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Foster mom Lani Barnes of Talmadge has cared for Jaxon since he was 2 months old, and has now adopted him.  
(Courtesy of the Barnes family)

## From foster mom to tireless advocate for foster families

By Jennifer Coburn

(Editor's note: May is National Foster Care Month)

When Lani Barnes first laid eyes on her foster child, she knew she was up to the tough road ahead. She and her husband Matt arrived at Rady Children's Hospital and were introduced to a 3-month-old boy who was severely underweight, the size of a newborn.

Doctors told the couple the child was failing to thrive and would need to be fed every two hours. Her first thought: "It's a good thing I'm Filipino," she recalled. "Feeding people is innate, it's what we do."

Since then, Lani and Matt have opened their Talmadge home to three foster children, the most recent placement ending with the adoption of Jaxon, a toddler who had been in their care since he was 2 months old.

Lani said that each child came to her from different biological family circumstances, but they shared one thing in common – they thrived in the loving care of a stable family.

She has no shortage of family love to give the children she has fostered. She has 50 first cousins as both of her parents come from sibling sets of nine. At family reunions, her foster children receive both lumpia and hugs in generous portions.

Her family rallied behind her when she was experiencing difficulty becoming pregnant.

see Foster, pg 16

## Color and funk

North Park's arts festival keeps growing

By Tori Hahn



Michelle Currier's featured artwork appears on Festival of Arts posters around North Park (Photo courtesy of North Park Main Street)

North Park will celebrate its 20th Festival of Arts this year on Saturday, May 21 with a variety of funky art from local artists.

The free and family-friendly event will take over eight city blocks in North Park and feature vendors, food, local art and live music across six stages. All proceeds from the festival will benefit North Park Main Street.

Attendees will be able to enjoy a live art walk, in which local graffiti artists will paint

see Festival, pg 9

## The Living Lab starts taking shape

By Catherine Spearnak

In less than a year, City Heights-area students who have never seen the beach will be working in a 12,000-foot lab that will provide programs in marine science and environmental education.

The lab is a partnership between the San Diego Unified School District and the Ocean Discovery Institute, a Pacific Beach-based nonprofit that offers elementary and middle school students a chance to have access to more science education.

"The Institute's research has shown increased student performance in science, increased college attendance, and increased pursuit of science and conservation degrees," said Cynthia Reed-Porter, school district communications supervisor.

The founder of the Institute, Shara Fisler, was nominated in April for a CNN Heroes award for creating the institute and her work with underprivileged students in the City Heights area.

The Ocean Discovery Institute provides classroom and field-based science

see Living Lab, pg 16



Jacob Islas takes a moment to explore the environment in one of several urban canyons that bisect City Heights, near the future home of The Living Lab. (Photo by Lowell Tindell)

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More than 100 people attended a forum on homelessness at the May 10 meeting of the Hillcrest Town Council. (Courtesy of HTC)

# Hillcrest Town Council update

By Mary M. McKenzie

The forum on homelessness sponsored by the Hillcrest Town Council (HTC) at its May 10 community meeting drew a crowd of over 100 concerned community members. Moderated by HTC’s immediate past president Luke Terpstra, the forum panel consisted of San Diego police Officer Ricardo Pinon, Jennifer Buck of Think Dignity, Alpha Project’s Brandon Smith, Ben Nicholls of the Hillcrest Business Association, and Karina Vesco, a licensed clinical psychologist. The panelists addressed several aspects of the homeless crisis in San Diego, from legal responses to lack of services to strategies for community education to a call for more affordable housing. A vibrant dialogue followed the panel presentations. Issues raised included aggressive behavior, the special situation of LGBT homelessness, and the role of physical and mental illness. Prior to the panel, representatives from several community organizations and elected

officials gave updates on neighborhood issues, including the University Avenue Pipeline Project and the Uptown Community Plan update. The participants also heard from Mayoral candidate Ed Harris and City Attorney candidates Bryan Pease and Gil Cabrera. At the meeting, the Town Council voted to support the Hillcrest Business Association’s “Re-Imagine Normal Street” project on May 12-15. The temporary project transformed Normal Street to a car-free public space, and HTC staffed the bike coral. Additionally, Natalia Mendez addressed street closures and the June 5 Rock & Roll Marathon. The run will be longer on University Avenue but will reopen earlier than in years past. Next month’s meeting of the Town Council, on June 14, will focus on affordable housing. As always, representatives from local organizations and officials will provide community updates. The council encourages all Hillcrest residents — whether renters or owners — to attend meetings and participate by asking questions and

providing input on issues you believe need to be addressed. Also, if you’re looking to get more involved in the neighborhood, the Hillcrest Town Council has a board vacancy due to the departure of board member Rich Grousett, who has provided great leadership on the board and will be missed. The minimum requirements to serve on the board are Hillcrest residency; a desire to serve the community; and attendance at three HTC meetings, one of which must be a Steering Committee meeting. If you would like more information about the board or just have questions, contact HTC chair Kath Rogers at dognamedannie@gmail.com. We look forward to seeing you on Tuesday, June 14, from 6:30 — 8 p.m., at the Joyce Beers Community Center, located at 3900 Vermont St. in the HUB Shopping Center. More information about HTC is online at hillcresttowncouncil.com.

—Mary M. McKenzie is secretary of the Hillcrest Town Council.❖

# Cody’s Home + Gift is moving to east side of Hillcrest

By SDCNN Staff

A grand reopening for Cody’s Home + Gift shop will be held from 3 — 7 p.m. Saturday, May 21, at a new and larger location at 1029 University Ave. in Hillcrest. The shop previously operated on the far western edge of Hillcrest, at 142 University Ave. The new location, which formerly housed the Establish shop, is next door to 100 Wines kitchen and on the east side of Hillcrest opposite the HUB shopping center. “We are excited to offer more of the unique furniture, lighting, home decor and gifts that Cody’s Home + Gift is known for, in addition to our interior design services,” said Cody Winters, the owner. “This move has been a dream come true after operating in our smaller, original location



Cody’s Home + Gift celebrates its grand reopening on May 21 at its new location in Hillcrest. (Courtesy of Cody Winters)

for almost four years, also in Hillcrest. Please stop by and see the gorgeous new space while enjoying hors d’oeuvres and a refreshing craft cocktail this coming Saturday,” he added.

The shop offers upscale home décor, lighting products, unique gifts and greeting cards. For more information, call 619-269-7264 or visit codyshome.com.❖

# How to Sell High: Avoid these Three Mistakes When Selling Your San Diego Home

San Diego - When you decide to sell your home, setting your asking price is one of the most important decisions you will ever make. Depending on how a buyer is made aware of your home, price is often the first thing he or she sees, and many homes are discarded by prospective buyers as not being in the appropriate price range before they’re even given a chance of showing. Your asking price is often your home’s “first impression”, and if you want to realize the most money you can for your home, it’s imperative that you make a good first impression. This is not as easy as it sounds, and pricing strategy should not be taken lightly. Pricing too high can be as costly to a home seller as pricing too low. Taking a look at what homes in your neighborhood have sold for is only a small part of the process, and on its own is not nearly enough to help you make the best decision. A recently study, which compiles 10 years of industry research, has resulted in a new special report entitled “Homesellers: How to Get the Price You Want (and Need)”. This report will help you understand pricing strategy from three different angles. When taken together, this information will help you price your home to not only sell, but sell for the price you want. To order a FREE Special Report, visit [www.AvoidTheseSellerMistakes.com](http://www.AvoidTheseSellerMistakes.com) or to hear a brief recorded message about how to order your FREE copy of this report call toll-free 1(800) 728-8254 and enter 1016. You can call any time, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Get your free special report NOW to learn how to price your home to your maximum financial advantage. This report is courtesy of Reef Point Real Estate. Not intended to solicit buyers or sellers currently under contract.

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**FEAR OF THE UNKNOWN IS A GREAT MOTIVATOR.**

Our response is either flight or fight and that manifests in many ways. Fighting doesn't prove anything and if we run from the problem the bully never goes away. Creating suitable security to allay our fears becomes paramount to our lives.

**Indulge me the Merriam-Websters Full Definition of security plural securities**

- 1.** 1: the quality or state of being secure: as  
a: freedom from danger: safety  
b: freedom from fear or anxiety  
c: freedom from the prospect of being laid off <job security>
- 2a:** something given, deposited, or pledged to make certain the fulfillment of an obligation  
b: surety
- 3.** 3: an instrument of investment in the form of a document (as a stock certificate or bond) providing evidence of its ownership
- 4.** 4a: something that secures: protection  
b (1): measures taken to guard against espionage or sabotage, crime, attack, or escape  
(2): an organization or department whose task is security.

As we get older we strive to create more options to our personal security, whether for our home, our personal, and financial. We the aging boomer has spent our life planning for our future by investing in various investment tools to include; Securities, real estate and our social security.

What many senior boomers are finding that life has gotten in our way and many of our investments have suffered through premature withdrawals, the whims of financial markets that we have invested in. As I speak to many seniors I am finding that they are no longer trying to grow their cash as they were as little as 10 years ago they are into preservation financial tools of what they have been able to save. Risk taking is not apart of our long term security.

What I am finding is many boomers have real estate and if you didn't use your home as an ATM machine over the years, you have tied up equity. The typical senior cannot qualify for a traditional loan for one simple reason they do not have the income. The argument to for the Home Equity Conversion Mortgage, HECM or the Reverse mortgage comes into play.

There are many reasons to use a Reverse Mortgage; pay off the existing mortgage to free up the cash flow, the other reason is to have a Reverse Equity line in place so if there is an emergency it is readily available cash and there is no penalty to access the cash and no taxes need to be paid on the access funds. Another words the boomers are looking for options to promote a healthy financial lifestyle as we walk down the "primrose path" of life. Do yourself a favor get a quote and look for your options to address your fears of insolvency in your future. Check out the Reverse mortgage guy on FB.

# Wage increases good for all parties

**Notes from Toni**

Toni G. Atkins



Last month, some observers remarked that the new minimum wage in California went from idea to legislation to law with lightning-fast speed. But really, the wave that crested with the bill signing had been swelling for quite some time, as activists, union groups, and just plain regular working citizens up and down California and across the country agitated for higher minimum wages and protested against growing income inequality.

Some communities have taken matters in their own hands and increased their own minimum wages. This didn't happen overnight, but given the rising cost of living and wage disparity, it was seemingly inevitable.

Gov. Jerry Brown thought California's new law was a necessary response to a proposed ballot measure that would have raised the minimum wage to \$15 more quickly than the new law does. While I supported that initiative, I'm pleased with the details of the new law, and I'm happy that the governor won the support of the people who were backing the initiative.

Here's how it will work: The minimum wage will rise to \$10.50 on Jan. 1, 2017, and

then to \$11 on Jan. 1, 2018. After that, it grows by \$1 at the beginning of each year until it reaches \$15 in 2022. Then, beginning in 2024, the wage will be adjusted according to the federal consumer price index, but it will never go down, and it won't rise by more than 3.5 percent in any single adjustment.

One thing I like about this law is it gives small businesses more time to plan for the increased payroll costs. For companies with fewer than 25 employees, the wage increase schedule lags for a year. In other words, they won't have to pay \$10.50 until 2018, and so on.

Another feature of the new law is that it takes into consideration the effects of an economic downturn. If the governor determines that California has failed specific job-growth and sales-tax tests, or a specific balanced-budget test, after the first increase happens, the increase schedule will be stopped and, basically, delayed.

I think the best word to describe what we have now is "certainty." Everyone has known for some time that an increase was eventually coming; the people of California simply weren't going to stand for a \$10 wage much longer. But no one knew how high or how quickly it would rise.

Now, low-wage workers and businesses know what's going

to happen and when it's going to happen, and everyone has time to plan for the gradual impact.

This was a great example of the people effectively demanding change and legislators responding with a thoughtful, prudent course of action.

It's important for me to note that California's new law doesn't change my position on the proposal to increase the minimum wage in San Diego. That's because in the early years of the state's schedule, San Diego's wage would rise more quickly. Additionally, the San Diego proposal includes a provision for more sick days than the state requires.

People who work full time should not have to live in poverty. We had to do right by California's lower-wage workers. This was a thoughtful way to do it while taking into account the needs of workers and employers and allowing for a pause should the state fall into an economic downturn. I applaud the governor and the communities that worked to make this a reality, as well as the legislature for enacting the new law.

