering place that would include a unique fountain and attractive plantings.

Architect Henry Lord Gay, who came to San Diego in 1904 and is perhaps best known for designing the Western Metal Supply Company Building that is now a part of Petco Park, worked with Park Commissioner and Golden Hill resident L.A. Wright to propose "a spring at the head of the first canyon upon the west of the entrance of the park." They determined that it would be "made to resemble the old-fashioned spring, so dear to the hearts of most people, into and out of which the water will flow all the time, running over cascades and shaded by ferns and shrubbery."

Golden Hill residents contributed \$75 toward construction of the fountain, and the park commission provided matching funds. On March 8, 1908, the San Diego Union reported that the Golden Hill section of the park had a new fountain at the west end near the 25th Street entrance. The fountain was made of irregular pieces of rock set in circular form about four feet in diameter. Cobblestone steps led into and out of the secluded spot, which became a place for families to pose for photographs and enjoy nature.

Fast forward 101 years to 2009. The Golden Hill Fountain Grotto, with its fountain that is older than the better-known 1910 Horton Plaza Fountain designed by Irving J. Gill, is on the National Register of Historic Places. But it also is on the Save Our Heritage Organisation (SOHO)



(top to bottom) The restored Golden Hill Park fountain awaits water so it will cease being misused as a fire pit. (Photo by Katherine Hon); Ansen Caires (middle, far left), Balboa Park Nursery supervisor, watches the crew install plants from the nursery, which was started by Kate Sessions more than 100 years ago. (Courtesy of Catherine McCullough); the finished grotto grounds (Photo by Katherine Hon)



Endangered List for being neglected and allowed to deteriorate. SOHO's summary notes that "the native stone and concrete stairs are decomposing and a safety hazard, and the fountain last worked in perhaps the 1930s." Without water, the fountain was being misused as a fire pit.

However, the community has rallied to save and restore the grotto fountain with an efficient recirculating water design. That is a whole

other story with many dedicated participants, and their work is nearly complete.

Also coming to the rescue is Boy Scout Troop 53, and in particular, 15-year-old Life Scout Will McCullough. He wanted to achieve Eagle Scout rank (the highest possible rank, which must be attained before a scout's 18th birthday). One of the requirements is for the scout to perform a project that benefits an organization in a non-monetary way. Will is a big fan of the KPBS show "San Diego's Historic Places" and he remembered a segment on the Golden Hill Fountain Grotto. He found out what the community was doing to restore the grotto, and asked the Golden Hill Planning Committee how he could help.

His contact, Joe Grant, suggested Will handle the landscaping of the slope above the fountain. This was perfect, because Troop 53 does a lot of planting projects, and Will's father, David, is a landscape architect. So Will coordinated with the Balboa Park Nursery supervisor and the district manager of Balboa Park to obtain plants and permissions. He enlisted the help of his fellow troop members, and together they planted a succulent garden above the grotto.

The grotto fountain is now off SOHO's Endangered List, but preservationists are keeping a watchful eye on its condition. Your eyes would help. All who are participating in the restoration of this iconic piece of San Diego's history hope that the neighborhood will visit the site, enjoy it as it has been intended for more than 100 years, and remain vigilant to keep it maintained and not misused.

—Katherine Hon is the secretary of the North Park Historical Society. Reach her at [info@northparkhistory.org](mailto:info@northparkhistory.org) or 619-294-8990. ♦

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

9/6

**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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Puzzle answers on page 16

Uptown Crossword

**State Your Name**

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13
14					15					16				
17					18					19				
20				21					22					
	23						24				25	26	27	
			28		29	30				31	32			
33	34	35			36					37				
38			39	40				41	42					
43							44					45		
46					47	48				49	50			
51					52					53		54	55	
		56	57	58					59	60				61
62	63					64					65			
66						67					68			
69						70					71			

