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Not your dad's law office

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Solar 'cap' faces deadline

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Authentic food of Mexico City

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San Diego Community News Network



(l to r) Natalie Gill operated the Native Poppy flower shop and Jennifer "Jen" Byard runs Communal Coffee in a shared space in North Park. (inset) Exterior of the building located at Texas Street and University Avenue. (Photos by Ken Williams)

Shared spaces

Coffeehouse, flower shop coexist under one roof

Ken Williams | Editor

Armed with a biology degree, Jennifer "Jen" Byard took her first career step by becoming an autopsy assistant for a medical examiner. "The real CSI," she said. "It was pretty interesting." But the Gen-Xer's career would wind down a twisting path, including 15 years in the nonprofit world, before the 44-year-old wife and mother of three boys decided upon her latest business venture.

Natalie Gill, a 28 year old from Normal Heights, was born and raised in the Bay Area. She danced at the San

Francisco Ballet until she was 16, when she realized that she didn't want to do that for the rest of her life. After studying psychology at UC San Diego, she worked for a while in neuroscience and "studied the brains of rats" at a lab at Scripps. That didn't appeal to her either. "I realized that I was dissatisfied with my career choices," she said.

Two women from two different generations came together last year to share a vision of operating two individually owned businesses under the same roof. Shared spaces is a big trend in today's business world.

Almost a month ago, Byard opened her Communal Coffee shop and Gill debuted her Native Poppy flower shop in a one-story building, located on the southwest corner of University Avenue and Texas Street in North Park, which formerly housed a store that sold lamps and lighting fixtures. The busy

see Sharing, pg 25

Find your bliss at Art Around Adams

By Kit-Bacon Gressitt

Arts events are common these days. Every month, if not every week, denizens of the Uptown area can plan a weekend outing to dine on the cultural arts, whether a new gallery exhibit or theater production opening, or a festival of film, music or visual arts. But not every arts event includes attractions such as an athletic ballet of wrestling villains and heroes or a standup comedy trolley or elegantly crafted crossbows. These are a few of the many fanciful features that define Art Around Adams, coming up on Saturday, June 4.

The free event was born of a desire to promote local artists and Adams Avenue businesses. The result, after 12 years, is a cornucopia of visual and performing artists who prove art can be beautiful and fun, startling and family friendly. This year, Adams Avenue businesses, between Hamilton Street and Biona Drive, will play host to nearly 300 painters, ceramicists, sculptors, jewelry-makers, musicians, performance artists and comedians. They'll be positioned at storefronts, in parking lots and indoors — and on the Comedy Trolley.

Actually, there are two free trolleys that feature standup comics while taking visitors along Adams Avenue. Jaleesa Johnson, who has lived in the

see Art, pg 12

Uptown Bikeways project rides to a milestone moment

Ken Williams | Editor

The long-awaited Uptown Bikeways project reached a key milestone on May 24 when San Diego's regional planning agency conducted a public hearing in a packed Santa Fe Room at Balboa Park Club to collect comments ahead of a crucial vote by its board of directors.

The board of the agency, San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), will vote June 24 on whether the Uptown Bikeways project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act

(CEQA). As part of the project's CEQA compliance, SANDAG prepared a Traffic and Safety Impact Assessment, which was published May 9 and can be reviewed at bit.ly/1sRI0uR.

According to the assessment's executive summary:

"It concludes that the proposed project would not result in any vehicular traffic impacts, as defined by the City of San Diego Significance Thresholds for Traffic Impacts. The proposed project also would not have any negative bicycle or pedestrian safety impacts. ...

see Bikeways, pg 23



A bicyclist uses a protected bike lane, which is located between the sidewalk and the parallel parking. (Courtesy of SANDAG)

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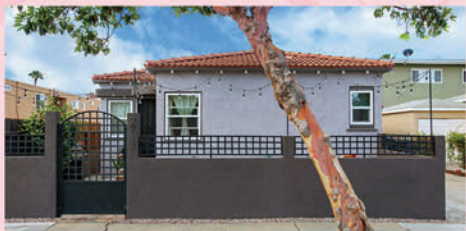
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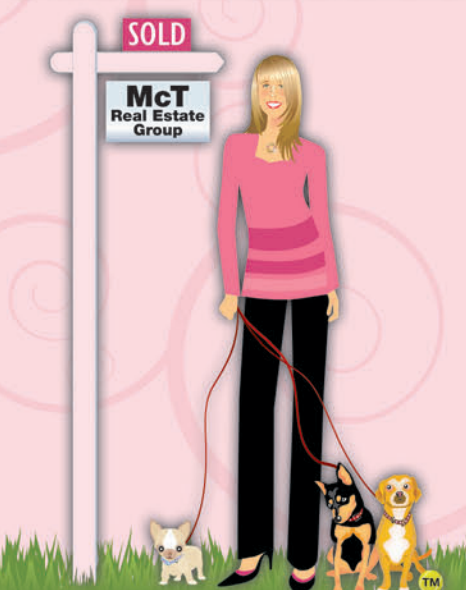


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Solo practice lawyers cozy up to sharing co-working space

By Catherine Spearnak

Working as a lawyer can now be fun, says appellate attorney Johanna Schiavoni of San Diego.

She's played table tennis in the conference room of Enrich, located in Bankers Hill, and read tempting books housed in a small glass bookcase in the corner of the large open space of the plush office.

But she said the new co-working space for lawyers is not all fun and games.

"We have a brain trust of different attorneys here," she said. "It's nice to have other smart, ambitious dedicated people around who are also fun."

Enrich is the brainchild of Amanda Allen, an attorney who encountered many bumps in the road after trying to start her own solo practice working at home after six years at a law firm.

"It was very lonely. A little bit isolating," the 34-year-old mother said.

Allen looked all over San Diego, and while she found some wonderful work spaces, nothing exactly fit the needs of the young lawyer. So she decided to launch her own space.

"I'm trying to find a niche between the old law school firm model and the way I think people are going to start working in the future, which is in a more community-oriented environment," she said.



Amanda Allen, founder of Enrich, a co-working space for lawyers, enjoys the comfortable open space in the Bankers Hill office. (Photo by Catherine Spearnak)

Co-working began in the Bay Area about 20 years ago when groups of techies began congregating in apartments and lofts to create a computer community. The concept grew, and now industry leaders like Apple and Google have captured the idea. Employees have back-to-back spaces, sit in comfy chairs, and consult with their co-workers.

Co-working was born. Allen said co-working has really grown in the past five to 10 years, but has taken a long time

to reach the lawyering business. In her research for Enrich, she could only find two other legal co-working spaces in the country – in Denver and New York City. "We offer our attorneys the support but not the big law firm culture. I wanted a place where people could work independently yet maintain the community," she said.

It also helps solo practitioners – lawyers with their own prac-

see Enrich, pg 27

27 Quick and Easy Fix Ups to Sell Your San Diego Home Fast and for Top Dollar

Uptown San Diego - Because your home may well be your largest asset, selling it is probably one of the most important decisions you will make in your life. And once you have made that decision, you'll want to sell your home for the highest price in the shortest time possible without compromising your sanity. Before you place your home on the market, here's a way to help you to be as prepared as possible.

To assist home sellers, a new industry report has just been released called "27 Valuable Tips That You Should Know to Get Your Home Sold Fast and for Top Dollar." It tackles the important issues you need to know to make your home competitive in today's tough, aggressive marketplace.

Through these 27 tips you will discover how to protect and capitalize on your most important investment, reduce stress, be in control of your situation, and make the best profit possible.

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Solar ‘cap’ fast approaching

Customers place their bets now or wait out imminent charge to finish line

Morgan M. Hurley | Contributing Editor

If San Diegans are still considering “going solar” this year, they only have about two months left to get their installation complete and certified in order to see the absolute best return on their investment, but thanks to the state’s public utilities commission, solar in California is surely here to stay.