**Around the district:**

Beginning May 15, my staff began collecting donations for **Socks for Stand Down**, our second annual drive to support San Diego's homeless veterans. You can help by bringing

clean, new socks or underwear to local community meetings, where my staff will collect them, or by leaving them in marked bins at libraries in my district communities, including Downtown, North Park and University Heights. You also may drop them off at my San Diego office, 1350 Front St., Room 6054, during the drive, which will continue through June 15. The donations will be turned over to organizers of the annual Stand Down event, where they will be distributed to homeless veterans. Stand Down offers these vets shelter and a variety of necessary services for one weekend each July ... The **San Diego Zoo**, one of our region's most cherished icons, kicked off its centennial celebration on May 14, at the **Spreckels Organ Pavilion in Balboa Park**. Look for other celebrations to take place at the zoo and at other Balboa Park attractions throughout the year. The zoo has helped many millions of us — residents and tourists alike — create a century's worth of great memories, with countless more to come. Happy 100th birthday, San Diego Zoo!

—Toni G. Atkins is the Speaker Emeritus of the California State Assembly. For more information, visit her website, [asmdc.org/members/a78](http://asmdc.org/members/a78) or follow her on Twitter, @toniatkins.❖

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# Hunter on the hot seat

**Congressional Watch**  
Andy Cohen



It's been a rough month for **Duncan Hunter (R-50)**. First there was the matter of some questionable charges made to his campaign credit card. The Federal Election Commission (FEC) had called to question some 68 charges made to the campaign account for video games, which were filed to his campaign disclosure statement with the notation "personal expense — to be paid back."

Hunter blamed the charges on a misunderstanding, claiming his son borrowed the credit card to purchase a video game and that the subsequent charges were somehow mistakes that the congressman was attempting to have reversed. The charges, totaling \$1,302 from Steam Games, occurred between Oct. 13 and Dec. 16, with no attempt at reimbursement.

The FEC is also looking into several other instances of questionable uses of campaign cash, according to the San Diego Union Tribune. Among the expenditures are \$1,137 for oral surgery, \$1,128 for a Hawaiian hotel stay, and over \$2,000 spent on food, train travel, and lodging during a Thanksgiving trip to Italy. More than \$6,000 was also paid to the private

Christian schools that Hunter's children attend.

Joe Kasper, Hunter's chief of staff, has claimed that all of the ineligible expenses were simply "mistakes," and that Hunter is making every effort to repay the nearly \$12,000 in personal charges. Kasper also insists that the investigation into his boss is part of a leftist conspiracy to discredit Hunter.

If all of this wasn't bad enough for Hunter, the "vaping" congress member made matters worse for himself on April 27 during a House Armed Services Committee hearing regarding an amendment he introduced to lift the ban on women registering for the selective service (the draft), when he made clear that he had no intention of supporting the bill.

We've covered Hunter's objections to the Pentagon's recent policy change allowing women full combat roles before. A former Marine, Hunter is vehemently opposed to the change and believes he is better suited than Pentagon brass to determine military policy, even going so far as calling Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus "a greater threat to the Marine Corps than ISIS."

"If we had that vote today I would vote against women being in infantry and special operations," Hunter told the committee, and it was an attempt to make a point that

he offered the amendment to lift the draft restrictions on women.

"The draft is there to get more people to rip the enemy's throats out and kill them for our nation, sanctioned by the U.S. government. That's what a draft is for," Hunter said. "I've spoken to coffee house liberals in San Francisco, and conservative families who pray three times a day, and none of those families want their daughters to be drafted. Hunter eventually said he may even vote against his own amendment."

"While you may be offering this as a 'gotcha' amendment, I would suggest that there is great merit in recognizing that each of us has an obligation to be willing to serve our country during a time of war," replied Jackie Speier (D-CA).

"Gender equality is achieved when women and men enjoy the same rights, the same opportunities, the same obligations, across all sectors of society and that includes military service," said Nikki Tsongas (D-MA).

Even one of Hunter's Republican colleagues, Martha McSally (R-AZ) got into the act, criticizing Hunter's characterization of the draft, noting that all positions in the military are filled by the selective service, and not just combat positions. The amendment passed on a bipartisan vote, 32-30. Hunter, of course, voted "no."

Despite all this, Hunter will of course be easily reelected in November.

**Susan Davis (D-53)** introduced a bill in Congress that would provide funding to school districts to train teachers and other school administrators to be able to detect signs that their students have fallen victim to sex trafficking and how to intervene.

"Local school districts are setting the standard for creating programs that can detect the signs that may lead to their students becoming victims of sex trafficking," Davis said in a press release. "The federal government should help them."

According to a study conducted by researchers at the University of San Diego and Point Loma Nazarene University, between 8,830 and 11,773 San Diegans fall victim to sex trafficking per year. The average age of entry is 15 years old, mostly facilitated by gangs.

The Biotechnology Innovation Organization named **Scott Peters (D-52)** as its legislator of the year for 2016 last month.

"Representative Peters has distinguished himself by supporting policies that foster innovation, including increasing NIH funding, protecting our U.S. patent system, promoting an industry-friendly tax environment and advocating for science-based regulations," said the organization in a press release. "He also co-founded the Congressional Life Science Caucus with Congressman Leonard Lance (R-NJ) at the end of last year and is a great supporter of this industry that is one of Southern California's economic cornerstones."

It's the third time Peters has won the award.

Peters also delved into the GOP presidential primary late last month when Republican hopeful Ted Cruz made a visit to San Diego.

"The government shutdown was Cruz's main accomplishment as a Senator," Peters said, according to La Jolla Patch. "In San Diego, we understand exactly who was hurt by that political Tea Party stunt ... We have scientists and researchers that depend on basic science research grants that had to suspend their work often."

**Darrell Issa (R-49)** earlier this month encouraged the U.S. Department of Energy to include Southern California on its list of sites for public hearings on long-term nuclear waste storage. Residents from both southern Orange County and San Diego County have expressed concerns over the storage of spent nuclear fuel rods at the now inactive San Onofre nuclear power plant. The department was unable to accommodate the request, but did vow to send a high ranking official to the next community engagement meeting in June.

"This is encouraging news for Southern Californians," Issa said, according to the Union Tribune. "For many of us, especially those in the San Clemente area, the storage of nuclear waste at [San Onofre] is really a major source of concern."

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

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**AWARD-WINNING JOURNALISM:** San Diego Uptown News won third place for general excellence at the 2016 ACP Annual Publication Award. This category is the top award in the annual competition, which received more than 1,400 entries from free community newspapers across the U.S. and Canada. Parent company San Diego Community News Network won a total of six awards.

**OPINIONS/LETTERS:** San Diego Uptown News encourages letters to the editor and guest editorials. Please email submissions to ken@sdcnn.com and include your phone number and address for verification. We reserve the right to edit letters for brevity and accuracy. Letters and guest editorials do not necessarily reflect the views of the publisher or staff.

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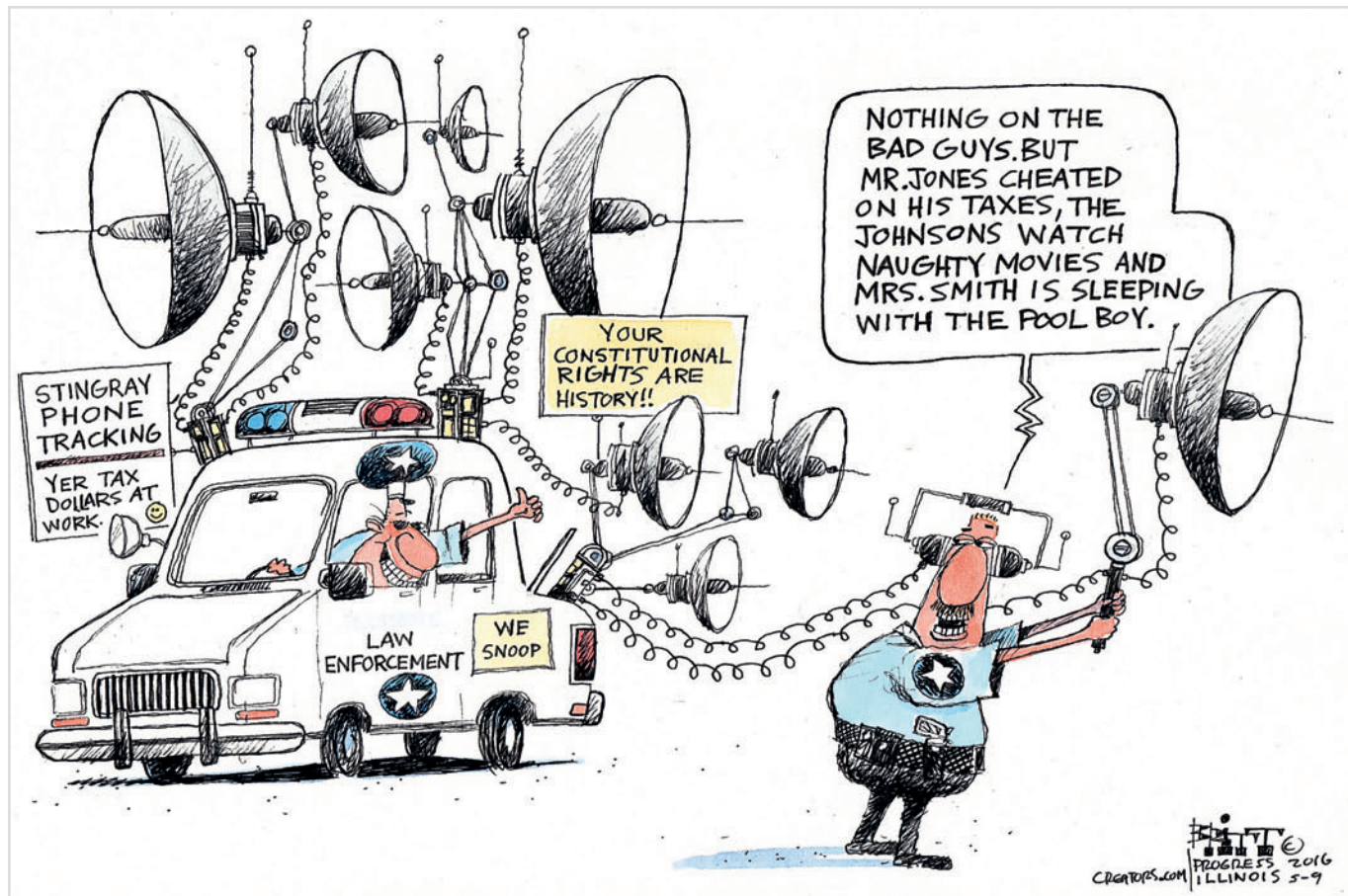
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## GUEST EDITORIAL

# Taking care of military families because they take care of us

By Rep. Susan A. Davis

San Diego is the proud home to thousands of military families, who make sacrifices everyday to protect our democracy and keep us safe. As the ranking member of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Military Personnel, I advocate for increases in the benefits for our men and women in uniform and their families.

Every year, Congress looks at how to best address our nation's military and national security needs through a defense bill. The House Armed Services Committee recently finalized the FY2017 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

The Personnel section demonstrates a bipartisan effort to recruit and retain service members while continuing our commitment to care for those who continue to serve.

I was able to secure a number of provisions that build on existing benefits, ensure service members are getting the benefits they earned, and honor the role women have played in our national security efforts.

The amendments I added to the NDAA include:

Expand parental leave in the military. One amendment increases leave for the spouse of someone who gives birth to at least 14 days from 10 days and allows dual military couples who adopt to split 36 days of leave according to family needs. Another orders a study into the feasibility of shared parental leave for dual military families after one member gives birth to a child.

Prevent servicemembers' overpayments on student loans. Servicemembers have overpaid about \$100 million on student loan interest. Under current law, such interest is supposed to be waived for those eligible military borrowers serving in areas of hostilities. However, many servicemembers carrying student loans are unaware of such a waiver. My amendment orders a plan of action to address these overpayments in student loan interest.

Increase access to infertility services for seriously wounded veterans. Many servicemembers have trouble conceiving as a result of their service-connected injuries. While there are infertility services available after they depart the military, many are unaware of this assistance. I added language to the NDAA to reach out to veterans who were seriously wounded, ill or injured and inform them of the available infertility services.

Restore the inurnment rights for Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) at Arlington National Cemetery. The NDAA incorporates the bipartisan WASP Arlington Inurnment Restoration Act that I cosponsored. The WASP helped win World War II and deserve access to Arlington and the full honors we give our war heroes.

Recognize the role of women in the military by authorizing financial support for military service memorials and museums that highlight the role of women in the military.

Retention and Recruitment of Afghan Women in Security Forces. As with previous defense bills, I included language to require a goal of \$25 million of the funding authorized for the Afghan Security Forces Fund go toward the recruitment, integration, retention, training and treatment of women in Afghan Security Forces.

Some military families experience food insecurity. Reports have recounted hundreds of families in San Diego visiting local food banks to meet their nutrition needs. These families would qualify for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) but their housing allowance puts them over the limit for these benefits. A simple solution would be to exclude the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) from the formula, and I offered an amendment to do this.