CREATORS NEWS SERVICE By Charles Preston

**ACROSS**

1 Seaweed substance

5 Landon, et al.

9 Cause horror

14 Michael's *Disclosure* costar

15 Potential measure

16 Cite

17 Wings

18 Operatic prince

19 Marry

20 Gleason role in *The Hustler*

23 Fog

24 Poitier role

25 Choose

28 "Lost Ark" seeker

33 \_\_\_\_ -fi

36 Banking convenience: abbr.

37 Clarence's accuser

38 Leather-producing plant

41 Convinced

43 Heated offense?

44 Swiss river

45 Age units: abbr.

46 Sweet woman of song

51 Rams' home: abbr.

52 Powerful D.C. lobby

53 Berlin composition

56 *A Room of One's Own* author

62 Match site

64 Probability

65 Blackthorn

66 Kind of dressing

67 Food fish

68 Greek letters

69 Legends

70 Draft classification

71 Collectors' goals

**DOWN**

1 First man

2 Very cold

3 Name in freezers

4 Wagner opera

5 Budget competitor

6 Golden Arches, e.g.

7 Driftwood, e.g.

8 Push to the limits

9 Greenish blue

10 Usual fourth-down play

11 Calamine lotion target

12 Bar member: abbr.

13 *To Kill a Mockingbird* author

21 Dusk, to Browning

22 Monk's title

26 Diminish, with out

27 Former Russian rulers: var.

29 Org. founded in 1890

30 Par or van add-on

31 Clayton or Sterling

32 Singer Yoko

33 Male deer

34 Insertion mark

35 Not quite bankrupt

39 Postal-creed word

40 Part of the UK

41 Struggle

42 Pizarro's quest

44 Give up

47 Participate suffix

48 Song-like passage

49 Opposite of ENE

50 Rope loops

54 *The Prince of Tides* star

55 Act self-satisfied

57 Move at a snail's pace

58 Stadium approvals

59 Inactive

60 On the briny

61 Admit, colloquially, with up

62 Pitcher's asset

63 *Everything Is Beautiful* singer

Stevens

Puzzle answers on page 16

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Residents agree that the 24-hour accessible reception, security and maintenance staff all result in a truly carefree retirement.

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Puzzle from page 15

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6	1	4	3	8	9	2	5	7
7	3	8	5	2	1	4	9	6
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State Your Name  
Crossword from page 15

A	G	A	R	A	L	F	S	A	P	P	A	L
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# San Diego Canyonlands tackles runoff issue

By Tershia d'Elgin

Like most places with hills, Bankers Hill has a valley — Maple Canyon. The canyon's long, sinuous path from the top of Third Avenue down to West Maple Street is both a connection with nature and a workhorse. The canyon is a haven for birds, animals and hikers. However, during rainstorms the canyon funnels a rage of stormwater to the San Diego Bay. Erosion, habitat destruction and water pollution are the result, costing taxpayers dearly every year.

Reversing this trend is part of San Diego Canyonlands' mission in Uptown right now. An umbrella organization for San Diego's many canyon "friends" groups, Canyonlands builds stewardship for the region's undeveloped coastal canyons.

"Nearly every rainstorm winds up closing beaches," said Eric Bowlby, executive director of San Diego Canyonlands. "Harmful bacteria and other pollutants washed from our urban landscape make the ocean a risky environment, for up to 72 hours at a time."

Many factors contribute to water pollution and other negative impacts, most of them not in the canyons but along the rims and mesas above the canyons. Rooftops, sidewalks, streets and parking lots are impervious. As the land is urbanized, less and less rainfall soaks into the ground. Even turfgrass is a problem. Short-rooted lawns don't absorb as much water as shrubs and trees. Water slides

right off them and is funneled from yards, parking lots and streets through storm drains directly into the canyons.

The runoff is filled with contaminants such as pesticides, fertilizers, tire dust and grease . . . the list goes on and on. Together with rain, this urban swill is funneled through the canyons in ever-greater volume and velocity. Now, instead of meandering streams that wind through deep-rooted native vegetation in the canyon floodplain, filtering and cleaning the water, we have severe erosion causing deeply incised, narrow creek channels where the water rushes through the canyon like a toxic spike on its way to our coastal waters.