Changes to how residential rooftop solar customers are billed, however, will take place as compromise. Assembly Bill 327 (AB327), which Governor Brown signed into law last October, goes into effect soon, once the number of solar installations within the public utility’s territory reach a cap — determined at 5 percent of the utility’s peak capacity — which is expected to happen mid-July in San Diego. Other areas of the state have until July 1, 2017 to reach the cap in their territories.

Under current regulations, San Diego Gas and Electric (SDG&E) customers who have installed solar energy systems receive “full retail price” — which is basically a 1-for-1 credit on their bill — for each kilowatt hour of energy they add to the grid.

These generous incentives have helped create a boon in solar rooftop sales in California — and

especially San Diego County — in the last decade, with San Diego currently ranked No. 2 in the nation, according to a recent report from advocacy group Environmental California. Los Angeles is ranked No. 1.

“According to researchers who examined solar power installations in 64 American cities in nearly every state, San Diego had enough solar capacity at the end of last year to power about 47,000 homes,” Environmental California stated in a press release referencing their report.

In addition, the city of San Diego recently promised to install even more solar-generated power systems as part of their goal to transition to 100 percent renewable energy by 2035. Just last month, San Diego Airport unveiled a new 3.3 mega watt (MW) system, which officials stated is expected to save the facility up to \$8 million over the next 20 years.

All this growth has increasingly impacted the state’s utility companies, who have lobbied intensely in recent years to boost fees for rooftop solar customers or eliminate incentives for the installations altogether.

“San Diego has been a leader in renewable energy, particularly solar power, for years,” said Daniel Sullivan, president and founder of San Diego-based Sul-



Roof-top solar will soon be less incentivised but will still save customers money. (Courtesy of Sullivan Solar Power Co.)

livan Solar Power. “Environment California’s report has ranked San Diego as one of the top solar cities in the country for three consecutive reports and that’s very encouraging and we welcome that growth. Because we’re so aggressive and proactive as we move away from fossil fuels and toward renewable energy, we are quickly moving towards reaching the maximum capacity that the public utility will allow to receive metering.”

While other states such as Hawaii, Arizona and Nevada have curtailed or nearly elimi-

nated net metering — a method that incentivizes solar customers for contributing energy to the grid from their rooftop systems — the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) voted in January to retain the program, despite alternative proposals from the state’s three investor-owned public utilities, SDG&E, PG&E and SoCal Edison.

“The way net metering works — you have a solar powered system on your roof and the energy from that system automatically flows into your electric service panel,” Sullivan said. “Energy

will first go to satisfy any loads in the home and anything that is in excess of what is needed in the home gets fed out into the street or onto the distribution grid with SDG&E. In doing so, you literally spin your meter backwards and generate monetary credits with the utility on your electric bill.”

In the evenings, when residential solar systems are no longer working, customers automatically begin to accumulate debits with the utility, which are later balanced out with the energy the customer added to the grid during daylight hours for billing purposes.

Though CPUC is retaining net metering and those with systems today will continue to get full retail credit through the life of their systems, AB327 will make it a little less appealing for new solar customers.

Amber Albrecht, a representative from SDG&E, said there is “little change to the existing program” and credits will remain “full retail value minus about two or three cents,” but others say those cents add up and the additional fees the utility will soon be allowed to enforce on its customers will further chip away at the incentives.

New charges planned include a one-time “interconnection fee,” which CPUC will determine (between \$75 – \$150), and a “non-passable solar fee,” a monthly service charge that will cover the costs of meter readings, billing services and help defray low-income customer programs.

Despite these post-cap changes, Sullivan said there are ways to enhance the installation to continue the appeal for users.

“A system’s performance needs to line up with a customer’s usage profile to optimize the benefit on a moving-forward basis,” he said, adding that his team performs a detailed pre-installation analysis for each project.

“If we move customers onto a time-of-use rate that is specific to solar and design the system to optimize production during on-peak hours, then it is financially advantageous.”

East County’s climate causes homes to expend more energy, requiring larger solar footprints than coastal areas but added

9 Ways Contour is Changing Television



Technology has changed the way we live, and now Contour is changing the way we watch television. With an image rich on-screen guide, smart search that predicts what you will want to watch, and a voice controlled remote, the all new Contour from Cox offers an innovative way to experience television. Here are 9 ways that Contour will change the way you watch TV.

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Rooftop solar is here to stay in California even though incentive credits through the public utility will soon lessen. (Courtesy of Sullivan Solar Power Co.)

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FROM PAGE 4
SOLAR

benefits. Sullivan emphasized, however, that since not all homes have south- or west-facing roofs, some prospective clients may not be suitable for optimization or even installation.

"We always had to take [the usage profiles] into consideration when determining how good a system was going to perform, but now it is even more crucial to get it right on the front end, or the return on investment can be much longer."

While two months may seem like plenty of time to get an install in under the wire — April saw 18 MW of installations and 37 MW still remain under the 617 MW cap — Sullivan said things are moving more rapidly than people realize, due to the installation backlog and the scope of the process, which can take up to 40 days to complete.

Add to that the sheer number of installs yet to come.

"There will be acceleration toward the cap by all local solar companies," Sullivan said. "If you sign up for solar now, it is a risky endeavor because you may not get it installed before the cap is hit."

Despite the seeming "gloom and doom" surrounding the upcoming cap, Sullivan was quick to point out that rooftop solar is still the way to go.

"While it is not as attractive to go solar in a couple of months as

it is today, the state of California supported rooftop solar and it's my belief they are going to continue to do so," he said. "It is not just the right thing to do as far as global warming is concerned, but we have a finite amount of fossil fuels. It is logical, we need energy to survive and we need energy to support our economy. Being dependent upon a finite amount of fossil fuels controlled by a few special interests is not the way of the future."

Assembly Speaker Emeritus Toni G. Atkins reiterated the importance of solar energy and the state's dedication to the future.

"Clean energy is hugely important to California," Atkins said. "There are more than 2,300 solar-related companies working in our state, employing 75,000 people. In 2015, California installed some 3,266 MW of solar electric capacity, ranking it first nationally once again. The 13,243 MW of solar energy we have installed in California ranks us first in the country. We will continue to ensure that Californians who seek to increase their use of renewable energy — including individual consumers and our manufacturing and business sectors — have the maximum opportunity to do so."

[Editor's note: Next month we will share an in-depth look at the solar activist who became a business phenom.]

—Morgan M. Hurley can be reached at morgan@sdcnn.com.

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When teens 'time out' of foster care

Local program helps youths deal with the great unknown

By **Tori Hahn**

"You can just imagine when you were 18, and if your parents had come to you on your 18th birthday and [said], 'You have to leave now and you can't call us back for more help. Here's a couple hundred bucks. You can't come back. You just need to make things work on your own,' and they sent you out the door with whatever you could carry."

That's how Don Wells, executive director of Just in Time for Foster Youth, describes what it is like when foster children turn 18 and must leave foster care.

Stories like this are not uncommon for the 800 former foster youths who sought help last year from Just in Time. The Old Town-based organization provides support for former foster children ages 18-26 who need assistance transitioning into the adult world.

Victoria Willis, 19, a former foster child and current employee of Just in Time, shared a different story.

Willis was born in Madera, California while her mother was incarcerated. The young girl "house-hopped" between relatives' homes until her mother was later released and the two moved to Florida to restart their lives.

Soon after their move, her mother fell back into her old drug habits. Willis still recalls the day when men emerged from a black van to take her mother away from her. The next thing she remembered was her mom filling out paperwork — forms she now believes signed her away to the foster care system.