However, Republicans on the Armed Services Committee blocked the amendment on procedural grounds. However there is still hope. The next step for the NDAA is the full House of Representatives where I plan to offer this amendment again.

As the NDAA moves through the legislative process, I will continue to work with my colleagues to build on these benefits. We must honor the men and women in uniform and their families for the daily sacrifice they make on our behalf.

—Rep. Susan Davis represents Congressional District 53, which includes the San Diego communities of Old Town, Kensington, Mission Hills, University Heights, Hillcrest, Bankers Hill, North Park, South Park, Talmadge and Normal Heights, as well as La Mesa, Lemon Grove, Spring Valley and parts of El Cajon and Chula Vista.✽

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## Readers Poll



## Poll results

What is most  
driving you to vote  
in the June 7 primary?

50% Presidential politics

36% Local politics

14% Statewide issues

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Historical photographs dating back to 1935 reveal glimpses of Zoro Garden, a nudist colony that existed during the 1935-36 California-Pacific International Exposition in Balboa Park. (Courtesy of Weldon Jones)

## New play recreates a 1930s nudist camp that resembled a human zoo

By Margie M. Palmer

When most people hear that Balboa Park was once home to what was likely the first, and only nudist park open to the public, the phrase “urban legend” quickly comes to mind.

But during the two-year run of the 1935-36 California-Pacific International Exposition, anyone could pay their hard-earned 75 cents to gain entry to Zoro Garden. Once inside, they could spend as long as they wished watching fellow human beings hang out and move about stark naked.

The elusive details of Zoro Garden have been tracked down by cultural journalist Welton Jones, who along with artist Kate Clark, have fashioned them into a four-act play.

“The Naked Truth: The Rise And Fall Of America’s Only Public Nudist Colony In Four Acts” is part of “Parkeology”: a live event and TV series that unearths lesser known sites and stories of Balboa Park.

Running through June, “Parkeology” hosts events that explore popular and obscure locations in the park — including but not limited to its closeted histories. Clark leads the series in collaboration with the San Diego Art Institute (SDAI).

When SDAI executive director Ginger Shulick Porcella asked Clark if she wanted to do something on Zoro Gardens, Clark said she jumped at the chance.

“A friend and I wound up putting together a museum display [for the Balboa Park Centennial] that ran from probably January through March of this year, and we realized there was very little material that was left behind. It was treated like a carnival concession,” Clark said. “I first made contact with Welton when I was doing research for the exhibit but I felt like we should do something in the garden itself.”

Jones had written plenty of stories about the park’s history when he worked at the San Diego Union-Tribune, but as he approached retirement, Jones said he felt there were certain areas of the park that were grossly overlooked.

That’s when he started researching Zoro Gardens.

“I don’t need to hear any more stories about the little old lady who planted all the plants,” Jones said, laughing. “The nudist camp happened, it was open to the public and this happened in the middle of the Depression. How is this not widely known?”

The production hopes to answer questions about the nudist colony and comes as close as possible to an actual reenactment, without being a full-blown reenactment.

“Reenactments solidify things as being in the past,” Clark said. “The plan is to have different modern things incorporated, like, there will be a juicer there and some people will be wearing Crocs.”

### ‘The Naked Truth’

The production of “The Naked Truth” will staged on May 22. The 40-minute-long acts will run at 1, 3, 5 and 7 p.m. The event is free and open to the public; reservations are not required.

Clothing is optional (just kidding.)

“The original colony was kind of like a zoo. People could go any time of day between 11 a.m. and midnight, and when they got there, they never knew



A postcard from 1935 with a typo about Zoro Garden



Nudists gather for a reading session in Zoro Garden in Balboa Park.

in nude suits. Another part involves looking at what was happening during this era that allowed this to occur and asking why that’s not possible now,” Clark said. “My hope is that people realize that people have always been weird. So many people have this attitude about ‘The Past’ that people behaved better, and I think this gives an interesting window into a moment of experimentalism in California that was pre-World War II that was taking place during the Great Depression.”

And while some might think of Zoro Garden as being a “dirty secret” of the past, wondering why its existence would be highlighted as part of a public art project, San Diego Art Institute executive assistant Celia Gold said that the “Parkeology” productions, including “The Naked Truth,” have been a good fit for the SDAI.

“Parkeology’ is such a good fit for us because it combines all of the components [of our mission],” she said. “We’re supporting Kate and the artists with whom she’s collaborated, as well as partnering with other museums in Balboa Park to create informative, interactive events that are free



These beauties sunbathe on the rocks in Zoro Garden.

what the people would be up to,” she said. “Sometimes they’d be playing volleyball, or relaxing, or cooking bacon. I liked the idea of doing a daylong thing so people could filter in and out of the space in a way that it was initially designed for.”

And while the nudists will not actually be nude, because current laws require that people be dressed to a level of nudity that’s appropriate for a public beach, they will be in nude suits.

“Part of this project is about the absurdity of having them

and open to the public. [She] put a lot of thought into the various histories she wanted to elucidate and the impacts of foregrounding these often overlooked narratives on the way San Diegans think about the city’s past, its present, and the parameters that we put around imagining its possible futures.”

—Margie M. Palmer is a San Diego-based freelance writer who has been racking up bylines in a myriad of news publications for the past 10 years. You can reach her at [margiep@alumni.pitt.edu](mailto:margiep@alumni.pitt.edu).



# Chassé-ing your dreams

A dancer honors her mother — and the past — by restoring a piece of local architectural history

## HouseCalls Michael Good

Today's new homeowners tend to rush into things. And you can hardly blame them.

First, they rush into making an offer on a house — because they've learned from experience that in this overheated market those who wait get outbid. Then they rush into closing, because the sellers and the real estate agents and the lenders want a quick escrow. And then, once they actually own their dream home, they rush into remodeling, because their former house has been sold and their furniture is in storage and the kids are about to start school, and they can't afford to rent another house, and, well, at this point hurrying has become a habit.

But Anna Wilcoxson took her sweet time when it came to restoring her vintage house on Sunset Boulevard in Mission Hills. In fact, she thought about it for about 50 years before hiring an architect and contractor.

"My mother bought the house in 1956, when I was 1 year old," she said. Some of her earliest memories are of looking around and thinking about what she would change — if she ever got the chance.

There was a lot to daydream about. Two items were particularly irksome: the brick cladding in the front of the house, and the small upstairs room — also at the front of the house — that had once been an open balcony.

"I always knew it had been changed, and I always knew it should be changed back," she said. "I dreamed of it. But my mom liked the extra room."

The house had been put through a number of changes over the years, by a number of people who perhaps should have thought a little longer before taking up the hammer.

"There was a housing shortage before and after the war, and they filled in the upper balcony and added a room in the back, with a master bedroom and a closet," she said.

At some point, the house had been divided into two dwellings. It was put back before Anna's family bought it in the 1950s. "But there was a gas outlet in the bedroom closet, where the kitchen stove had been," she said.

In the 1970s, Anna's mother added a room on the back. "She took out the porch and just added a box on the back, with aluminum windows. I took over the room and made it my ballet



The owner of this Mission Hills house has been recognized by SOHO with a People in Preservation Award. (Photo by Michael Good)

room. I danced in there — she didn't mind. She said, 'Oh, knock yourself out.' That's how the Rec Room became the Ballet Room," she said.

Anna eventually put the experience to good use: She established a ballet school in the neighborhood, Center City Ballet, just a few blocks away on Fort Stockton. And as the years went by, she continued to daydream about the house on Sunset, and what she would do if she had her way.

In 2014, nearly 60 years after buying the house, Anna's mother passed away, and Anna inherited the place. At last, she was free to put things right again.

"I wouldn't touch it until she was gone," she said, lowering

her voice to a conspiratorial whisper. "I probably shouldn't say this," she pauses, and then of course she says it. "She told me, 'You better not take that brick off or I'll come back to haunt you.'"

In Anna's mother's defense, wrapping the front of the house in brick wasn't a completely wacky idea. Prairie-style houses are sometimes half brick, half stucco, and often have some sort of banding that adds to the horizontal nature of the house — although usually it's higher up on the wall. And usually the house is in the Midwest. San Diego's version of the style, which was started by architects like Irving Gill, who had lived or worked in the Midwest and were familiar with the style, tended to be a little more minimalist. And, in truth, putting a course of brick on the bottom third of a ranch house was kind of a 1950s thing. Looking at the "before" picture of the house, you can see why Anna couldn't wait to tear it off. Except, of course, she did wait.

The house on Sunset was built in 1912 by the Pacific Building Company. The firm was innovative for a number of reasons — it offered financing for homebuyers and had its own design staff. Oscar W. Cotton founded it in 1908, and remained in charge until 1928.

Anna believes that Irving Gill was the chief architect of the firm. I couldn't confirm that, but many of Gill's former protégés were on staff. Frank Mead (Gill's former partner) and Richard Requa (Gill's former foreman) designed at least one house for Pacific Building Company, the 1911 George and Anna Barney residence, on Seventh Avenue. Frank Lloyd Wright's son, John Lloyd Wright, was chief designer for Pacific Building Company. And John's brother, Lloyd Wright, worked in Gill's office and illustrated many

of Gill's buildings. The two Wright brothers, Gill and Gill's nephew Louis, were friendly.

According to Gill's biographer Thomas Hines, the brothers lived in one of Gill's experimental "workers cottages" and the four played music together, sometimes for four or five hours at a time. (John on violin, Lloyd on cello and Louis on piano.) So Gill was something of a mentor to the house's likely designer, John Lloyd Wright — but he was a mentor to many young architects and draftsman of the era. His influence can be found on many Mission Hills Prairie-style houses, including Anna's house on Sunset, which has transom windows similar to those Gill used on the Hawley house on Panorama Drive. The house on Sunset looks like something Gill might have done. Or John Lloyd Wright might have done while trying to draw an Irving Gill house.

"I just think Irving Gill is great," Anna said. "I just love what he did. He was just wonderful. The Ellen Browning Scripps house in La Jolla is one of his great buildings. And the Bishop's School."

When Anna finally got her chance to restore her mother's former house, she proceeded with considerable caution.

"When you have a house like this, you need to do things in a way that's beautiful and cohesive," she said. "It's just what you do."

Anna hired contractor Jim Stafford to do the windows. He in turn brought in contractor Rhett Lessler for what turned into a major project, with restoration of the stucco exterior, the missing porch, the "eyebrow" that runs around the top of the roofline and a new addition. Architect Kim Grant designed the project. The Ballet Room was converted into a modern kitchen and family room. The ballet bar got moved to a little

see House Calls, pg 9



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FROM PAGE 8

## HOUSE CALLS

guest cottage with a wooden floor. “It was all-encompassing,” Anna said. “All the molding was duplicated to create this seamless look. You really can’t tell what is new and what is old. It just turned out beautiful. My mom would be so proud, even if the brick is gone.”

She must be proud — because she hasn’t come back to haunt the place. Or has she? Anna laughed. “There was this rose bush she planted and during the construction, we had to pull it up. It was dormant for two years, and then we replanted it, and now it’s alive again. She was an amazing lady. She was a completely fantastic person. She picked the house. She lived to be 99 and a half. She died

two months short of 100. I think people should just feel blessed when something works out as well as this did, and we should just appreciate these old homes. They’re just so precious.”

On May 18, Save Our Heritage Organisation (SOHO) recognized Anna’s efforts to restore her mother’s house during its People in Preservation Awards. The ceremony was held in the garden of the Irving Gill-designed Marston House, which Anna’s mother would no doubt have appreciated. Other homeowners were recognized, including Devin and DeLayne Harmon of Kensington, who were profiled in this column last fall. Also recognized were homeowners Genevieve Legér and Chris Woods, Kyle and Tim Malone of Kensington and Kevin and Laurie Kravets of Inspiration Heights.

—Contact Michael Good at [housecallssdun@gmail.com](mailto:housecallssdun@gmail.com).❖

FROM PAGE 1

## FESTIVAL

non-traditional objects such as dumpsters, refrigerators and trucks.

Michelle Currier, a Poway native, is this year’s featured artist. Her vibrant pop art-style paintings exhibit bright colors and draw inspiration from famous pop artists Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein.

The piece that earned her the “featured artist” title is a single subject painting of a woman boasting of deep blues, greens and reds. The piece, along with the rest of her paintings, doesn’t have a name.

“It’s ... a type of painting that when I was doing it, it just sort of felt — it’s hard to explain — it just sort of clicked,” she said.

The UCSD alumna attributes her passion for bold colors to her childhood spent in San Diego.