This is one reason why the California Coastal Conservancy is investing \$300,000 via a grant to San Diego Canyonlands to plan rehabilitation of 12 urban canyons, including Maple Canyon. The agency seeks to restore the natural habitat and functions of the canyons as well as plan sustainable, non-eroding trails so people can safely access and enjoy these precious islands of open space.



As runoff from rainstorms is causing more erosion, the chasm in Maple Canyon in Bankers Hill is more than 12 feet deep in places, as Tershia d'Elgin shows in both photos. (Photos by Diego Lynch)

"There are solutions to help individuals play a significant role in capturing and slowing the runoff," Bowlby said. "Contouring the yard to direct runoff into a garden or to the base

of a tree is one easy example." Deep-rooted, drought tolerant, plants direct water down into the soil, where the plant and micro-organisms can use and break down the contaminants. As a bonus, trees and shrubs also sequester carbon, clean air, save energy expendi-

tures, and raise property values.

Permeable landscape is but part of capturing rainwater. Roofline gutters and rain barrels are an additional tool. These methods will ease the burden on Maple Canyon, lower water expenditures and improve neighborhood ecosystems. Better landscaping addresses not only downstream impacts, but also the healthy function of microclimates, i.e. individual properties on the rims.

San Diego Canyonlands has organized a survey of Bankers Hill properties and residents. Interns will be canvassing the neighborhood to assess opportunities to increase water retention and water-absorbing landscapes. Residents' interest in this program will help the organization raise money to help convert landscapes, build sustainability for water resources, and restore Maple

Canyon's natural functions. Look for San Diego Canyonlands volunteers with whom you can discuss possible landscape improvements.

"In the last year we have grown the Friends of Maple Canyon to over 120 Bankers Hill residents," Bowlby said. "Their enthusiasm is strong and I believe the Bankers Hill community will roll up their sleeves to help solve this challenge."

Participating is a great way to positively improve your property, your neighborhood and the coast. For more information, contact Eric Bowlby at 619-284-9399 or [eric@sdcanyonlands.org](mailto:eric@sdcanyonlands.org).

—Tershia d'Elgin, a climate activist, saves and restores wetlands. The University Press of Colorado will publish her book, "The Man Who Thought He Owned Water," in spring 2016. ♦

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Anthony Roach and Amelia Pedlow. Photo by Scott Suchman, courtesy of Shakespeare Theatre Company.



# UPTOWN CALENDAR

## FEATURED EVENTS

**'Ithamar Has Nothing to Say' performance and master class Saturday, Jan. 16; and Sunday, Jan. 17**

This one-night only performance by Ithamar Enriquez will be held at Finest City Improv (4250 Louisiana St., North Park) from 8 – 9 p.m. Jan. 16. This unique performance by the comedian described as “the Charlie Chaplin 21st century” will be an entirely wordless show of silent improv. The following day on Jan. 17, Enriquez will host a “master class” for improv and comedy professionals from noon – 3 p.m. Tickets to the show are \$15; the Sunday workshop is \$40. Visit [finestcityimprov.com](http://finestcityimprov.com) for more information and tickets.

**Author Gabriel Ramirez book signing Saturday, Jan. 16**

San Diego resident Gabriel Ramirez will be signing copies of his book “12 Red Roses” from 10 a.m. – noon at Industrial Grind Coffee (3922 Park Blvd., Hillcrest). The novel is described as a “dark romance” centered on the love story of an angel and a mortal. Visit [gabrielramirez-12redroses.tateauthor.com](http://gabrielramirez-12redroses.tateauthor.com) for more information.