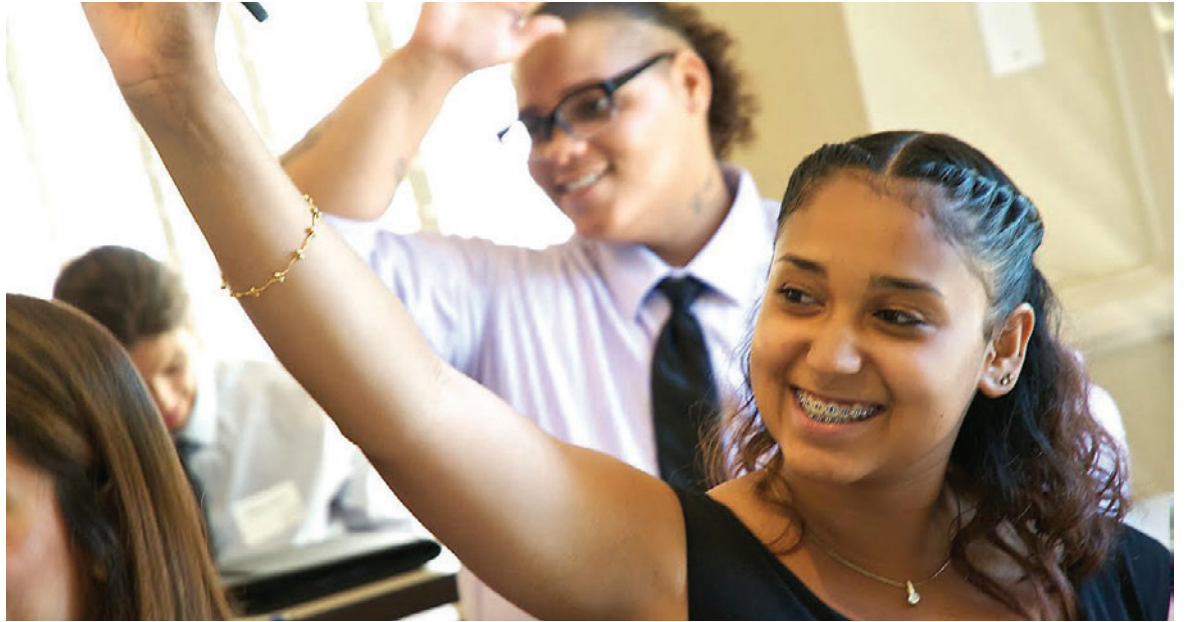
After some time in a group home, a Florida family adopted Willis. For once, she was surrounded by what she called an "organic" family: a mom, dad, brother and sister.

"I didn't feel like I was in foster care there," she said.

But before her new family could solidify their plans to adopt Willis, she was forced to move back to California to live with her great aunt. And in her junior year of high school, Willis started living with her mother again.

"There were days where she would tell me to go into the room, and her friends were coming over and we were going to get money," Willis said. "She still talked to me as a child then. At the time I was probably 17, and I knew what was going on."

"Although living with her wasn't stable, she gave me life and I tried everything I could to make it work."



Victoria Wells can testify to the challenges posed when foster teens like herself turn 18 and are released from foster care. That's why she is an advocate for the Just in Time for Foster Youth program. (Courtesy of Just in Time for Foster Youth)

Now, two years later, Victoria is a full-time student at San Diego State University. But even between earning her degree and working for Just in Time, she still views herself primarily as a former foster child.

"I feel like I am a foster youth before any other identity," she said. "I never felt like I was ever in a traditional family, even before I was in care."

An alarming number of former foster youths are at risk following their forced emancipation. According to The Cities, Counties and Schools Partnership, 40 percent to 50 percent of former foster youths become homeless within 18 months after separation from their families. Twenty-five percent end up in prison within two years.

Only 1 percent to 3 percent of former foster children earn a

college degree, and 60 percent of those who do have jobs earn wages of less than \$6,000 per year.

The largest gap for transitioning foster youths is connection, Wells said. They endure detachment from their families, movement between numerous homes and lack of experience with self-sufficiency.

"They leave foster care not trusting relationships, not thinking their relationships are lasting, not thinking that people follow through on their promises — starting with their parents," he said. "A big part of what we do is try to change that perception."

Just in Time's first contact with former foster youths doesn't always happen immediately after they turn 18. The young adults often wait until they're in trouble with the law or even homeless

before they seek help, Wells said.

The organization offers programs such as meeting basic needs, finding a home, managing finances, getting an education and building a career.

While many agencies focus on providing tangible supplies to former foster youths, Wells stressed the importance Just in Time places on youths establishing and maintaining a community with others.

"You can get all the resources in the world, but if you're still disconnected, you're still struggling," he said.

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

—Tori Hahn is a freelance writer from San Diego. Reach her at torihahn@cox.net.



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Local immigrants organizing ahead of elections in 2016

By Dave Schwab

Immigrant San Diegans are organizing socially, economically and politically under the banner of Partnership for the Advancement of New Americans (PANA), which is headquartered in City Heights.

"Our mission is to promote the fair treatment and equitable inclusion of refugees," said Ramla Sahid, a spokesperson for the 501(c) 3 nonprofit with offices at 4089 Fairmount Ave., just south of Kensington and Talmadge.

"Our goal is to educate (immigrant) people about what voting means, how it impacts them locally, and to encourage them to vote," said Sahid, who immigrated with her family from Somalia to Texas before relocating to San Diego.

Founded in 2014, PANA is a research, community organizing, and public policy hub dedicated to advancing the full economic and social inclusion of refugees.

It has become a powerful voice for refugees in San Diego, spearheading immigrant voter

participation while educating and advocating against recent anti-refugee legislation in Congress.

PANA engages in numerous networking activities in the San Diego immigrant community, from running phone banks presently with the upcoming June primary and November national elections looming, to hosting quarterly special events, right down to staging neighborly get-togethers in people's homes.

Sahid said the impetus behind creation of PANA was the realization that the refugee community



Partnership for the Advancement of New Americans and the Diplomacy Council for Muslim Voter Empowerment met May 12 to organize their communities. (Photo courtesy of PANA)

needs to work together to advance their common interests and achieve better outcomes. She said the key to that effort is finding ways to make resettlement meaningful to immigrants via promoting better outcomes for them in terms of getting them better housing, jobs and education.

"When people jump out of a building, they need to know they're not going to land on concrete," Sahid analogized. "You've got to have a trampoline to let them bounce back up."

PANA recently partnered with the Diplomacy Council for Muslim Voter Empowerment on May 12 in City Heights to host a panel discussion on Muslim faith-based organizing and voting. One of the panelists was Tareq Purmul, vice president of the San Diego chapter of Muslim American Society, the nation's largest Muslim organization.

Following that special event, Purmul talked about the drive to integrate Muslims into American society.

Referring to the United States as a "salad bowl of immigrants," Purmul noted that immigrants have "made America great."

"The message we're trying to get out to the Muslim community right now is that they need to be civically and politically engaged," Purmul said, characterizing the current political conversation about banning immigration as short-sighted.

"The Muslim population has been here since the creation of America," Purmul said. "We're here to stay. We're here to be of service to our own nation. And we feel that our religion gives us the antidote to a lot of the ills of society."

Purmul said the time has come to change the mindset of mainstream America — getting it to see that Muslims "are a huge asset," while getting people to see that the recent Islamophobia and anti-immigrant fear mongering

are politically motivated.

"We're hoping that we can mobilize the Muslim community, and at the same time, get them out of their shells and actively engaged in society," Purmul said.

Sahid noted there's a lot of work to be done in organizing San Diego's Muslim population.

Of the estimated 80,000 refugees who have come to San Diego since 1975, averaging about 2,400 per year, eight per day, now comprising about one out of every 40 San Diegans, Sahid said only about 10 percent, so-called "super voters," participate in every election.