“San Diego definitely has some very artsy communities,” she said. “Growing up in San Diego, every weekend you’re going somewhere new and you’re seeing different pieces of work and being inspired by everything around you.”

The 23-year-old said that apart from working in a couple showcases in the past, headlining the art portion of the Festival of Arts is the biggest role she’s received as an artist.

“I’ve never had anything quite like this before,” she said. “I was looking at the other ... pieces of artwork that were submitted and everyone was so talented, so it’s really quite an honor and very flattering that I’m the featured artist.”

In the festival’s music scene, local band Vokab Kompany will co-headline with Steve Poltz and Mariachi El Bronx.

The group, which varies from a six- to 10-piece accompaniment, is comprised of four full-time members, including vocalists Rob Gallo and Matt Burke, keyboardist Geoff Nigl and saxophonist John Avery. Additional band members — Tyler Olson (drums), Vikingo Burkhisser (bass) and Richard Galiguís (guitar) — join for live performances.

On their website, Vokab Kompany defines their style of music as “genre-defying” that leaves its audiences in a “musical stupor.”

“It’s grown into a live hip-hop, funk, soul, electronic mashed-up musical composition I guess you could say,” Gallo said. “So you get a full smorgasbord of music when we do our shows.”

May 21 will be the first-ever Vokab Kompany performance in North Park. Although the band members live locally, Gallo said they usually avoid playing shows in the area so as not to “over-saturate” it.

“When we do play a San Diego show, we want our friends and family to be excited about it,” Gallo said.

Attendees of the North Park Festival of Arts can watch Vokab Kompany perform at 6:45 p.m. on the Main Stage, located on University Avenue between 30th Street and Ray Street.

New to the festival this year is longer hours: Festivities will last from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. — a four-hour extension from last year’s 6 p.m. curfew.

“We used to have people here until 6 p.m. and it would be really hard to get them off the streets,” said Angela Landsberg, executive director of North Park Main Street.

“This year we decided ‘Nobody really wants to go home. Let’s not make them go home.’”

Another addition will be a DJ and cocktail lounge on Illinois Street, which Landsberg described as a family-friendly environment during the day and at a place where people can “sit, relax, listen to some great DJ music and, at night, have a cocktail.”

Festivalgoers who are 21 and older can also participate in the Waypoint Craft Beer Block, which features unlimited tasting from more than 30 craft brewers. Two sessions — one from noon to 4 p.m. and another from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. — will be accessible for \$30 tickets each.

For more information about North Park Festival of Arts, visit [bit.ly/1LxQ8mE](http://bit.ly/1LxQ8mE).

—Tori Hahn is an intern with SDCNN who recently graduated from San Diego State University with a degree in journalism. ❖


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# Double take

## Casper Andreas scores two movies at annual FilmOut LGBT festival

Ken Williams | Editor

A FilmOut festival without a movie by Casper Andreas is like a rare day in San Diego without sunshine, so it comes as no surprise that the Swedish-born filmmaker has been tapped for the 18th annual San Diego LGBT Film Festival.

Fans of Andreas — known for hits such as “Big Gay Musical” and “Going Down in La-La Land” — are in for a double treat when FilmOut’s festival returns June 3 – 5. In an unprecedented honor, Andreas has had two of his films chosen to open and close the festival.

“I selected ‘Kiss Me, Kill Me’ as the Opening Night film and ‘Flatbush Luck’ as the Closing Night Film because of the marquee/entertainment value and its accessibility for all audience types,” said Michael McQuiggan, longtime programming director for FilmOut.

FilmOut announced about a month ago that the star-studded “Kiss Me, Kill Me” was chosen for the festival’s gala opening on Friday, June 3. Shortly after that announcement McQuiggan “lucked” into another gem by Andreas, which is still undergoing final production tweaks.

“It was by chance that ‘Flatbush Luck’ even became available,” McQuiggan said. “It is technically a ‘Sneak Preview West Coast Premiere,’ so naturally I jumped at the chance to include the film in our lineup. It just made perfect marketing sense to offer the film as the Closing Night selection so we can spin the two films and its director.”

Andreas admits that he is blown away by McQuiggan’s decision to prominently showcase his two films.

It is a first for FilmOut. “This is an incredibly huge honor,” the 43-year-old filmmaker said. “I found out about ‘Kiss Me, Kill Me’ chosen as the Opening Night film a while back, so when I then heard ‘Flatbush Luck’ was being considered for Closing Night I could hardly believe it. It’s very exciting and definitely a first for me as well!”

Short films and features by Andreas have been shown at FilmOut for more than a decade.

“We have screened all of Casper’s short films and feature films — starting in 2004 with his first endeavor, ‘Slutty Summer’ — through ‘Kiss Me, Kill Me’ and ‘Flatbush Luck’ in 2016,” McQuiggan said.



Casper Andreas

“His films are always well-written and directed and perfectly cast,” he continued. “[Andreas] clearly knows what he is doing and has grown tremendously as a filmmaker since 2004. Not to mention that all his feature films [‘A Four Letter Word,’ ‘Between Love and Goodbye,’ ‘Violet Tendencies,’ ‘Big Gay Musical,’ ‘Going Down in La-La Land’] are immensely popular and crowd-pleasing movies. They are LGBT film entertainment at its best!”

### OPENING NIGHT FILM

“Kiss Me, Kill Me” is a murder mystery starring Van Hansis (“As The World Turns”) as a spurned boyfriend who becomes the prime suspect when his wealthy sweetheart — played by Gale Harold (“Queer As Folk”) — ends up dead.

Andreas calls the film an homage to film noir, those highly-stylized Hollywood crime dramas

from the 1940s and 1950s. Even the film’s music evokes that theme.

“I grew up reading Agatha Christie novels and always loved a good whodunit, and it was very exciting making a movie like this,” he said. “I watched a lot of Hitchcock movies in preparation and some of our shots were directly inspired by shots in his movies — we even have a ‘Vertigo’ shot! The film was also inspired by films like ‘Basic Instinct’ and ‘Fatal Attraction.’ Screenwriter David Michael Barrett is a big film buff and there were definitely a lot of references to other films in his screenplay. The score was inspired by ‘Chinatown.’”

Fans will also notice the harsh look at Hollywood life, much like Andreas’ 2011 opening night film, “Going Down in La-La Land.”

Does he have a particular fascination with Hollywood, or is it purely by chance that two of his major movies over the past five years have had Hollywood as the backdrop?

“It’s actually more happenstance,” Andreas said. “‘Going Down in La-La Land’ I wrote based on a novel and I was fascinated by the life of struggling actors in LA — a life I have lived myself — and to explore why these characters would do the things they do. ‘Kiss Me, Kill Me’ is completely set in West Hollywood and is centered around a successful reality TV producer who gets murdered. In this case, the story could probably have been set in other cities but it was a lot of fun making the film with these LA-types that I certainly

recognize and that Barrett knew well. And, of course, setting a film noir-inspired murder mystery in Los Angeles was a lot of fun considering the many great classic film noirs and thrillers that took place in Hollywood.”

With a finished script in hand, Barrett approached Andreas about directing the film.

“Originally it was called ‘Blackout,’” Andreas said. “We worked on developing it together for about a year and it went through quite a bit of rewrites during that time, so I think some of my ideas made it into the final script but mostly it’s all from David’s imagination.”

Operating with a modest budget, the filmmakers still landed a large cast that included Van Hansis, Gale Harold, Brianna Brown, Jai Rodriguez, Matthew Ludwinski and Jonathan Lisecki.

“We spent a lot of time casting the film and it was all through personal connections that we were able to reach these actors directly rather than having to go through their reps. It’s incredibly hard to get agents and managers excited about their clients making films on this budget level,” Andreas said.

“David and I got a lot of help by Kit Williamson, who in addition to playing a role in the film, came on as an associate producer and put us in touch with several of our cast members, like Van Hansis and Brianna Brown, both who worked on his web series ‘Eastsiders.’”

They initially raised money to finance the film through a highly

see FilmOut, pg 11

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FROM PAGE 10

FILMOUT

successful Kickstarter campaign that raised well over the \$100,000 goal.

“I do think it’s the future of indie film — especially with LGBT themes,” Andreas said. “The LGBT market is, of course, much smaller than the mainstream one to begin with so if you make a film for primarily a gay audience you have to keep the budget low.

“Nowadays with illegal downloads, cheap streaming services and a disappearing DVD market, it’s only getting harder to make money back on these films,” he continued. “So we knew with ‘Kiss Me, Kill Me’ that our Kickstarter campaign had to be successful for us to make this film and we worked incredibly hard to make that happen.”

Andreas said he also raised some of the film’s budget through investors, something the Kickstarter campaign helped with a great deal, since the less money they have to repay investors the more “in the green” the film may eventually be.

CLOSING NIGHT FILM

“Flatbush Luck” may be the most mainstream movie made by Andreas; the film is about two cousins who work at dead-end jobs as telephone repairmen in their Flatbush neighborhood in Brooklyn.



(l to r) Robby Stahl and Tanner Novlan (Courtesy of “Flatbush Luck”)

Jimmy (Tanner Novlan), a former hotshot on Wall Street before the recession hit, dreams of hitting it big again. And his cousin Max (Robby Stahl) is getting wet feet about his impending wedding to his longtime girlfriend Donna (Jenna Perez), especially after he finds himself attracted to his hot Latino masseuse (Juahn Cabrera).

“Flatbush Luck’ is directed more towards a mainstream audience, but it does have a major gay plotline so I don’t think gay audiences will be disappointed,” Andreas said. “The film’s executive producer James Balletto wrote the original screenplay and approached me about making it.

“It was a passion project for him having grown up in Flatbush and wanting to make a movie that takes place there. The best part is that he self-financed the film so no Kickstarter was needed in this case,” Andreas continued. “I did all the casting myself, something I do enjoy a lot, and I’m very excited about the cast we assembled. For several of our actors, this is their

feature film debut and I’m very proud of everyone’s job in the film. We had a lot of fun making it and I hope that shows up on the screen.”

Writing credits go to James Balletto, Jed Seidel and Andreas, so the screenplay became a collaborative effort.

“James was open to script changes and my friend Jed Seidel came onboard to help in developing the plot and restructuring the story quite a bit. Then I ended up writing the final few drafts of the screenplay,” Andreas said.

Again, Andreas had great success in finding a great cast. Some reviewers have called the part of Jimmy a breakout role for Novlan.

“I hope so! I think he is fantastic, and hopefully other directors and casting directors will see him in this role and agree,” Andreas said, adding that he is proud of the performance by Briana Marin as Barbara.

“Briana I had known for a while — we actually took acting class together — and I think she is excellent and so exciting to

watch in whatever she does,” he said. “I basically looked at the script to see which one of the female roles I was gonna offer her and then I cast her before casting had even begun.”

Stahl once played the role of “bartender” on an episode of Bravo’s “Watch What Happens: Live” with Andy Cohen, Kristen Johnston and Luke Perry. FilmOut audiences will relate to his character’s coming out process during the move, which is very believable and realistic.

“A big part of what Robby does in the film is thanks to his talent as an actor, and though incredibly handsome, he also has a sweetness about him that I think makes him very endearing on screen,” Andreas said.

“Robby initially auditioned for the Jimmy character but I thought his sensitivity worked so much better for Max, and once I read him for that role it was pretty clear to me that he would be great,” he continued. “During callbacks I had him read several times with multiple actors auditioning for the roles of Donna and Andres, so that kind of worked out as a rehearsal.”

Still, Andreas made sure Robby was fully prepared for the crucial role.

“Once cast, Robby and I met up prior to shooting and looked at all his scenes together to make sure he understood what I needed from him,” Andreas said. “During production, I’m pretty hands-on with my actors, building up trust and making sure to give them room to play and have fun. This was Robby’s first time in a leading role in a feature film, so I also think some of the nervousness he had about that and about portraying this character, he was able to use to his advantage in the role.”

Andreas, along with many of his actors and film crew, will spend the June 3 – 5 weekend in San Diego. To buy individual tickets or a festival pass, visit [filmoutsandiego.com](http://filmoutsandiego.com). To watch the official movie trailer for the festival, visit [bit.ly/27vMVB7](http://bit.ly/27vMVB7).

—Ken Williams is editor of Uptown News and can be reached at [ken@sdcdn.com](mailto:ken@sdcdn.com) or at 619-961-1952. Follow him on Twitter at @KenSD or Facebook at [KenWilliamsSanDiego](https://www.facebook.com/KenWilliamsSanDiego). He also serves a voluntary position as Film & Media Relations Director for FilmOut San Diego. ❖



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# Bon voyage

A luxury vacation on the canals of Holland

(clockwise from above) Windmills at Alkmaar; tulips in Keukenhof; Haarlem at night; and two more flower images from Keukenhof (Photos by Ron Stern)

## Global Gumshoe

Ron Stern



It's morning and the crew of the Panache, one of the fleet of luxury barges with European Waterways, has just departed Amsterdam on its way to Alkmaar.