**Martin Luther King Jr. weekend of commemoration Saturday, Jan. 16; Sunday, Jan. 17; and Monday, Jan. 18**

The opening program of this weekend will be a free screening of the film “12 Years a Slave” on Jan. 16 in the Friendship Hall at United Church of Christ of La Mesa (5940 Kelton Ave.) from 1:30 – 4 p.m. Discussion of the film’s message will follow. For more information, visit [TableUCC.com](http://TableUCC.com) or call 619-464-1519.

On Jan. 17 a free fellowship gathering with “small plate supper” will be held at the Christian Fellowship UCC (1601 Kelton Road, Emerald Hills) at 4 p.m. with entertainment by the Gospel Jazz Vespers at 5 p.m. For more information call 619-262-8095 or email [info@ChristianFellowshipUCC.org](mailto:info@ChristianFellowshipUCC.org).

A breakfast on Jan. 18 with featured speaker the Rev. Richard Lawrence, a Selma walk participant, will be held at 7 a.m. at Jacobs Center (404 Euclid Ave., Lincoln Park). There is a \$50 fee for this event. Visit [JacobsCenter.org](http://JacobsCenter.org) for more information.

The final event of the weekend on Jan. 18 will be the MLK Jr. Day of Interfaith Community Service from 9 a.m. – noon in Balboa Park. The opening interfaith ceremony will be at 9:15 a.m. at Marston House (3525 Seventh Ave.), followed by a cleanup and beautification of the Marston House grounds at 9:30 a.m. and musical entertainment and picnic lunch at 11:30 a.m. Visit [CBISD.org/event/mlk](http://CBISD.org/event/mlk) for more information.

**Live music: Josh Ritter and the Royal City Band with Elephant Revival Monday, Jan. 18**

Americana music mainstay Josh Ritter and his band the Royal City Band will headline at the Observatory North Park (2891 University Ave.) Ritter recently released his eighth album, “Sermon on the Rocks,” each ticket to this show comes with a digital download of the album. Folk rockers Elephant Revival will open the show. Tickets are \$25 and the show is 18 and up. Visit [observatorysd.com](http://observatorysd.com) for tickets and details.

**Jai Rodriguez performance Thursday, Jan. 21**

Jai Rodriguez presents his new show, “Tales of An Aging Twink,”

at 8 p.m. Jan. 21 at Martinis Above Fourth (3940 Fourth Ave., Second Floor) in Hillcrest. He calls this show “the R-rated GLEE version of his life.” Rodriguez, best known for his role as the culture guide on Bravo’s “Queer Eye for the Straight Guy,” is also a Broadway singer/actor and TV/movie performer. Tickets are \$20-\$25 at [martinisabovefourth.com](http://martinisabovefourth.com).

**Mission Hills Library events Saturday, Jan. 23; and Wednesday, Jan. 27**

The Friends of the Mission Hills Branch Library will host a book sale from 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. to support the library on Jan. 23. On Jan. 27 the Mission Hills Book Group will meet from 6:30 – 7:30 p.m. to discuss “Paris Deadline” by Max Byrd. New members are always welcome to attend and participate. Please read the book beforehand. Books are available at the Circulation Desk while supplies last. Visit [library92103.org](http://library92103.org) for more info.

**Hillcrest Business Association Thursday, Jan. 28**

Hillcrest Business Association will present its quarterly Open House & Mixer from 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. Jan. 28 at Vom Fass Hillcrest in the Hillcrest HUB shopping center. Open to HBA members. RSVP to [megan@Hillcrestbia.org](mailto:megan@Hillcrestbia.org).

## RECURRING EVENTS

### Select dates:

Canyoneers guided nature walks: These free walks are part of a countywide program by the San Diego Natural History Museum through June 26, 2016. A map and schedule of walks can be found online at [sdnhm.org](http://sdnhm.org).

### 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.

**North Park Toastmasters meeting:** 6:30 – 8 p.m., weekly meeting at St. Luke’s Episcopal Church, 3725 30th St., North Park. 8469. toastmastersclubs.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. Lestats.com.