"We've found that once immigrants are engaged, they're really engaged, and become super voters," Sahid said, adding that PANA hosts small-group meetings around tables in private homes with the intent to "promote their having an active voice. The idea is not to achieve a special outcome, but rather bring our communities together. She added the objective is get immigrants to engage, connect, network, chat with one another, get to know their neighbors, hear new topics, get them to meet with people they usually don't meet with. "We want to bring together unlikely allies to collaborate and promote positive outcomes," Sahid said.

"I really have a lot of hope for the future," Purmul said. "I know it's going to be a bumpy ride, but I really do think man is inherently good, that we can solve the problems that are in-hand today. This isn't the time to point fingers and get in arguments. The source of the problem (with immigration) is not religion, not race. It's putting the interests of the group ahead of the interests of individuals. That's what we need to focus on."

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



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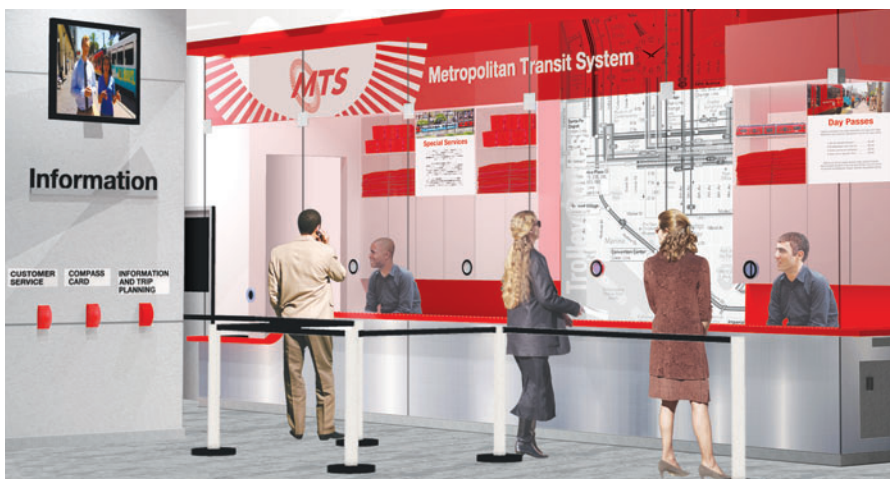
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Local immigrants enjoy a social hour at the PANA offices in City Heights. (Photo courtesy of PANA)

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AWARD-WINNING JOURNALISM:

San Diego Uptown News won third place for general excellence at the 2016 AFCP Annual Publication Awards. 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@sdcdn.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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GUEST EDITORIAL

Domestic violence victims have protection

By Molly Kirkland

Generally speaking, your lease with a landlord is a binding agreement that cannot be easily modified, but California has recently adopted laws that provide special protection and rights to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking or elder abuse.

The laws recognize that everyone should be able to feel safe and secure in their home. If a tenant becomes the target of a predator, both the tenant and the landlord should be able to make reasonable changes to keep the tenant safe and comfortable.

The law now allows a domestic violence victim to break their lease early without any penalty or fee, as long as they provide the landlord with at least 14 days' written notice to vacate along with a copy of a temporary restraining order, an emergency protective order, or a police report issued within the last 60 days. In lieu of a police report or restraining order, the tenant may also provide a report written by a qualified third party, such as a domestic violence counselor, or a report written by a health practitioner such as a doctor, psychiatrist or a licensed marriage counselor.

In some situations, a domestic violence victim may not want to move or may not have the resources to move. Another option is to ask the landlord to change the exterior locks on the unit. If the tenant provides the landlord with a copy of a police report or court order, the landlord must change the locks within 24 hours. Most landlords will have no problem changing the locks, but if it

takes longer than 24 hours for the landlord to respond, the tenant may change the locks. If the tenant takes this route, the tenant must use locks of similar or better quality than those provided by the landlord, and the locks must be changed in a manner that is "workmanlike," or professionally acceptable. The tenant must also notify the landlord within 24 hours that the locks have been changed, and provide the landlord with a copy of the new key.

The fact that you are a victim of domestic violence or a similar crime should not be a reason for a landlord to end your lease or refuse to renew it. However, there are three circumstances in which the landlord may end a lease: first, if the perpetrator of the crime is a tenant of the unit along with the victim; second, if the victim allows the perpetrator to visit the property after an act of abuse has been reported; or third, if the landlord has reason to believe that the perpetrator's presence on the property is a threat to other people on the property.

Everyone deserves to have safe, stable housing. If you've suffered domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking or elder abuse, discuss these options with your landlord to find a solution that works for both of you.

—Molly Kirkland is director of public affairs for the San Diego County Apartment Association. ❖

LETTERS

Praise for Et Voila
Re: Uptown Food Briefs — May 20 [Volume 8, Issue 11 or at bit.ly/1XdSih]

Et Voila where we dined last Sunday was just excellent. We each had something different and we each loved everything we ordered. My husband had French onion soup and was surprised by its lightness of flavor. As an appetizer I had figs and Roblechon cheese. The salads, main courses and soufflés and mousse were just fabulous. The wines were a wonderful complement to the food. They also serve weekend

brunch. Can't wait to go back for my birthday dinner.
—Francie Krauel via our website, sduptownnews.com

Supporting foster children
Re: Amazing journey: From foster mom to tireless advocate for foster families [Volume 8, Issue 11 or bit.ly/25xNAAl]

Wonderful article! Lani Barnes, please know that we have a resource center in San Marcos called Straight From The Heart and Angel's families are so welcome to come and receive any of the supportive services we offer. We believe

in supporting all foster children and families no matter what agency they are associated with. Would love to meet you!
—Patty via our website

Missing her chicken pies
Re: Chicken Pie Shop still serving after 75 years [Volume 5, Issue 9 or at bit.ly/1SOPzXY]

Love this place! Had to move, been gone for 20 years and still miss going here. Do you ship chicken pies overnight? Would love to have them where I live now. Miss you guys, bunches.

see Letters, pg 10

San Diego Uptown News

Readers Poll

Poll results

Who will you vote for in the District 3 City Council race?

- 92% Chris Ward
- 4% Anthony Bernal
- 4% Scott Sanborn

New poll

What do you think of the Uptown Bikeways project?

- ☐ Thumbs up
- ☐ Thumbs down
- ☐ Close the gaps

To cast your vote, visit sduptownnews.com.

Up and out

New projects will add vitality to Uptown

(Editor's note: This is part of a series of architectural commentaries and critiques that run in San Diego Uptown News every other issue. The opinions are those of the author.)

By Eric Domeier

New projects are springing out of the ground in Uptown. In the ever-pressing forward momentum of growth and renewal, these projects promise increased vitality and diversity to our neighborhood.

IOWA STREET SENIOR HOUSING

Possibly the most exciting development is the Iowa Street Senior Housing project near the corner of University Avenue in North Park. As the community rises in affluence, many local residents are getting priced out of the market. Iowa Street Senior Housing pushes back on this trend by providing quality housing for seniors on the margins.

Brought to us by San Diego Interfaith Housing Foundation, Iowa Street will offer one- and two-bedroom apartments to the 55-and-older set. With monthly rents ranging between \$430 and \$1,000, there will be 100 one-bedroom and 20 two-bedroom units available. Acceptance of tenancy is available to those with an income between \$18,000 and \$36,000 annual.

Parking is provided on the ground level with four stories of units above. The ground floor will also have 3,800 square feet of commercial/retail available to lease. Let's hope for a cafeteria-style restaurant to offset the hip-clique cliché that is becoming North Park. And if nothing else, it will be a pleasure to have 120

more seniors in our neighborhood to mellow the flavor of our community.

Iowa Street is under construction and should be done by Christmas.