This will be the first stop on its slow-moving voyage through the Dutch countryside along Holland's canals. On board, guests revel in the experience as they enjoy great food, fine wines and million-dollar views along the way.

The Panache is a floating luxury hotel and completely redefines the word *barge*. This includes 12 comfortable guest cabins with in-room double sinks and oversized showers, a lounge with large panoramic windows, a sun deck with a spa pool, and a dozen bicycles for exploring. Add to that a crew of six attending to your every need, daily excursions, wine and cheese presentations, and a chef who delights in preparing delicious, international cuisine.

You begin to understand why these sorts of vacations are widely popular.



Food galore

April is tulip season and visitors eager to view Holland's colorful flowers have booked months in advance to visit the most popular destinations in the Netherlands. After the Panache docks, Alkmaar guests can explore this typical Dutch maritime village of colorful windmills, traditional shops and a museum. Here, you'll see how Gouda and other cheeses are made, browse thousands of wooden shoes and watch as local artisans show you how the clogs are created.

Back on board, Chef Frank Schaart, as much of an artist as he is a chef, is preparing lunch for the guests. Today's offering consists of Asian shrimp salad, avocado and mango compote, and poffertjes (baby pancakes) with honey. Dinner is more extravagant — light spicy carrot and coconut soup with salty peanuts and lobster meat, and filet of fish with purple potato and salty sea leaves with cognac and lobster sauce. These multi-course meals are meant to be savored slowly, accompanied by fine wines and good conversation.

On day three, the Panache glides into the historic town of Haarlem past picturesque

see Holland, pg 13



## RESOURCES

### Go Barging

[gobarging.com](http://gobarging.com)  
Prices for a six-night cruise onboard the Panache start at \$5,250 per person for a twin/double cabin. This includes all meals, wines, open bar, excursions and local transfers.

### Rebound Tag

[reboundtag.com](http://reboundtag.com)  
I used Rebound Tag on this trip, which offers a trackable microchipped luggage bag tag using state-of-the-art technology for a \$31.99 annual fee. If your baggage is lost, you can locate it with GPS on your phone and receive SMS messages when found.

### Roam Mobile

[roammobile.com](http://roammobile.com)  
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The Penache luxury barge sails the canals of Holland. Prices start at \$5,250 per person. (Photos by Ron Stern)

FROM PAGE 12  
HOLLAND

waterfront homes and landscapes. Dating from the 13th century, Haarlem has a large shopping area and historic center that will be visited later. The featured excursion for the day, however, will be the Keukenhof Gardens, known as the Garden of Europe. Set on 100 acres, this garden is the pièce de résistance with more than 7 million flowering bulbs. You will want to bring your camera to capture the vibrant hues of red, yellow, orange and blue flowers in eye-catching designs.

If you came to Holland to see tulips and flowers, you won't be disappointed as another day's activities include a trip to the Aalsmeer Flower Auction, the largest in the world. Blossoms from all parts of the world are traded here and then sent off to their various destinations. The showroom looks something like the aftermath of pouring water on an anthill as workers driving pallets carrying colorful floral boxes zig-zag across the floor with what appears to be purposeful, organized chaos. This is a once-in-a-lifetime experience and should not be missed.

While the barge is moving through the locks to its next destination, passengers can enjoy a cocktail on the sundeck, read a book, take a nap, or just watch the pastoral scenes unfolding around every bend



(above) Girls wearing traditional Dutch costumes at Keukenhof;  
(below) shop at Alkmaar featuring clogs



in the canal. Life on board is meant to be enjoyed in small groups, which is one of the biggest contrasts to ocean cruising.

The final stop on the route is Delft, where you will visit the Royal Delft Factory. You will see master craftsman create these beautiful blue and white hand-painted, world-renowned works of ceramic art.

The captain's dinner is the last meal of the trip and one enjoyed with some of the crew as well. Chef Frank presents his culinary sensation of sirloin with red cabbage and potato celery pie paired with Chassagne-Montrachet or red Pommard wines.

The next day, passengers are taken by motor coach to the airport or to their hotel in Amsterdam, if they wish to extend their visit. The crew is lined up on deck, as always, with broad smiles extending heartfelt farewells. Many of the guests are repeat customers and are by now, already contemplating their next barging adventure.

—Contact Ron Stern at [travewriter01@comcast.net](mailto:travewriter01@comcast.net) or visit his blog at [originalglobalgumshoe.blogspot.com](http://originalglobalgumshoe.blogspot.com). *FTC disclosure: This was a sponsored trip. All opinions are the author's.* ❖

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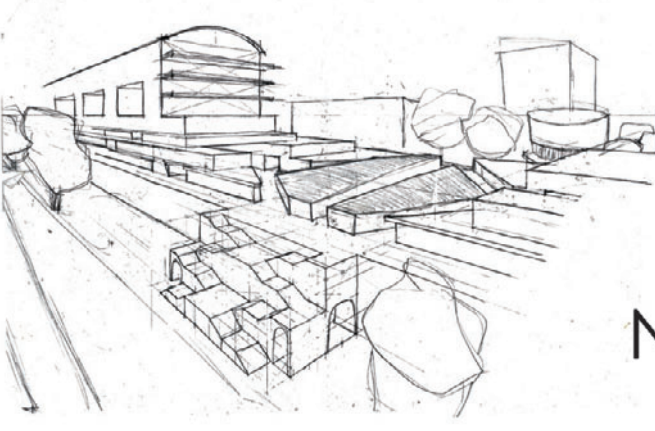




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# Dancing to the ‘Lullaby of Broadway’

By David Dixon

A hit production of the musical “42nd Street” should feature wonderful choreography, a triple-threat cast and tuneless renditions of songs like “We’re in the Money,” “I Only Have Eyes For You,” and “Lullaby of Broadway.”

San Diego Musical Theatre’s production at the Spreckels Theatre should have plenty of all that in spades.

Set during the 1930s, Peggy Sawyer (Ashley Ruth Jones) travels to New York City to audition for the big show, “Pretty Lady.” Although she arrives late for the audition, she becomes friends with several chorus girls involved with the dance extravaganza. When the well-known and quick-tempered director, Julian Marsh (Robert J. Townsend), sees her perform a stellar dance routine, he decides to cast her as a chorus girl.

Responsible for the massive sound of a 14-piece band is musical director Don LeMaster, who lives in University Heights. He has been the resident musical director for almost a decade. Throughout the evening, LeMaster will be playing piano onstage. While conductors usually are not featured in the action, he is used to being involved with the plot.

“I do it all the time,” he said. “I’m not an actor, but I’ve been onstage as the music director in a gagillion shows.”



(l to r) Don LeMaster, Katie Whalley Banville and Donny Gersonde (Courtesy of SDMT)

In something new to LeMaster, he will temporarily leave the musicians when he is featured with the ensemble members.

“I’ve never walked away from my band before,” he said. “My piano player will have to jump up and wave his arms to the band. It’s a little bit weird that I’ve never had someone else in control underneath the stage when I’m not with them.”

Also stepping up to a challenge is University Heights resident Katie Whalley Banville. She not only co-stars as dance director Andy Lee, but is the dance captain in this version directed by James Vasquez.



## “42nd Street”

San Diego Musical Theatre  
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sdmt.org  
858-560-5740

She can empathize with the fictional composed choreographer. “Andy yells a lot of notes during rehearsals for the show within the show,” she said. “I always tell the cast that all the notes are real.”

Donny Gersonde, an ensemble member from South Park, is amazed at how much tap



dancing is utilized throughout the musical.

“Most shows that are regarded as tap shows like ‘Thoroughly Modern Millie’ only have a small amount,” he said. “The finale alone of ‘42nd Street’ is basically 12 minutes of tap.”

A fair amount of the dancing in “42nd Street” pays tribute to the influential choreographer of the motion picture, Busby Berkley.

“He created an entire genre of dance,” Banville said.

“There are numerous numbers that are an ode to his overall style.”

The 1980 adaptation of the classic movie incorporates

musical numbers from the film as well as other melodies penned by Harry Warren and Al Dubin. Many of their songs are instantly memorable.

“They knew how to write a catchy tune that sticks,” Banville said. “It’s not like Sondheim where you almost need to have a trained ear to fully appreciate what’s happening. It’s accessible popular music.”

Some of the numbers have stuck with LeMaster since he was young.

“I think the songs are part of our vocabulary as musical theater people,” he said. “I remember learning ‘Lullaby of Broadway’ when I was 12. My mom, sister, aunt and I performed it in a show at my grandparent’s mobile home park. All of us have grown up with the showtunes used in the evening.”

Those interested in the world of backstage theater or just in the mood to see exuberant and extravagant entertainment, ought to buy tickets in advance for the special engagement. SDMT’s interpretation appears destined to be an irresistible love letter to Broadway.

—A fan of film and theater from a very young age, David Dixon has written reviews and features for various print and online publications. You can reach him at [daviddixon0202@gmail.com](mailto:daviddixon0202@gmail.com).

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(l to r) Cashae Monya, Brianna Dodson, Jolize Frank, Mallory Johnston and Shardae Hayes (Photos by Daren Scott)

## Rwanda revisited

### Theater Review

Charlene Baldridge



Internationally-aware theater aficionados have an opportunity to see the West Coast premiere of Katori Hall's new play, "Our Lady of Kibeho," which The Wall Street Journal proclaimed "the most important play of the year."

Premiered at New York's Pershing Square Signature Center in 2012, "Our Lady of Kibeho" is directed locally by Jennifer Eve Thorn, Moxie Theatre's co-founder and associate artistic director.

The well-performed production takes onlookers to Rwanda in 1981-82 and is based on real events that seemed to presage the coming genocide that killed as many as a million people, mostly members of Rwanda's Tutsi population. The work fulfills Moxie's pledge to present plays that need to be seen. It is not without humor, mostly due to the unquenchable spirit of the girls involved.

The setting is a Catholic girls' school in Kibeho, a small village in Rwanda. Likable and seemingly naïve 17-year-old student Alphonsine Mumureke (Cashae Monya) claims she receives visitations from the Virgin Mary, during which she is told things she couldn't possibly know. She is mercilessly taunted by the other girls, among them Anathalie Mukamazimpaka (Tyrah Hunter) and Marie-Claire Mukangango (Mallory Johnston).

Punishment is meted out by the skeptical, innately nasty, and possibly somewhat envious Sister Evangelique (Yolanda Franklin). As penance, Alphonsine is assigned to help the also-skeptical Father Tuyishime (Vimel Sephus) daily in his office. When he witnesses a visitation, and as two additional girls receive the Virgin, he comes to believe it is true.

A shrine is set up and villagers, having heard of the miracle, begin visiting the school.

Word spreads and the school also receives visits from Bishop Gahmanyi (Antonio T

Brianna Dodson portray additional girls. Other visitors and villagers are played by Durwood Murray, Imahni King-Murillo, Taylor Mumin, John Brooks and Kimberly King.

Divya Murthy Kumar devises gritty scenic design that encompasses the school dorm room, Father Tuyishime's office, and the school grounds. Excellent support is provided by costume designer Anastasia Pautova, lighting designer Christopher Renda, sound and projection designer Melanie Chen, and prop and special effects designer Angelica Ynfante.

Rwandan accented English is spoken effectively and understandably, and the company standouts are the three visionaries: Monya, Hunter and Johnson, plus their detractor, intensely played by Franklin. Sephus provides a sweet and effective Father Tuyishime.

The 2½-hour unfolding of the play prior to the payoff seems to plod at times, perhaps because Hall's suspense builds by fits and starts instead of building in a smooth arc. But that's the nature of reality. Moxie is exceptionally brave to present this important work.

—Charlene Baldridge has been writing about the arts since 1979. Follow her blog at [charlenebaldridge.com](http://charlenebaldridge.com) or reach her at [charb81@gmail.com](mailto:charb81@gmail.com).

### "Our Lady of Kibeho"

By Katori Hall

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Yolanda Franklin

J Johnson) and Vatican investigator Father Flavia (Steve Frehlich). One sits in the dark rooting for the girls until the last, public, miraculous appearance of the Virgin and its vision of the horrific future.

Jocelynn Johnson, Shardae Hayes, Jolize Frank and



(l to r) Antonio T.J. Johnson, Vimel Sephus and Yolanda Franklin

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Ned Eisenberg, Richard Thomas, and Khaled Nabawy. Photo by Jim Cox.

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FROM PAGE 1

## LIVING LAB

education aligned to San Diego Unified's current state science standards for upper elementary and middle school students, as well as professional development and resources for classroom teachers.