**Unsung Genius:** 6:30 p.m., trivia hosted by Rafael Gaitan starting at 7 p.m.; \$2 to play; cash, bar tab and other prizes. Karaoke to follow at 9 p.m. on the big stage at The Merrow, 1271 University Ave., Hillcrest. Themorrow.com.

### Tuesdays:

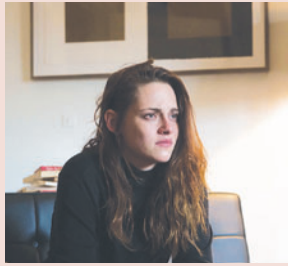
**Curbside Bites:** 5:30 – 8:30 p.m., gathering of gourmet food trucks at 3030 Grape St., South Park. Curbsidebites.com.

**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.

**Uptown Democratic Club:** 6:30 p.m., Joyce Beers Community Center hosts these meetings on the fourth Tuesday of every month. New members wanted. 1220 Vermont Ave., Hillcrest. Uptowndemocrats.org.

**Open Mic Charlie’s:** 7 – 9:30 p.m. (except the third Tuesday), open mic night at Rebecca’s Coffee House, 3015 Juniper St., South Park, free. Rebeccacoffeehouse.com.

**North Park Brewer’s Club:** 8:30 p.m., monthly meeting



(above) Kristen Stewart and (below) Richard Gere (Courtesy of Digital Gym)

## Digital Gym gems

**Jan. 15 – 21:** The drama “Anesthesia” is about lives that become interlocked after a fateful accident brings them together. The film opens with a violent attack on a beloved Columbia University professor, then flashes back one week to trace the domino effect of events that lead to the assault. The ensemble cast includes Sam Waterston, Kristen Stewart, Gretchen Mol, Glenn Close and more. Unrated. 90 minutes.

**Jan. 15 – 21:** “The Benefactor” stars Richard Gere as an eccentric philanthropist consumed by guilt over the accidental death of a couple. He insists on providing financial support to the couple’s newly married and pregnant daughter (Dakota Fanning) and her new husband (Theo James). Rated R. 92 minutes.

**Jan. 22 – 28:** Director Chris Bell follows up his film “Bigger Faster Stronger” with “Prescription Thugs.” Bell sets out to expose pharmaceutical companies and doctors as drug-pushers while learning about the nature of addiction from experts. As he learns more, Bell falls down his own hole of addiction providing a very personal aspect to the story. Unrated. 86 minutes.

**Jan. 22 – 28:** Cannes Film Festival winner “The Treasure” is a film from Romania about a father turned temporary treasure hunter. The comedy began as a nonfiction film and evolved into a “semi-fictional” one based on the film’s star (filmmaker Adrian Purcarea) and his quest to locate a stash allegedly hidden by his grandfather on the grounds of their family estate. Unrated. 89 minutes.

of the club every second Tuesday of the month on the back patio at Thorn Street Brewery, 3176 Thorn St., North Park. [Thornstreetbrew.com](http://Thornstreetbrew.com).

### Wednesdays:

**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](http://Universalspiritcenter.org).

**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, Suggested \$5 donation. Ages 12 and up. [Storytellersofsandiego.org](http://Storytellersofsandiego.org).

### Thursdays:

**Uptown Sunrise Rotary Club meetings:** 7 a.m., weekly meeting at Panera Bread, 1270 Cleveland Ave., Hillcrest. [Sdurotary.org](http://Sdurotary.org).

**Gentle yoga for seniors:** 2:30 – 4 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](http://Thecentersd.org).

**North Park Farmers Market:** 3 – 7 p.m., in the parking lot behind CVS at 32nd Street and University Avenue, North Park, free. [Northparkfarmersmarket.com](http://Northparkfarmersmarket.com).

**Kornflower’s Open Mic:** Sign-ups at 7 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. [Rebeccacoffeehouse.com](http://Rebeccacoffeehouse.com).