HABITAT ON 31st

Churning parking lots into residences is the best kind of urban renewal. The latest parking lot conversion is happening on 31st Street between University Avenue and North Park Way.

Elusive architect Bejan Arfaa brings us Habitat on 31st, a 35-unit apartment complex, offering 11 studios and 24 one-bedroom apartments. Unit sizes will range between a modest 375 square feet up to a spacious 1,100 square feet.

The project has only recently broken ground. As I sit here writing this article, concrete is being pumped into the foundations. Both designer and builder, Arfaa expects completion of the project in the summer of 2017.

CHEVRON AT UNIVERSITY NEAR I-805

My heart raced when I saw the razing of the Chevron on University Avenue near Interstate 805. What could it be? A micro high-rise? A new office project? Mass transit station? Alas, it will be a new convenience store. Details are not readily available at this time. But city permits indicate that the owner, Chevron, has been granted a permit "to demolish existing building, remodel fueling stations and construct new store for an existing gas station."

Considering that the original gas station has been scraped off the lot, and all the paving with it, it would indicate that new foundations are probably going in for a bigger store with more pumps. Not terribly exciting, but we can at least be glad that the very convenient station will be restored and invigorated.

THE BLVD ON THE BOULEVARD

Last fall, an entire city block



Habitat on 31st will do its part to offset the housing shortage in Uptown. (Courtesy of Bejan Arfaa)

along El Cajon Boulevard was converted from dilapidated commercial buildings into a weedy dirt lot. While this particular version of conversion took about six months for full maturation of random and happenstance plant species to occur, the approval process for an actual building has been grinding away for at least eight years.

At the helm of this project is HG Fenton, which seeks to deliver 165 units of apartments. One- and two-bedroom units will be complemented by commercial lease space. Fourteen of the residential units will be "affordable."

One image of the project exists that illustrates a cheery, California façade with three-story signage fit for the ever-boastful West LA. Whether billboard or building, this project does seem to be shaping up as the revitalization that El Cajon Boulevard needs.

Interestingly, the project

was granted a site development permit in January 2009. Such approvals are typically tied to certain conditions and features of the project. But more recently the project was submitted to a Substantial Conformance Review (SCR), a process that validates whether a project is conforming to the conditions of approval.

In the city comments section it is stated, "This is a very tricky SCR. The SCR is against all previous entitlements." There is no indication in city documents of the non-conforming aspects of the project. Both the city and the representative of HG Fenton declined to comment.

And given the near decade that this project has been underway, it is no surprise that a developer would adjust their project goals to accommodate market changes. But woe is the developer that tries to progressively improve this city. The

machine of bureaucracy turns dreams to pulp and pulp to paper. Upon which the city finds another creative way to write "No" in one thousand words or less.

The business of land development is a thankless task in regulation-rich California. Even in this era where we have wisely agreed to increased density over urban sprawl, headwinds are the only winds for progressive growth. Nonetheless, projects continue to break ground that will revitalize and recycle our urban community. And the captains of those efforts should be applauded for staying the course.

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

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FROM PAGE 9 LETTERS

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—Cindy via our website

A big oops!

Re: Dancing to the Lullaby of

Broadway' [Volume 8, Issue 11 or at bit.ly/281uJzG]

Did you even see the show? "I Only Have Eyes For You" isn't in this particular production ["42nd Street"].

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

About electric bikes

Re: Are electric bicycles worth the buzz? [Volume 8, Issue 5 or at bit.ly/1WOF7U3]

Awesome info. I found it very informative. Thanks a lot.

—EBike Easy Rider via our website

—Send letters to the editor to Ken Williams at ken@sdcnn.com or comment via our website or Facebook page. ♦

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Close up of Claycraft gateway motif tile (Photo by Katherine Hon)

Golden Era fireplaces should be appreciated

PastMatters
Katherine Hon

Do you think those muted brown and green tiles on your fireplace are boring? Are you considering painting over the funky rabbit relief tile that has lost its shine? Do you want the tiles showing bucolic scenes to be marble instead?

Resist the urge to “modern-ize” your fireplace! Those tiles may be some of the most valuable features in your bungalow.

In 1910, as North Park’s urban development began in earnest, California’s Golden Era in tile-making was dawning. Tile manufacturers in the eastern United States and Europe had been sending their products westward to enhance residences and public buildings since the mid-1870s. But the regional, distinctively Californian industry was launched because of increased demand from a growing state population after 1900. The history and products of the finest tile companies are documented in “California Tile, the Golden Era 1910-1940,” by the California Heritage Museum, Joseph A. Taylor, Editor, published by Schiffer Publishing Company in 2003.

One of the best-known tile-makers is Ernest Batchelder, who bought property on Pasadena’s Arroyo Seco in 1909 and started a school that became a shop for the production of decorative tile. Batchelder originally studied to become a teacher of drawing and manual training at the Massachusetts Normal Art Institute in Boston, graduating in 1899. He moved to Pasadena in 1901, where he taught for eight years at the Throop Polytechnic Institute, which later became Caltech.

Batchelder wrote articles on design for Gustav Stickley’s “The Craftsman,” among other journals, and wrote two books. His tiles incorporated images in a variety of themes, including Viking ships, medieval castles, musicians, birds and abstractions. The tiles are highly prized and were popular far beyond Southern California. Robert Winter, an architectural historian who in 1972 bought the Pasadena home built by Batchelder, said the symbol Batchelder used for himself was often a rabbit, or hare, possibly because he

was shy. The symbol for his wife, a musician, was a harp.

Another tile company with similar style also frequently seen in North Park living rooms is Claycraft Potteries. Established in 1921 in Los Angeles, the company produced more than 500 design tiles. Fred Robertson, who won gold medals for his work with crystalline glazes at the San Diego Exposition in 1915, was the general superintendent.

The Claycraft style for fireplaces was typified by a single-fired tile with an irregular, buffed and sanded surface. Relief tiles presented idealized visions of California natural landscapes, such as waterfalls in Yosemite National Park; a Sequoia forest with a bear cub; and scenes featuring an oak, sycamore, palm or Torrey pine. A covered wagon drawn by three pair of oxen traversing a desert expanse is tile No. 1056 in a Claycraft Potteries catalog, and a Spanish Mission scene is No. 1022.

Another prominent tile-maker is California Art Tile Company (Cal Art). The California Heritage Museum book notes: “Tiles produced by California Art Tile are among the premier examples of artistic tile produced during California’s Arts and Crafts period.”

James White Hislop founded Cal Art in 1923. The company was located in Richmond on San Francisco Bay. Pictorial tiles show medieval, Spanish, Mexican and traditional Western scenes.

Production of these decorative tiles peaked in the 1920s, and most of the businesses failed during the Great Depression triggered by the stock market crash of 1929. Although Cal Art stayed in business until 1964, Batchelder’s factory closed in 1932, and the last mention of Claycraft Potteries in the Los Angeles city directory is in 1939. But the beauty of Arts and Crafts tile is alive and well on the fireplaces of historic communities like North Park.

Is your fireplace tile original? Send a photo to the North Park Historical Society at info@northparkhistory.org and we will post it on our website’s “Community Scrapbook” page.

—Katherine Hon is the secretary of the North Park Historical Society. Reach her at info@northparkhistory.org or 619-294-8990. ❖

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FROM PAGE 1

ART

area for five years, leads a collection of 24 other comedians who will keep the jokes, puns and double entendres rolling.

"This is my second year [in the festival]," Johnson told San Diego Uptown News. "It's so much fun, sort of like open mic. It's all standup comedians who come from all over San Diego."