"In addition, the institute provides district students and families with out-of-school programs that foster rigorous science learning and prepare young people for post-secondary education and careers in STEM fields," Reed-Porter said.

STEM stands for science, technology, engineering and math.

The lab is currently under construction on Manzanita Canyon in City Heights, off Fairmount Avenue, near the Florence Joyner Elementary School and Monroe Clark Middle School. Students are so close, they can walk to The Living Lab, as it has been named.

The lab was designed by renowned San Diego architect Rob Wellington Quigley, who

created the now iconic San Diego Central Library in East Village.

Reed-Porter said the lab is 15 percent completed and scheduled to open in March 2017. The district has contributed \$11.8 million to The Living Lab, and the Ocean Discovery Institute has raised \$15 million for construction.

The institute is currently giving tours of the construction site, and a construction party is planned 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. on Saturday, June 4 at Florence Joyner Elementary.

"We hope to get 750 community members for the construction party, and we think we will," said MacKenzie Sandy, the institute's director of philanthropy. "We want people in the community to start getting a taste of The Living Lab."

The Living Lab will be used to provide unique marine science educational opportunities to more than 10,000 students per year. The learning spaces include an amphitheater for larger classes and student presentations, stormwater demonstration projects where students will



As students examine study items, Shara Fisler uses a microscope. Fisler, founder of the Ocean Discovery Institute, was nominated for a CNN Heroes award this year. (Courtesy of Ocean Discovery Institute)

conduct water quality testing, atmospheric instrumentation that will allow students to gather data, plots to develop outdoor experiments, outdoor lab space for teacher professional development, and access to the adjacent canyon that will provide research opportunities for students.

The Living Lab is the brainchild of Fisler.

"As executive director, Fisler envisions what Ocean Discovery Institute can achieve and how we can make the greatest difference possible," Sandy said. "Her leadership ensures that the organization has the resources and guidance needed to carry out the mission of transforming young lives through science."

Fisler has been recognized with numerous commendations, including the CNN Hero Award, the California Society for Ecological Restoration

President's Award, KPBS Union Bank Women's History Month Local Hero Award, and Sunset Magazine Coastal Hero Award.

Fisler holds a bachelor of science degree in environmental science from the University of California, Santa Barbara and a master degree in marine resource management from the University of Miami's Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science, and previously served as adjunct faculty at the University of San Diego.

"Because of my role, I am often in the position that belongs to our students, families teachers, staff, board, volunteers, scientists and supporters," she said. "This is always an honor. Of course each of them have made significant contributions and been part of what leads to these recognitions."

Fisler was honored by CNN with a nomination on-air on the

cable news network on April 7 and a profile on her work. She is one of only 25 honorees in the country. If she is chosen as the winner at the upcoming CNN Awards, she could win \$50,000 for the institute. The awards will be hosted by CNN anchor Anderson Cooper.

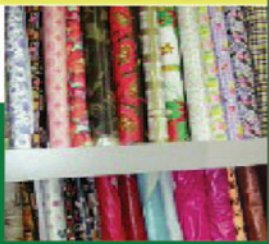
"During the filming of the CNN profile, it was clear from every perspective that while City Heights is a community where poverty is high and inequities exist, it is foremost a community bursting with talent, and ready for opportunity," she said. "I am proud that people across the country will know this about City Heights and make think differently than they did before about similar communities."

—Catherine Spearnak is a San Diego-based freelance writer. She can be reached at [catherine.spearnak1@gmail.com](mailto:catherine.spearnak1@gmail.com).

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FROM PAGE 1  
FOSTER

"I had this longing to be a mother," Barnes said. "We tried for many years and even tried a round of fertility treatments, but the effects on my body were negative. It seemed like every other person I knew was pregnant and my ache grew."

Lani wanted to do something positive with that ache, so she started quietly visiting the Angels Foster Family website and wondered if she and Matt should foster a young child. Even though her husband expressed concerns about the unknowns of fostering, on their ninth wedding anniversary, the couple decided to attend one of the monthly orientation at Angels. The meeting was geared toward helping people decide whether or not fostering is right for them.

"After the meeting, we thought, this is doable, let's make a difference in a child's life," she recalled.

There are several reasons they chose to be foster families through Angels. They wanted to help a child under 5 years old. The couple also liked the philosophy that children should be with one

foster family until they are reunified with their biological families or find a "forever family" through adoption.

The agency also asks families to foster one child – or sibling set – at a time so the children get the focused attention they deserve. And the couple saw that there was great support for families.

"I couldn't have gotten through it without my caseworker," Lani said.

As thorough as she found the screening, training and support at Angels, she did make one suggestion to the staff regarding the difficulty with transitions.

"When my first baby was reunified with his family, I was so happy for him because his mother did what she needed to do to get her son back, but at the same time, I felt a deep loss and wanted to talk to another foster mother who could understand this grief," she explained.

"Friends and family are wonderful, but only someone who has gone through this could really understand how I felt."

Despite the fact that her first two reunifications were smooth – she still maintains relationships with the children and their biological families – Lani said it's helpful

to lean on others who have shared the experience of fostering a child and saying goodbye.

The organization took her suggestion to heart and created a new position that would provide foster parents with additional support in the form of a seasoned foster parent who could provide both expertise and experience.

In 2015, after completing her last foster placement, Lani started a full-time career with Angels. She not only helps to recruit wonderful new families, but provides additional support to foster families in the form of informal and formal support groups, connecting new foster families with experienced foster families and providing that extra support along with their case manager.

"I've walked through this process and now want to help other families do the same," she said. "If a family makes the decision to care for a young foster child, Angels is going to do their best to take care of them."

For more information about how to be a foster parent, or how to support foster children, visit [angelsfoster.org](http://angelsfoster.org).

—Jennifer Coburn is a writer and author from San Diego.



# Growing **tasty tomatoes** at home is easy

By Gary Jones

Tomatoes are, by far, the most popular home-grown “vegetable.” (It’s really a fruit.) Their ubiquity is not surprising for obvious reasons. They are very easy to grow and the flavor of a backyard tomato is sensationally better than store-bought.

Whether you are a tomato newbie or a hardcore tomato-maniac, there is always a new variety to try or a new tomato trick. (Remember the “upside-down” tomato craze a couple of years ago?)

Here is some juicy insider information that you may not know about tomatoes. A myth or two may be dispelled along the way. These tips are the result of years of growing both heirlooms and hybrids, and also from listening to customers — tomato growers love to talk. Tomato stories are about as tall as fish stories. “The one that got away,” has its tomato equivalent: “A squirrel ate it.”

Let’s review the basics:

**Soil** — All vegetables give a lot. They produce a lot of foliage as well as fruit, all in a short time. It is only reasonable that if the soil feeds the plant, then you have got to maximize the soil. Amend it well — to conserve water, improve texture and increase nutrient availability. Work in an organic starter fertilizer at the same time.

**Container size** — If growing in containers, size is important.



Heirloom tomatoes, including Cherokee Purple, are known for their flavor and different colors. (Courtesy of Armstrong Garden Centers)

Most people want to grow tomatoes in too small a pot. A 15-gallon nursery pot is the right size, not a 5-gallon pot. Too small containers cause the watering to be uneven, which can cause other problems mentioned below.

**Feeding** — Tomatoes are not heavy feeders. If you feed too often — even with a food designed specifically for tomatoes — you will end up with lush, beautiful plants and little fruit. A light feeding every other month is sufficient.

**Watering** — Tomatoes need a consistent supply of moisture. They will suffer if you let them go too dry before watering. They can develop blossom-end rot and will be much more susceptible to diseases. Use an organic mulch to keep the soil evenly moist.

**Blossom-end rot** — This is when the bottom of the tomato develops a dark brown patch which begins to rot. A lack of

calcium is the cause. However, you do not need more calcium. You need a consistent supply of moisture. There is plenty of calcium in California soils, but plants can only take in calcium as it is soluble in water. Uneven watering means insufficient calcium.

**Heirloom or hybrid?** — One of the ways of distinguishing the two is that hybrids have been bred for disease-resistance. Here in California, we have an ideal tomato growing climate and heirlooms rarely get disease. But there is no question that heirlooms are not as productive. Grow both. Use heirlooms for their incredible variety of flavor, shape and color and hybrids for production.

**Tomato flavors** — Yes, there are many, many tomato flavors. Some taste rich and smoky (purples and blacks). Some come already salted (Black Krim and others). Some have a rich, fruity

wine taste. Some are super sweet (yellows and oranges — Sungold wins every cherry tomato taste test). Where will you find all these flavors and more? From heirlooms — that is why they are grown.

**Why not to grow beefsteaks?** — Beefsteaks are everyone’s dream tomato. But inland gardeners beware: Beefsteaks produce little fruit when temperatures are above 85 degrees. If you want a few spectacular tomatoes early in the season and that is all, grow them. Coastal gardeners: Grow beefsteaks.

**Pinching or pruning** — Don’t. There is no need. The technique for removing side shoots was developed in cold-summer, European climates. Removing most of the foliage made it possible for the sun to reach and warm the entire plant. We get plenty of heat and sun in California for tomatoes to produce beautifully without any pinching or pruning. If you do, your fruit may get sunscald.

**Don’t refrigerate** — Keep tomatoes at room temperature. Cold temperatures turn the sugars to starch, ruining the home-grown flavor.

— Gary Jones is the Chief Horticulturist at Armstrong Garden Centers, which has locations on Friars Road and Morena Boulevard. Email your drought and gardening questions to [growingdialogue@armstronggarden.com](mailto:growingdialogue@armstronggarden.com).

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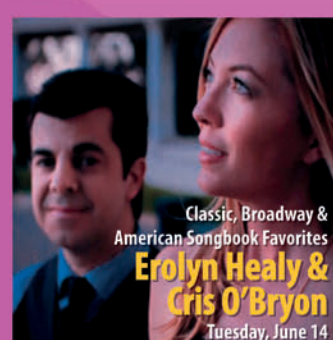
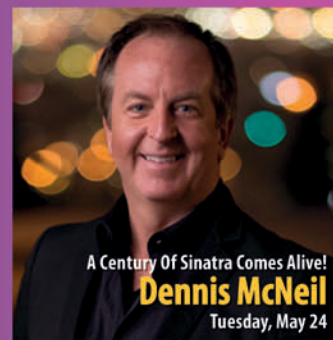
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Sudoku

Puzzle from page 19

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

Be Prepared

Crossword from page 19

L	E	T	A	V	E	S	E	E	S	M	E	S	S	T	O	T	S
L	A	V	E	R	E	L	A	V	E	R	E	L	A	V	E	R	E
E	D	E	L	E	D	E	L	E	D	E	L	E	D	E	L	E	D
L	I	Z	E	L	I	Z	E	L	I	Z	E	L	I	Z	E	L	I
S	E	S	A	R	E	S	A	R	E	S	A	R	E	S	A	R	E
T	I	N	E	A	G	E	A	G	E	T	I	N	E	A	G	E	A
S	O	S	G	R	O	S	G	R	O	S	G	R	O	S	G	R	O
L	A	T	O	N	I	N	I	S	S	E	R	I	H	S	E	R	I
C	A	L	I	C	A	L	I	C	A	L	I	C	A	L	I	C	A
T	R	A	T	C	R	A	T	C	R	A	T	C	R	A	T	C	R
P	O	L	O	P	O	L	O	P	O	L	O	P	O	L	O	P	O
R	O	L	O	P	O	L	O	P	O	L	O	P	O	L	O	P	O
H	A	T	E	N	E	N	E	N	E	H	A	T	E	N	E	N	E
S	P	A	S	A	N	A	L	A	N	S	P	A	S	A	N	A	L

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

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 18

## Uptown Crossword

Be Prepared

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14					15						16			
17					18						19			
20				21					22	23				
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54						55	56				57			
58						59					60			
61						62					63			

CREATORS NEWS SERVICE

By Charles Preston

ACROSS

1 Ungovernable  
5 Highway  
10 Resorts  
14 German river  
15 Lorna  
16 Loathe  
17 Robert  
18 Maine town  
19 Swan genus  
20 appearance  
22 Remind  
24 Let's go for a  
25 Supporter: suffix  
26 Provisions  
29 warfare  
33 Takes on  
34 Bone  
35 Famous theme song  
36 Asian babysitter  
37 Vapid  
38 Large: Fr.  
39 Network  
40 Buddy  
41 Spy  
42 Wishful thinkers  
44 Open spaces  
45 Deer  
46 Seed covering  
47 salad

50 Level  
54 code  
55 Cloth  
57 Noble: Ger.  
58 Cook's concern  
59 Dignified  
60 True  
61 Vessels  
62 Mergansers  
63 Elihu

DOWN

1 Cry  
2 Pointless  
3 Sly look  
4 Certain performances  
5 Aphrodite's beloved  
6 Navigational system  
7 Force down  
8 Atlantic cape  
9 Synthetic rubber  
10 Amusement park attraction  
11 Conceal in a certain way  
12 Over  
13 Spanish painter  
21 Uncovers: poet.  
23 Constellation  
25 Innocent creature

26 Fragment  
27 Track official  
28 Talk  
29 Burns  
30 Like some apples  
31 Unique  
32 Wears  
34 Big names  
37 Lawbreakers of a sort  
41 Inter  
43 Man's nickname  
44 Cereals  
46 Waters: L.  
48 Mountain: comb. form  
49 Chaise longue, e.g.  
50 Border  
51 Get the  
52 Elan  
53 Femme's pronoun  
56 Thread: comb. form

Puzzle answers on page 18

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# A *marquee* brunch

## Restaurant Review

Frank Sabatini Jr.