**Liberty Toastmasters Club:** 7 p.m., at Saint Paul’s Community Care Center, 328 Maple St., Bankers Hill. [Libertytoastmasters.org](http://Libertytoastmasters.org).

**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. [Pilgrimageyoga.com](http://Pilgrimageyoga.com).

**Cinema Under the Stars:** 8:30 p.m., classic movie screenings at 4040 Goldfinch St., Mission Hills. Additional showings Friday – Sunday. Tickets start at \$15. [Topsresents.com](http://Topsresents.com).

### Fridays:

**Memory Café:** 10 – 11 a.m., second and fourth Fridays. Gathering place for those with memory loss, caretakers and those worried about memory problems in the Common Room at First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Diego, 4190 Front St., Hillcrest. At-will donation. [Memoryguides.org](http://Memoryguides.org) and [Firsttuusandiego.org](http://Firsttuusandiego.org).

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

**Square Dancing Classes:** 6:30 – 8:30 p.m., every Friday. No previous dance experience needed. Recital Hall, 2130 Pan American Plaza. \$50 for 13 classes. 858-277-7499 or [circulators.sdsda.org](http://circulators.sdsda.org).

### Saturdays

**Old Town Saturday Market:** 9 a.m. – 4 p.m., on Harney Street and San Diego Avenue, Old Town, free. Also held on Sundays. [Oldtownsaturdaymarket.com](http://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](http://Sdmarketmanager.com).

**Tai Chi Qigong:** 10 a.m., all skill levels welcome in Balboa Park, Upas Street and Sixth Avenue, free. Call Chris at 619-504-1557.

**Children’s Craft Time:** 10:30 a.m., at Mission Hills Library, 925 Washington St., Mission Hills, free. Library92103.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](http://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](mailto:nancy@nhunited.org).

**ASD Mornings:** 9 a.m. – noon, every second Sunday members of the autism spectrum community are given chance to explore the museum

in a quiet, less-crowded environment at the San Diego Natural History Museum, 1788 El Prado, Balboa Park. [bit.ly/1TjvYkQ](http://bit.ly/1TjvYkQ)

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

**Karaoke:** 8 p.m., your chance to shine on the big stage at The Merrow, 1271 University Ave., Hillcrest. [Themorrow.com](http://Themorrow.com).

To view local community organization meeting information online, visit: [sduptownnews.com/community-organization-meetings](http://sduptownnews.com/community-organization-meetings).

—Email calendar items to [ken@sdcnn.com](mailto:ken@sdcnn.com). ♦



Blessing of the Animals in 2015 (Photo by Mike Simms)

## Seventh annual ‘Blessing of the Animals’

**Sunday, Jan. 17**  
Old Town San Diego State Historic Park (4001 Wallace St., Old Town) will host this free event from 1 – 3 p.m. in the central plaza. Various rescue groups will be on hand with animal adoption opportunities. There will also be information available on rescuing, rehabilitating and supporting local animals. Father Richard Perozich of the Immaculate Conception Church will lead a pet blessing between 1 – 1:30 p.m. A pet costume contest will be held at 2:30 p.m. with prizes in various categories including “best dressed” and “best pet-owner look-alike.” For more information, call 619-297-3100.



## North Park neighborhood mixer - Wednesday, Jan. 20

The North Park Community Association (NPCA) will present a neighborhood mixer at Rip Current Brewing Co. (4101 30th St., North Park) from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. Residents are invited to mingle with North Park business owners and NPCA members in a casual and friendly setting. Several members of the local craft beer industry will be on hand as well as staff members of San Diego Uptown News. Guests are encouraged to bring their business cards or other promotional swag as a way to network with fellow North Park residents. The event will also serve as a membership drive for anyone interested in joining the NPCA. Visit [northparksd.org](http://northparksd.org) for more information on the group.



FROM PAGE 1  
HOUSING

That report also concluded San Diego County needs 142,564 additional affordable rental homes to meet the needs of its extremely low income (ELI) and very low-income (VLI) renters.