Johnson described the trolleys' talent as wide-ranging: "You have people like Jeffrey Burner, who is so clever, a George Carlin type, but weirder. Then you have folks who are very jokey, lots of puns and word play, silly but fun. We keep it clean when there are families on board. It's great for people who normally wouldn't go out to a comedy club. They can see us in their neighborhood, in their own backyard, exposing them to a whole new world. Live comedy is a whole different ballgame."

Another whole different ballgame at Art Around Adams is Super Awesome Showdown. The self-described "intergalactic performance art wrestling" troupe stages a multimedia show that resembles a classic morality play, retold with a lucha libre spin.

"At the root of everything, it is a good guy versus bad guy show, superheroes versus villains, wrestling with aerial techniques — the 'dance,' as we call it," explained Kevin Burton, a member of the group and a South Park resident. "We added in a DJ who plays music, a lot of lights, and the final element is the videos. Professional wrestling is one of the oldest forms of entertainment.

We're changing an old-school style into more modern scenes, particularly the lights, sounds and video work. We make it very family friendly, everything's very safe and over the top. My 92-year-old grandmother comes to the shows."

Super Awesome Showdown's troupe of about 15 wrestlers and staff will perform their new science fiction storyline — the villain is a computer virus — throughout the day at the Unity Mason Lodge parking lot, 3366 Adams Ave.

In contrast to the multimedia dazzle of death-defying superheroes, there will be about 200 slightly more subdued visual artists exhibiting along the avenue, in just about every imaginable medium. One of the artists is Aaron Cathcart, who has been doing woodworking for 12 years, first inspired by an antique.

"I had a neighbor who had an old [figurehead] from a ship, two or three hundred years old," Cathcart said. "I thought it was the coolest thing I'd ever seen. I was a more traditional artist before. I painted on canvas. I'm kind of a tinker, like my dad. He was an artist."

Cathcart's original aesthetic inspiration has now evolved into the creation of finely-crafted wood artwork, often intricately carved — crossbows, sculpture, millwork, furniture and more. "It's a labor of love. I really enjoy the craft, making something out of nothing. I'm working on an isolation chair made from reclaimed pallets for Art Around Adams. When you sit inside one of these egg chairs and you listen to music, there's something very comforting and that's



Artist Aaron Cathcart working on an isolation "egg" chair (Photo by Victoria Jones)



Super Awesome Showdown (Photos by Kevin Burton)



the whole idea — to comfort you and take you back to the bliss of being a child."

A Normal Heights resident, Cathcart recently returned to the neighborhood of his childhood: His grandmother's house is across the street from where he now lives.

"I love the North Park-Normal Heights area because it's eclectic,"

he said. "It's sort of like the cool part of town. Everyone's sort of accepted there and a lot of artists live there. That's what I like about it: It's a melting pot."

The public is invited to jump into that melting pot on June 4, perhaps to find some bliss at Art Around Adams.

—Kit-Bacon Gressitt writes

commentary and essays on her blog, "Excuse Me, I'm Writing," and has been published by *The Missing Slate*, *Ms. Magazine* blog and *Trivia: Voice of Feminism*, among others. She formerly wrote for the *North County Times*. She also hosts *Fallbrook's* monthly Writers Read authors series and open mic, and can be reached at kbgressitt@gmail.com. ❖

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Iraqi and American artists find common ground

By Kit-Bacon Gressitt

Sophie's Kensington Gallery, a cute little storefront at 4186 Adams Ave., has been exhibiting art with a message since opening in 2014. Whether encouraging autism awareness, honoring mother-daughter relationships or celebrating "Kitchen Kitsch," the gallery's aesthetic has a foundational theme: Its artists, adults with developmental disabilities, have a lot in common with everyone else. Art provides a venue for revealing those commonalities, and the proof is in the painting.

The gallery's new show, launching June 4 in conjunction with Art Around Adams, is titled "Common Ground," and it pursues the theme in a bold direction. The exhibit is a collaboration by five artists with disabilities, trained at the St. Madeleine Sophie's Center, and five Iraqi artists, members of the Iraqi Culture and Arts Association.

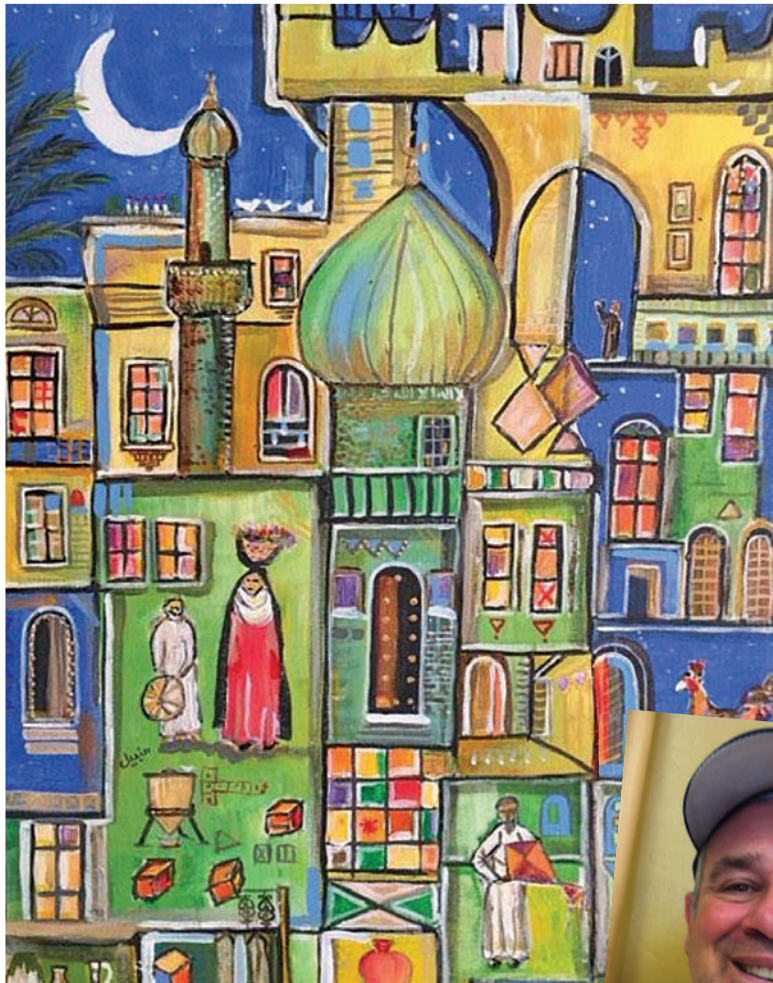
Both organizations are based in El Cajon, which has a sizable Iraqi population. Sophie's Center provides an array of programs for adults with such disabilities as autism, Down syndrome and cerebral palsy, to help them reach their full potential. The Kensington Gallery is one of three operated by the center. The Iraqi Culture and Arts Association has a mission of building relationships within the community by increasing understanding of the art and culture of Iraq.

Association president Hussein Al Ghazali explained their goal, using an interpreter.

"We really appreciate the collaboration. We believe that it — the Iraqi art with the American art — is really important, to show how we are involved in this society. We like to be in the melting pot. Our artists represent the ancient Iraqi culture and show it in their art," he said.

And, again, the proof is in the painting. A comparison of two paintings in the exhibit — a Baghdad cityscape by Iraqi artist Rabea Alwiswasee and a Tijuana cityscape by U.S. artist Mark Rimland — reveals their similar approach to capturing the colorful mosaic of a dense urban environment.

"There are a lot of misunderstandings about both groups," said Wendy Morris, administrator of the gallery. "Art is a way to transcend that. That people are all the same comes out through art."



Baghdad lat by Rabea Alwiswasee (Courtesy of the artist)



Tijuana by Mark Rimland (Courtesy of the artist)

"Common Ground"

a multicultural art exhibit

June 4 – June 30

Sophie's Kensington Gallery 4186 Adams Ave.

Tuesday through Saturday | Noon to 5 p.m.