Always on the lookout for meals that don't originate from the copycat mill, I discovered on the revised brunch menu at West Coast Tavern a couple of signature dishes that were previously alien to my palate as well as traditional fare augmented with appealing dashes of novelty.

When initially viewing the menu online, the carrot waffles piqued my interest, as did the coconut-chia pudding. I wondered if the waffles would be orange and savory while realizing that nutritious hippie-hyped chia seeds had somehow evaded my consumption until now.

To a lesser extent, in terms of originality, my appetite was also cued by the notion of a fried chicken BLT and deluxe bloody marys promising “the bartender's choice of tasty toppings.”

Within a matter of days, and with a brunch fanatic in tow, I was plowing through a thicket of fresh mint, celery, bacon,

Executive chef Abe Botello, who last worked at Urban Solace and its sister restaurant, Solace & the Moonlight Lounge, fuels the experience with everything from strawberry-avocado toast and assorted eggs Benedict draped in roasted poblano hollandaise. He also gives chilaquiles a welcome boost with chipotle chicken while appeasing vegetarians with skillet combining pasta, scrambled eggs and seasonal veggies laced in cheese sauce and residing under a mantle of toasted breadcrumbs.

My companion gravitated to the “loaded” biscuits and gravy constructed with house-made cheddar biscuits crowned with bacon, sausage and two sunny-side eggs. He orders them all the time in other places, but said these were exceedingly more satisfying with the proteins piled on top.

The same sweet-tasting gravy covering the biscuits reappeared alongside my fried chicken BLT as a dipping sauce. But it wasn't necessary because the tender buttermilk-battered chicken filets and ripe tomatoes exuded enough juice to keep the sandwich moist. And



A hotspot for food and drink, fronting a landmark theater (Photos by Frank Sabatini Jr.)

### West Coast Tavern

2895 University Ave.  
(North Park)

619-295-1688

[westcoasttavern.com](http://westcoasttavern.com)

Brunch prices: Starters and waffle dishes, \$7 to \$15; sandwiches, egg dishes, and specialty entrees, \$10 to \$17

coconut milk, which morphs into a dairy-like paste.

The additions of nutmeg and cinnamon factored in nicely while the chia injected a flavor I can best compare to that of flax-

The “loaded” biscuits and gravy with eggs



salami, olives and other savorys rising from a tamely spiced bloody mary made with Kettle One Vodka.

West Coast fronts the historical Observatory North Park (formerly the Birch North Park Theatre), occupying in part an architecturally detailed space that was formerly the lobby of the Fox West Coast Theater some 85 years ago. To the right of it is a brick-walled tavern. And toward the back is another bar, the area from which a high-powered sound system cranks out music.

Brunch is served in all areas, including the sidewalk patio, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Friday through Sunday.

On this particular day of rest, the vibe started out quiet and mellow. We were seated along the street-facing glass panels of the main dining room. Though by 11 a.m., the noise level increased two-fold from the clamor of a full house competing with the cadence of moderately low-beat dance music.

Amid rum flights, bottomless mimosas and other libations flying around the room, we transitioned from bleary-eyed to festively alert.

unlike the room-temperature tongue of bacon curling down from my Bloody Mary, the strips poking out from the toasted sourdough were hot and crispy, thus unleashing a better smoky, cured flavor.

Our waitress wisely suggested we hold off on the carrot waffles until the end of our meal since they were anything but savory. The batter contains brown sugar, currants and candied walnuts, much like carrot cake. And the scoop of fluffy white matter on top of the dark-tan waffles was cream cheese icing that pooled into the squares as it melted. The dish can potentially enjoy success on an evening dessert menu.

The coconut-chia pudding topped with berries, jam, granola and shaved coconut was more intriguing than it was sweet. Thick and creamy, the chef soaks chia seeds in

seed, or something medicinal. My companion loved it. For me, it was an acquired taste with the help of knowing I was upping my intake of soluble fiber.

Botello takes a fun, friendly approach to brunch by skipping omelets and the scads of breakfast potatoes that often accompany them. His dishes are instead built on skill with just the right amount of inventive foresight to keep customers merrily engaged.

West Coast Tavern also serves dinner and offers happy hour seven days a week, 4 – 6 p.m.

—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](mailto:fsabatini@san.rr.com). ❖



A restaurant with a New Zealand vibe is taking shape in North Park. (Photo by Frank Sabatini Jr.)

The converted house on 30th Street in North Park where Eddie's Philadelphia Steaks and Hoagies previously resided is undergoing a major remodel for the June opening of **Dunedin**, named after the New Zealand city. The venture (pronounced duh-nee-din) is backed by in part by P.J. Lamont, who also operates **Bare Back Bar**, **Queenstown Public House** and **Raglan Public House**. All three establishments carry a New Zealand theme.

Dunedin will follow suit, but Lamont is keeping the food menu under wraps for now while assuring that some of the beer and wine will be imported from the two-island nation.

The property is now clad in rustic wood siding and will feature Eucalyptus logs as fencing. Tables made from the wood of a flatbed truck will contribute to a rural feel inside.

Lamont's wife is from New Zealand, and he has made numerous trips to the country over the years. 3501 30th St.



Escargot in garlic butter (Courtesy of Et Voila French Bistro)

**Et Voila French Bistro** on Adams Avenue is garnering rave reviews from restaurant-goers since opening in late April. Launched by French natives Vincent Viale (former chef de cuisine at **Bernard'O**) and Ludo Mifsud (past maitre d' at **Tapenade Restaurant**), the bistro offers solid French classics with modern accents for nightly dinner and weekend brunch.

The interior, designed with copious wood and old-style globe lighting, sets a cozy atmosphere for cheese and charcuterie boards, beef filet tartar, hearty bouillabaisse, steak frites, and

more. Daily soufflés are also available on the dessert menu. 3015 Adams Ave., 619-209-7759, [etvoilabistro.com](http://etvoilabistro.com).



The outdoors comes inside at One Door North (Courtesy of H2 Public Relations)

The long-awaited **One Door North** in North Park opened April 29 with an interior design that beckons to lodges you'd find in rugged wilderness. Its 5,000-square-foot layout features tented semi-private tables backed by forest imagery, banquettes set against painted landscapes of mountains, and a central wood-topped bar.

Executive Chef Fred Piehl presents a menu of “camp-fire cuisine” that includes everything from trout and slow-roasted tri tip to burgers and s'mores, although the offerings also delve into the urban arena with small plates, salads and pizzas.

Piehl and his wife Tammy own the adjoining **Smoking Goat** as well. One Door North is open for dinner Tuesdays through Sundays. 3422 30th St., 619-618-1285, [onedoornorthsd.com](http://onedoornorthsd.com).

Restaurateur Garo Minassian is about to open **Parc Bistro-Brasserie** in the Bankers Hill address that previously housed **Croce's Park West**. A sneak peek at the menu reveals French fare with lots of seafood options, plus daily specials extending to rack of lamb Provencal, wild boar ragu, butter-poached lobster, and more. The kitchen will be helmed by Chef Donald Lockhart, who moves over from **Cusp Dining & Drinks** in La Jolla.

Garo, a native of Montreal, has run a string of restaurants throughout San Diego since the late 1980s. He most recently co-operated **Harry's Bar** and **American Grill** before closing in December. Parc will start serving dinner by mid to late May, with plans of adding lunch service in the coming months. 2760 Fifth Ave., 619-795-1501. [parcbb.com](http://parcbb.com).

The self-proclaimed “world's largest hot dog chain” just shrunk a little with the abrupt closing of **Wienerschnitzel** at 101 W. Washington St. in Hillcrest. No explanation was posted on the A-frame walkup, which became boarded up in late April. The company, founded in 1961 near Long Beach, purportedly maintains 340 locations in 10 states, all run by individual franchisees. Countywide, there are still more than a dozen outlets in operation. [wienerschnitzel.com](http://wienerschnitzel.com).

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



# Chianti and Italian nachos

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

The aromas of red sauce, lasagna and hot pizzas are like a kiss on the cheek when you step inside DiMille’s Italian Restaurant in Normal Heights, which ranks among the oldest mom-and-pop establishments on Adams Avenue.

Founded by the namesake family in 1978, the Chianti has been no less a staple here than spaghetti. And at some point in the past decade, craft beer took over the taps following a series of remodels that resulted in the addition of a spacious patio and glass-enclosed bar lounge.

Weekday happy hour is available anywhere in the restaurant. The two main dining rooms are old-school cozy with their high-back booths that offer a little privacy for intimate conversation or when fumbling over the baseball-size meatballs from the regular menu. They’ve been my go-to choice in past dinner visits.

This time I came knocking for the drink and appetizer bargains, which provide only minor savings. Draft crafts, house wine and well drinks are \$1 off,



A full-bodied Chianti (Photo by Dr. Ink)

and you save \$2 on appetizers priced usually between \$8.75 and \$12.75.

I scored well with an above-average pour of Central Coast Chianti from San Antonio Vineyard (\$5.50 with the discount). Unlike the imports from Italy, this was less astringent and pleasantly grapey, much like medium-bodied zinfandel. Better yet, it was served slightly cool, an attribute I don’t usually encounter in family-run Italian restaurants.

Chianti, dry or fruity, is an excellent food wine that pairs especially well to meat, cheese and red sauce, or to the restaurant’s Italian nachos for that matter.



Nachos with an Italian spin (Photo by Dr. Ink)

## DiMille’s Italian Restaurant

3492 Adams Ave.  
(Normal Heights)  
619-283-3153  
dimilles.com

Happy Hour: 4 to 7 p.m.  
Monday through Friday

I had them a few years ago and liked them, although this time not as much. Served generously in a metal pan, the novel concoction features house-made potato chips smothered in bruschetta, pepperoncinis, crumbled meatballs and mozzarella. On top is a mantle of shaved, mouthwatering Romano cheese. They cost \$9 during happy hour.

However, the meatball component that once again attracted me to them was drier than before and lacked the herby, garlicky essence I fondly remember. Had the balls been fished from a pot of tomato sauce, the meat would’ve tasted much better. Unfortunately, the spicy alfredo served alongside for dipping tasted like creamy Frank’s Hot Sauce.

But the Chianti proved reliable in restoring the classic Italian savor of the meat as I used it to wash down most of the plate and every spec of cheese. Next time I’ll spring for the fried artichokes.

Other appetizers include calamari, spicy wings, bruschetta, and cheesy garlic bread. The libations extend to 10 rotating craft beers on tap and basic liquor drinks. Also, if you get there before the dinner rush verges into the second half of happy hour, parking is a breeze (and free) in the ample lot located on the west side of the restaurant. ❖

## RATINGS

### Drinks: ♂♂♂♂

In lieu of craft beers, I opted for a generous pour of California Chianti from San Antonio Vineyard, which was bolder and fruitier than most.

### Food: ♂♂

A limited number of appetizers are discounted during happy hour. The fried artichoke hearts from a previous visit were much better than the Italian nachos, which ambitiously combines house potato chips with crumbled meatballs, tomatoes, pepperoncinis, and mozzarella and Parmesan cheeses.

### Value: ♂♂

Prices for draft beers, house wines and well drinks drop down by only \$1, and appetizers are \$2 off. A drink and a nosh can easily total \$15, since the food prices seem to have recently climbed a notch.

### Service: ♂♂♂♂

The host greeted and seated me quickly, and the waitress was only minutes behind in arriving to the table with a menu in hand.

### Atmosphere: ♂♂♂♂

Two dining sections with cozy booths lead to a glass-enclosed bar lounge and a roomy patio. Though upgraded over the years, the restaurant’s mom-and-pop ambiance is well maintained.

## Food court tenants lose leases at Mission Valley mall

By Frank Sabatini Jr.

The food court at Westfield Mission Valley mall will be shut down by the end of May to eventually accommodate a single-use restaurant tenant to be announced. The new tenant will utilize the entire space occupied by seven food and beverage vendors, all of which received 30-day termination notices in mid April.