"The vast majority of San Diego County's low-income renters spend more than 50 percent of income on rent, leaving little left for food, transportation and health care," said the CHPC report, which also determined that, when housing and other costs of living are factored in, San Diego County's poverty rate rises from 14.5 percent to 21.7 percent: about one in five people.

Overcrowding for low-income renters in San Diego County is also 50 percent above the national average, contributing significantly to poor health and academic achievement among low-income children.

Plus, reductions in federal and state funds, including elimination of redevelopment funding, have reduced San Diego County's affordable housing funding by over \$139 million since 2008, a 67 percent reduction.

"What I'm hearing from my constituents is that they feel squeezed," Gloria said about today's real-life situation for lower-income renters. "They are dealing with stagnant wages and that, coupled with rising energy, water, food and housing costs, is a lot for them to absorb."

Gloria added many Mid-City residents, who used to get a rent break because their housing was 40-plus years old, are benefiting no longer because housing construction has lagged behind.

"Landlords are now able to ask for top-dollar rents in the market, even in buildings that are older and have been considered less desirable," Gloria said.

In Kensington and Talmadge, community planners strongly support the theory of the City of Villages, wherein denser housing is concentrated along easily-accessible bus, trolley, train and bicycling corridors.

"They [planners] certainly view it [Villages] as an improvement over the older development model," said David Moty, chair of the Kensington-Talmadge Planning Group.

But Moty acknowledged that housing density and affordability remain "touchy" subjects.

"What makes dense, affordable housing an issue is the lack of supportive public infrastructure," he said. "For years the city has plead poverty for why infrastructure couldn't be built. But even when other government agencies have stepped up to pay, the city has turned away infrastructure from our communities."

Moty said he and some others "have lost all confidence in the city's ability to build what we really need to solve our problems versus spending our infrastructure money on what's easy for them to push through the system. Why grow your community by a quarter or a third, when the only improvements you'll ever see are a bunch of corner sidewalk ramps?" he asked.

Granowitz noted one way North Park planners are encouraging development of more affordable housing is to encourage developers to "put their affordable units in their projects, rather than pay in-lieu fees. We believe that spreads out the affordable units through the newer developments."

North Park also "solidly supports" the City of Villages



(top) Cedar Gateway Apartments are affordable housing Downtown. (Courtesy of roemcorp.com); (bottom) Metro Villa Apartments are affordable housing in City Heights. (Courtesy of sdhc.org)

concept embraced by the city, Granowitz said.

"The plan is to put your density in your major transportation corridors," she said. "We want our higher densities on Park and El Cajon boulevards, where there is better Rapid Bus and other transit. If you want to increase pedestrian and bike uses, and get people out of cars, you need to have pockets of high-density."

Gloria said part of what needs to be done to address housing shortfalls is to lay the groundwork for setting — and accomplishing — the goal of creating more affordable units through the community plan update process.

"Right now we're involved in updating community plans in both North Park and Golden Hill," Gloria said. "What those community plans do when they're updated is to create a general consensus of what the communities want done in their neighborhoods."

Uptown planners are also updating the community plan for Bankers Hill, Park West, Hillcrest, Mission Hills, Medical District, Middletown and the western half of University Heights. The eastern half of University Heights is part of the North Park planning group, with Park Boulevard being the dividing line.

Updated community plans give authorities a new blueprint to work from when planning for things, including needed upgrades to affordable housing. Gloria noted a lot of current Mid-City redevelopment is occurring within mixed-use developments, with retail on the ground floor and housing above, in multi-story projects like those being built along El Cajon Boulevard.

In December 2015, the City Council's Smart Growth and Land Use Committee (SGLUC) unanimously voted to have staff study and report back on a series of proposals designed to alleviate San Diego's lack of affordable housing.

The San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC) presented SGLUC with 11 ideas that would require government action at the local, state and federal levels, to address the need for more affordable housing. The suggestions generally involve lowering costs for developers, because government red tape often makes it more expensive to build affordable housing projects, according to building industry leaders.