619-654-3679 | stmsc.org

chief of the association's arts program, is pleased with the exhibit's title, "Common ground."

"That's exactly what he's trying to show in his art," his son and interpreter Osamah said. "He feels very good about it. It's a chance to see other artists just like him, maybe better than him. Artists getting together to share ideas, mixing the art from both cultures — and people can share everything, that would be even better."

Osamah explained Alwiswasee's thoughts on the two nation's attitudes toward art.

"There is interest in Iraq in art, but there are limits. He can't show about religion, about culture. There are limits, what he can paint, what he can present. In the States, maybe there's less interest in art, but there's that freedom that every artist needs," Osamah said.

Freedom is also an underlying theme of the exhibit. It's about the freedom to step beyond expectations and stereotypes, to learn and grow, to explore one's true identity, and to express it freely through art. It's also about reaching for an audience

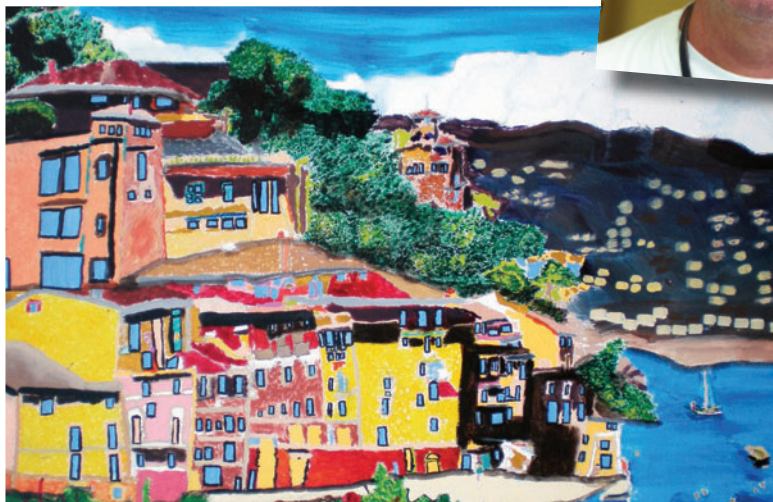
willing to examine the artwork and the artists with open hearts and minds.

Rimland, from Sophie's Center, has been painting for 39 years. He believes that art "can help make a person feel good. It can be part of making lonely people very happy people. I think [the exhibit] sends a message to the community — maybe it might encourage them to come see it and they'll feel happier."

When asked about the show's theme, common ground, Rimland said, "It's like magic. A very good surprise."

The "Common Ground" exhibit runs June 4 through June 30. Stop by for a bit of magical cultural exchange — and maybe a very good surprise.

—Kit-Bacon Gressitt writes commentary and essays on her blog, "Excuse Me, I'm Writing," and has been published by *The Missing Slate*, *Ms. Magazine* blog and *Trivia: Voice of Feminism*, among others. She formerly wrote for the *North County Times*. She also hosts *Fallbrook's monthly Writers Read authors series* and open mic, and can be reached at kbgressitt@gmail.com. ❖



Port by Mark Rimland (Courtesy of the artist)

People paint places they have gone, beautiful scenes, family, animals, everybody can relate to that. It breaks down a lot of barriers. It's important to see all the artists for who they are and embrace them as members of our community."

Morris pointed out that the Iraqi Association initiated their joint efforts.

"They sought us out. Somebody saw our gallery, and the president of the association asked

if we would have a show with them. They asked to include our students," she said. "It's a way of building friendships with them and creating some interest and awareness of their culture through the artwork — to capture the public's attention. I think our groups feel very close to one another. We're friends now. It's an honor to include them in our schedule of shows."

Artist Rabea Alwiswasee,

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Tapping and singing toward heaven

Theater Review

Charlene Baldridge



The 1980 Broadway musical “42nd Street” is set in 1933, near the end of the Great Depression. Legendary, ill-tempered director Julian March (Robert J. Townsend in San Diego Musical Theatre’s production) has just held New York auditions for “Pretty Lady,” the musical he knows will lift the nation’s spirits.

Peggy Sawyer (Ashley Ruth Jones), a hopeful talent from Allentown, Pennsylvania, who wants to join the chorus line, just missed the auditions. She screwed up enough courage to stand at the stage door, but not enough to walk through it.

The show’s romantic lead, Billy Lawlor (lovely singer/dancer Gabriel Navarro) takes her under his wing, as do a quartet of chorines (Annie, Lorraine, Phyllis and Gladys, played by Jill Townsend, Jenny Hoffman, Janissa Saracino, and Missy Marion) who befriend her and take her out to lunch. On the way back to the theatre, Peggy literally runs into Julian, who eventually hires her for the chorus line and ultimately puts her into the leading role.

Julian is dealing with a leading lady (Dorothy Brock, played by fabulous singer Laura Dickinson) who can sing but is a mediocre dancer at best. That’s because Dorothy’s sugar daddy, Abner Dillon (Lance Carter), is underwriting “Pretty Lady.” She, however, still has eyes for her former lover, Pat Denning (Ryan Fahey). Julian finds out and hires some thugs to “disappear” Denning to Philadelphia.

Complicated? You bet, but who cares when the tappers are tapping (choreographer Jill Gorrie) and the music is playing? Just a few numbers are the title song, “Lullaby of Broadway,” “About a Quarter to Nine,” and “Shuffle Off to Buffalo,” heavy on the tap numbers, especially as performed by all the above (a 30-member company) including Katie Whalley Banville, Bets Malone, Todd Nielsen, and Don Le Master (also music director and onstage piano) plus an orchestra of 14, plus pianist Steve Withers. Don’t forget lighting design by Michael Von Hoffman and costume coordinator Beth Connelly.

“42nd Street” is music heaven (music by Harry Warren, lyrics by Al Dubin, book by Michael Stewart and Mark Bramble) except for SDMT’s nagging sound problem



“42nd Street”

By Harry Warren, Michael Stewart, Mark Bramble and Al Dubin

San Diego Musical Theatre
Directed by James Vasquez
Thursdays-Sundays
Through June 12
Spreckels Theatre
121 Broadway (Downtown)
sdmt.org or Ticketmaster

Scenes from “42nd Street,” presented by San Diego Musical Theatre at Spreckels Theatre (Courtesy of SDMT)

(sound designer Kevin Anthenill), which has an edge they’ve never fully resolved: Edgy voices plus edgy singing equals seemingly loud and definitely unpleasant, resulting in unhappy ears on this critic, who finds all else laudable, especially Townsend’s heap-sexy