“We’re closing out the existing tenants because their

leases are expiring,” mall general manager Izamar Hook said, adding that the food court will be remodeled to also include an area called “the Westfield family lounge.”

Vendors that received termination notices are Monsoon Express, Café Soleil, Charley’s Grilled Subs, Sarku Japan, Deep Dish, Great Khan’s Mongolian Festival and Tanganyika Grill.

In an email from Westfield regarding the lease agreements, it states: “Although the company does not comment on confidential matters such as lease terms and conditions, we are always looking to refresh and revitalize the food offerings at our center. We look forward to announcements of exciting new arrivals in the coming weeks and months.”

—Frank Sabatini Jr. can be reached at fsabatini@san.rr.com. ❖



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ChuckAlek Biergarten, located at 3139 University Ave. in North Park, is a part of the Art Produce complex.  
(Photo by Cody Thompson)

# Sweet treat

## ChuckAlek brings Old World-style beers to North Park

**Suds in the City**  
Cody Thompson

It is no surprise that San Diego loves its hoppy beers. In fact, calling our city “bitter” might actually be seen as a compliment in most circles. In a city that has been dry-hopped to the bone, the North Park neighborhood is getting a whole lot sweeter as they celebrate the opening of ChuckAlek Biergarten.

Located at 3139 University Ave. as a part of the Art Produce building, ChuckAlek brings its Old World-style beers to North Park’s already amazing lineup of local breweries.

ChuckAlek Independent Brewers, started by Grant Fraley and Marta Jankowska, has operated in Ramona since 2013. They have been passionately serving “Old School Beers for New School Palates” to hordes of thirsty locals and craft beer fans willing to venture into a small, lesser-known community. After building a solid reputation in San Diego’s vast craft beer community, Fraley and Jankowska saw an opening to grow, planting roots in the thriving area of North Park.

“Marta and I are North Park residents and love our neighbors, community and the opportunities for entertainment: the parks, restaurants, coffee houses, boutique shops and of course breweries and beer bars,” Fraley said on why they chose North Park for their new location.

“North Park has been an epicenter for innovative local food and beer that’s been growing rapidly for over a decade now. There’s also a strong sense of community that dates back much further,” he said. “We developed ChuckAlek Biergarten to bring beer, culture and community together in the way we’ve experienced in travels around Europe. You’ll see our family regularly enjoying the Biergarten when we aren’t working.”

Fraley, who serves as owner and head brewer for ChuckAlek, has been brewing on a small one-barrel brewing system to serve the original Ramona tasting room. That is, until the inevitable opportunity presented itself to grow into the big city. To expand production, ChuckAlek acquired the four-barrel system from Butcher’s Brewing, which allows them to produce four times the beer at one time to supply both tasting rooms as well as expand its distribution throughout San Diego County.

The Biergarten space is about 3,600 square feet with a 300-square-foot bar area including cold beer storage.

“We have an intimate indoor bar space with 22 faucets pouring our range of ‘Old School Beers for New School Palates’ produced at our brewery in Ramona, California. We’re also pouring house-made root beer on nitro, lemon soda, Modern Times cold brew coffee, and we have a hop soda in the works. Bottles and growler fills of ChuckAlek beers are available to-go,” Fraley said.

The Biergarten seating and congregation area will be primarily in the garden area behind the Art Produce building. Community tables, strung lights and fireplaces set among the planters of growing herbs and vegetables create a perfect setting for sampling suds either on a sunny afternoon or a perfect San Diego summer evening. The space is managed by the nonprofit Art Produce, which runs arts and culture events regularly on-site.

ChuckAlek brings a new take on local beers to North Park. Some beer drinkers will be shocked not to find your typical hopped-up West Coast style IPA on the menu. Instead, visitors will be welcomed with their take on some historical and, until recently, rarely seen styles.

Some of those beers will include their Dowser — a Düsseldorf Altbier that presents a crisp sweetness from special malts and a herbal hop presence from the use of German hops. Another favorite, which is a take on a historical style, is their 1850 Runner — a brown porter boasting flavors of chocolate and hints of oak. You can also expect to see other styles including sours, crisp lagers, rich stouts and other German- and British-inspired ales.

ChuckAlek has also been ramping up its barrel-aging program and beer drinkers can take part in these special releases at both locations, and through joining their Bottle Club (limited spaces) to ensure they can get their hands on bottle releases as they become available.

Food is available on-site through a partnership with Tostadas, which is located within the same building that houses ChuckAlek. Tostadas, owned by the same people over at City Taco, serves up, you guessed it ... tostadas, as well as fresh San Diego ceviche! Luckily for you they are located right next door and will deliver orders directly to the table for patrons to pair with the fresh local beers.

It is also important to note that the space is not only family friendly, but also pet friendly! Luckily in San Diego, most places understand that there is more to the experience than just the beer and ChuckAlek’s new Biergarten fully embraces this sentiment.

ChuckAlek Biergarten North Park is open Tuesday-Sunday 11 a.m. — 10 p.m. and just in time for the sunny San Diego weather to begin. Save me a seat and order me a Dowser.

—Contact Cody Thompson at [cody@threebzone.com](mailto:cody@threebzone.com). ❖

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'Dollar-A-Dish'

Through Tuesday, May 31

Restaurants throughout San Diego are participating in this annual campaign benefitting San Diego Food Bank's "Food 4 Kids" backpack program. The program provides weekend backpacks full of food on Friday afternoons for schoolchildren in need. Participating restaurants select one of their best-selling items and donate \$1 each time that dish is ordered throughout the month. Uptown restaurants participating (and their dishes) include: Cucina Urbana (lunchtime pizzas), The Patio on Goldfinch (Ahi Poke Tacos), URBN Coal Fired Pizza (chef's weekly pie) and more. Visit [sandiegofoodbank.org/dollar](http://sandiegofoodbank.org/dollar) for a full list of restaurants.

'Science Fiction, Science Future'

Saturday, May 21 – Monday, Sept. 5

This traveling exhibition opens at Reuben H. Fleet Science Center (1875 El Prado, Balboa Park) today in the center's main exhibit gallery. The exhibit brings to life innovations and inventions once considered only science fiction, but now are becoming reality. Visitors will have an interactive experience with robots, holograms, invisibility and more. "Science Fiction, Science Future" was created by the Scitech Discovery Centre in Perth, Australia and produced by Imagine Exhibitions Inc. Visit [rhfleet.org](http://rhfleet.org) for more information.

'Meet the Candidates Forum'

Monday, May 23

This event will be co-hosted by St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral and Greater San Diego Business Association featuring candidates for City Council District 3: Anthony Bernal and Chris Ward; and candidates for city attorney: Gil Cabrera, Rafael Castellanos, Mara W. Elliott, and Robert Hickey. The event will be held from 7 – 9 p.m. at St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral in the Great Hall (2728 Sixth Ave., Bankers Hill). Visit [gsdba.org/2016-candidates-forum](http://gsdba.org/2016-candidates-forum) for more information.

'Pints of Science'

Monday, May 23 – Wednesday, May 25

A series of informal talks covering a variety of science themes including: space travel, mind control and automated technology. The talks – co-presented by Reuben H. Fleet Science Center – will take place at bars and breweries around town. Uptown venues participating in the event include: Thorn Street Brewery (3176 Thorn St., North Park/South Park) and Uptown Tavern (1236 University Ave., Hillcrest). Visit [pintofscience.us/events/san-diego](http://pintofscience.us/events/san-diego) for the full schedule.

Uptown Bikeways open house and public hearing

Tuesday, May 24

SANDAG invites attendees to talk with project team members and provide feedback on the Uptown Bikeways project. The project proposes neighborhood connectivity between Uptown, Old Town, Mission Valley, Downtown, North Park and Balboa Park. This event will be held from 6 – 8 p.m. at the Balboa Park Club in the Santa Fe Room (2144 Pan American Road West, Balboa Park). Visit [keepsandiegomoving.com](http://keepsandiegomoving.com) for details on the project.



Austin Lucas (Photo by Laura Partain)

Live music: Austin Lucas

Thursday, June 2

Singer-songwriter Austin Lucas will make a tour stop in San Diego in support of his recent LP "Between the Moon and the Midwest." The show at Black Cat Bar (4246 University Ave., City Heights) will feature Lucas' twangy country tunes. Check out the single "Unbroken Hearts" for a taste of the singer's music. The show will also showcase openers Adam Faucett and Fernando. Visit [austinlucasmusic.com](http://austinlucasmusic.com) for more information.

Dennis McNeil in 'A Century of Sinatra'

Tuesday, May 24

McNeil returns to Martinis Above Fourth Table + Stage (3940 Fourth Ave., Second Floor, Hillcrest) with his show "A Century of Sinatra – The Frank Sinatra Songbook." This performance will celebrate the life and legacy of the legendary entertainer as McNeil recreates his timeless music. The show starts at 8 p.m. and tickets are \$20 for reserved seating with a \$15 per person food/drink minimum. Visit [ma4sd.com](http://ma4sd.com) for more information.

Cory Briggs and Donna Frye speak

Tuesday, May 24

The Uptown Democratic Club will hear from lawyer Cory Briggs and former Councilmember Donna Frye concerning the San Diego Chargers stadium plans and other topics, when members meet at 7 p.m. at Joyce Beers Uptown Community Center in the HUB in Hillcrest, located at 3900 Vermont St.

Art Around Adams

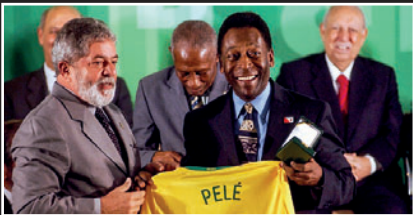
Saturday, June 4



"The Electric Giraffe," created by Lindsay Lawlor, shown at the 12th annual Art Around Adams 2015 (Courtesy of Exodus Studios)

This two-mile art and music walk will be held from noon to 8 p.m. along Adams Avenue. The free event will include exhibits, performances and more throughout Normal Heights and Kensington. Live music acts will feature numerous genres on various stages. Food trucks, beer gardens and more will also be featured. The complimentary "Comedy Trolley" will be available with stops up and down Adams. Visit [artaroundadams.org](http://artaroundadams.org) for more information and a full schedule.

DIGITAL GYM GEMS



(top to bottom) Scenes from "Pelé: Birth of a Legend," "The Curse of Frankenstein" and "They Will Have To Kill Us First: Malian Music in Exile" (Courtesy of Digital Gym)

**Friday, May 20 – Thursday, June 2:** The biopic **"Pelé: Birth of a Legend"** details the meteoric rise of soccer star Pelé. The story explores his humble beginnings as a poor child in São Paulo, Brazil who couldn't afford a real soccer ball to becoming the youngest player to play in a World Cup final match. Unrated. 107 minutes.

**Sunday, May 22:** Hammered Horror Series presents **"The Curse of Frankenstein."** The classic horror flick, loosely based on the novel **"Frankenstein"** by Mary Shelley, stars Peter Cushing as Victor Frankenstein and Christopher Lee as his monster. Unrated. 82 minutes.

**Friday, May 27 – Thursday, June 2:** In the film **"They Will Have To Kill Us First: Malian Music in Exile,"** musicians organize a concert in Timbuktu, Mali, after Islamic extremists ban all forms of music in the country. Unrated. 105 minutes.

Visit [DigitalGym.org](http://DigitalGym.org) for show times and tickets and information on additional films.

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).

**Cinema Under the Stars:** Films presented at an outdoor viewing space on various nights of the week. Upcoming films:

- "The Birds" on Friday, May 20 and Saturday, May 21
- "The Princess Bride" on Thursday, May 26, Friday, May 27, Saturday, May 28 and Sunday, May 29.
- "The Philadelphia Story" on Thursday, June 2 and Friday, June 3

Films start at 8 p.m. \$15. 4040 Goldfinch St., Mission Hills. For more info, visit [topspresents.com](http://topspresents.com) or call 619-295-4221.

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. toastmaster-sclubs.org.

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

**Unsung Genius:** 6:30 p.m., bi-weekly 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. Themerrow.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. Rebeccascoffeehouse.com.

**North Park Brewer's Club:** 8:30 p.m., monthly meeting of the club every second Tuesday of the month on the back patio at Thorn Street Brewery, 3176 Thorn St., North Park. 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

**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.

Thursdays:

**Uptown Sunrise Rotary Club meetings:** 7 a.m., weekly meeting at Panera Bread, 1270 Cleveland Ave., Hillcrest. 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.

—Email calendar items to [ken@sdcdn.com](mailto:ken@sdcdn.com). ❖



# My spare room funded my Master's degree.

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