Among the commission's

proposals:

Setting annual goals for producing affordable housing

Providing incentives for developers to make at least 20 percent of their housing units affordable

Lowering parking requirements

Reducing requirements for ground-floor commercial space, which raises project costs

Shortening the time it takes to process permits and entitle properties

Supporting efforts to reform the California Environmental Quality Act

"The majority of all these, to me, make a whole bunch of common sense on how to get the cost down so we can actually provide more doors and more units for people," District 7 Councilman Scott Sherman, who represents Mission Valley, has said, adding that "affordable housing costs so much more than market-rate (projects). We can put so many more doors onto the market if we cut into the costs."

City staff was directed by SGLUC to come back soon with proposed ordinances, resolutions and lobbying efforts to help implement SDHC's proposals.

Regarding affordable housing, Gloria concluded, "This is a crisis. We [the city] are looking to do whatever we can to try and help."

— Dave Schwab can be reached at dschwabie@journalist.com. ♦

FROM PAGE 1  
JAZZ

"It's been gaining momentum lately, so the past five or six sessions we have had anywhere from 50 to 80 people. Tonight [Jan. 5] I thought it was going to be really bad, because when it rains, people don't come out," he said.

The sessions are at 4610 Park Blvd. at 3rdSpace, Underground Jazz's home, which is called a "Co-Working and Club for the Creative." During the day, it's a working space where many San Diegans program, write, paint, or edit their videos.

3rdSpace is located at the edge of one of coolest blocks in University Heights. The small door and the narrow staircase don't advertise the big, well-illuminated space that awaits inside. It features plenty of room to work, have meetings or hang out. Its members pay a monthly fee for the right to use the space.

"I became interested in this place because I came in and I saw the piano, and I thought it was a good place to play music," Wanicur said. Certainly, the acoustics of the big common room help the live performances.

The venue is different from other spaces that offer music in San Diego. The most common

stage or an amplification system. You can even hear the musicians whisper to each other, and their snaps to mark the tempo.

Larry Zeiger is a regular of the event.

"This is my favorite place for listening to music," he said. "Ben [Wanicur] does an amazing job at attracting the top musicians in San Diego, who all come and give their talent and their time."

The main band that played at the January session has never performed together before. Wanicur acknowledged that "we rehearsed for about half an hour before we started. We were all playing songs from the jazz repertoire, so it's music I knew they knew." However, the band sounded like the members had been playing together for a long time.

After the main band plays for a little over an hour, the jam session took over. Other musicians bring their instruments, get on the improvised stage and do what they do best.

"There is a certain amount of tradition behind jam sessions," Wanicur said. "If you are a musician you should have a lot of respect for the people and be willing to hang out and listen. You might be the best musician there but the people don't know who you are, so don't be surprised if they don't call you up right away." The \$5 cover at the door goes



3S Underground Jazz organizer Ben Wanicur speaks with journalist María José Durán. (Photo by Matan Chaffee)

ones are bars, where people scream at each other and can barely hear the band, or concert settings with folding chairs where people are focused on listening.

"I think this gets the best of both worlds, because it's a concert setting, a big enough space and very casual. You can bring food, or if you want to talk to people you can go upstairs, hang out and still listen to the music," Wanicur said.

If you are lucky enough to sit in the first row of chairs, you can watch the fingers of the saxophonist move swiftly along the metal instrument 4 feet from you. The setup feels very familiar, without a formal

directly to pay the musicians. The event goes from 8 to 11 p.m., including the main concert and jam session.

For Wanicur, there is a future in San Diego for this kind of venue. He hopes that more music will come to 3rdSpace, even from out of town.

"I feel like we are almost getting to that point," he said. "We have 80 people coming every time, we could start doing other events and more concerts as well."

—María José Durán is a freelance writer from San Diego. She can be reached at emyein@hotmail.com. ♦

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