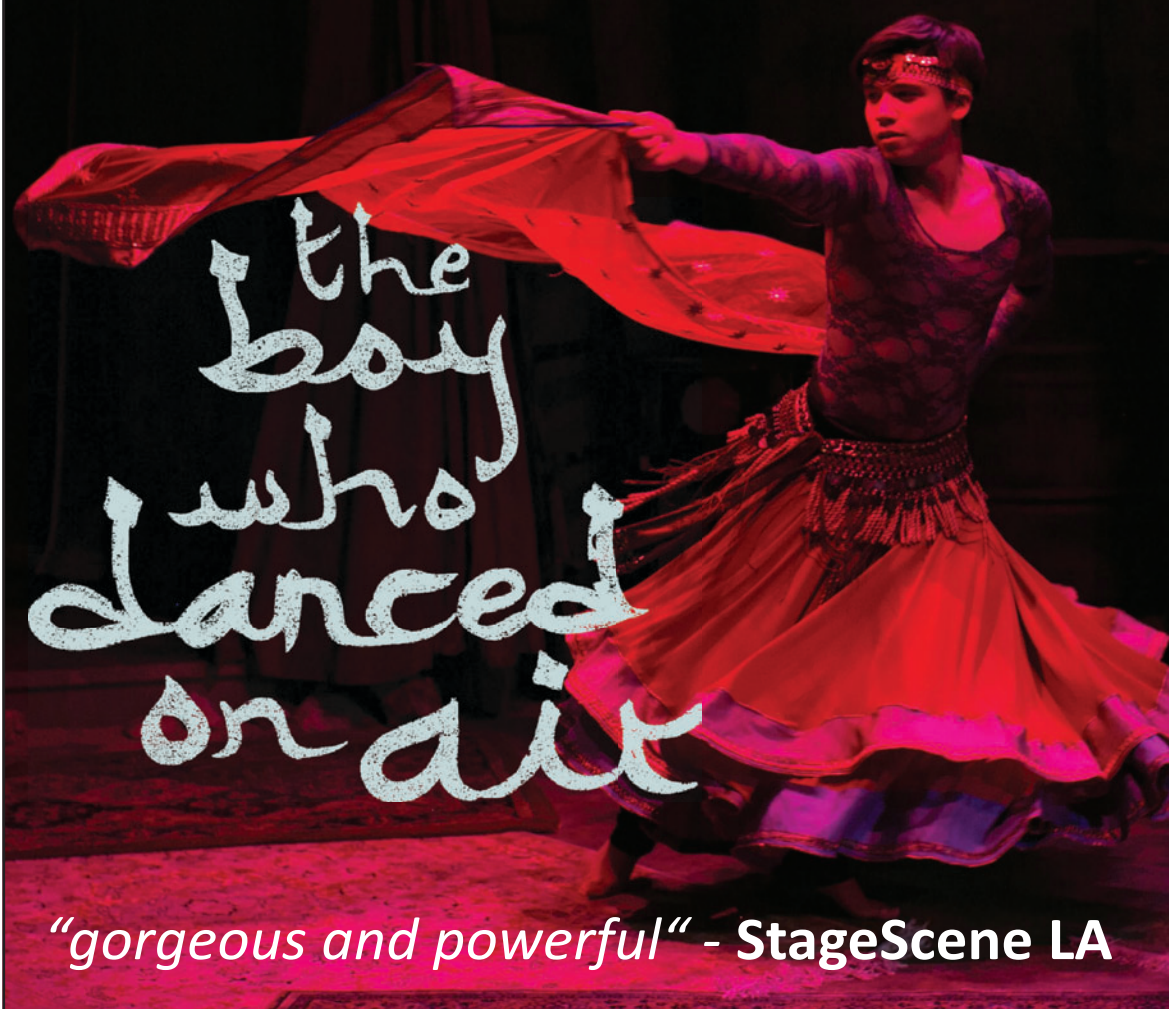
Julian, Dickinson’s mellifluous Dorothy, Navarro’s appealing Billy, and Jones’s game Peggy.

James Vasquez directs splendidly on a non-existent, non-traditional set that consists of the gussied-up Spreckels Theatre backstage with a few

rolled-in pieces, curtains and veils. Magic happens.

—Charlene Baldridge has been writing about the arts since 1979. Follow her blog at charlenebaldridge.com or reach her at charb81@gmail.com. ❖

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The Little Italy wine story that doubles as a wine bar pours off-menu picks on Fridays. (Courtesy of Vino Carta Wine Store and Bar)

Little Italy's **Vino Carta Wine Store and Bar**, which had a soft opening in March, has just introduced happy hour from 5 – 7 p.m. every Friday. The weekly deal, co-hosted by winery reps, affords customers four wines (averaging 3 ounces each) for \$10 a person. They are mostly labels not found on the regular wine list. Vino Carta doubles as a wine bar and retail shop and also sells packaged cheeses from Venissimo, although customers are permitted to bring in their own food when drinking onsite. In addition, there are no corkage fees on Mondays. 2161 India St., 619-564-6589, vinocartasd.com.

After a six-year run, **The Wellington Steak & Martini Lounge** in Mission Hills will close June 20 in preparation for a bar-focused establishment yet to be named. Owner Trish Watlington, who also owns the adjoining **Red Door Restaurant & Wine Bar**, said "Wellington's beef-heavy menu no longer fits our commitment to local sourcing." Her decision to re-brand was fueled also by the lack of a "true cocktail bar in Mission Hills."

The business is slated to reopen in July, with mixologist Brandt Stenberg overseeing the bar program, and executive chef Miguel Valdez introducing a menu of small plates. 741 W. Washington St., 619-295-6000, thewellingtonsd.com.



Reinvention is coming to a popular establishment in Mission Hills. (Courtesy of PlainClarity)



Labor Day will mark the end of a 14-year run for **Shades Oceanfront Bistro** in Ocean Beach, which has provided a dog-friendly environment with ocean views for customers under the co-ownership of Jeff Levitt and his wife, Michelle. The couple summed up in a newsletter to customers that it was time to rest and move on.

After Sept. 5, the restaurant will be renamed the **OB Surf Lodge** by a trio of new owners who hold various stakes in other local restaurants and bars such as **Wonderland Ocean Pub** a floor above, plus **Bayside Landing**, **Resident Brewing Company**, and **The Local**. The menu will remain focused on breakfast dishes with much of the same staff in place, and canines will still be welcome. 5083 Santa Monica Ave., 619-222-0501, shadesob.com.

Krisp Beverages + Natural Foods in the East Village recently launched a pizzeria within the store for making pies that can be delivered, carried out or consumed on the store's newly built dining patio. Specialty pizzas cost \$15; slices sell for \$2.50. The dough is made with high-quality Italian flour and undergoes a 48-hour rise. 1036 Seventh Ave., 619-232-6367, krispdelivery.com.

The poke craze, which seems to be a hot trend in San Diego, will soon be coming to North Park. **Poki One N Half** has leased space on University Avenue, just east of 30th Street. A colorful sign covers the front of the building, showing oversized images of bowls of fresh seafood with slices of avocado, scallions and other ingredients.

The sign states: "What is Poki? Poki (or Poke), a Hawaiian delicacy, is a delicious salad bowl served with fresh seafood and a variety of ingredients. Poke in the Hawaiian language literally means 'to cut or slice.' Here at Poki One N Half, we offer you four types of bases, seven types of seafood and over ten types of toppings and various sauces to choose from. We will help you find that ONE perfect combination to satisfy your taste buds! We promise the highest quality and the freshest ingredients to bring you the best Poki experience."

No opening date is listed, other than "coming soon." 3030 University Ave., onenhalf.com.



A new poke eatery is coming to "downtown" North Park. (Photo by Ken Williams)

More than 40 restaurants are taking part in the 22nd annual **Taste of Gaslamp**, which runs from 1 – 4 p.m. June 26. The self-guided walking tour will also feature receptions and open houses at various art galleries and museums located throughout the historic neighborhood. Establishments that will dole out food and drink samples include **Café 21**, **Nobu Restaurant**, **The Field**, **1919**, **Café Sevilla**, **Quad Ale House**, **Blue Point Coastal Cuisine**, and more.

Tickets are \$30 in advance and \$40 on the day of the event. In addition, VIP passes are available for \$75, which include access to exclusive receptions and special wine and beer tastings.

Guest check-in will be located at Pocket Park, 410 Island Ave. For more information, call the Gaslamp Quarter Association at 619-233-5227 or visit gaslamp.org/events.

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

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A culinary escape to Mexico's capital

Restaurant Review

Frank Sabatini Jr.



"This isn't like the Mexican food up the road," I said to my companion when tapping into a brittle sheet of rolled, fried cheese the size of our forearms. The appetizer, chicharron de queso, ranks among several dishes at El Charko that are well-known throughout Mexico City but absent along San Diego Avenue in Old Town.

The colorful indoor-outdoor restaurant surfaced more than a year ago in place of Craze Burger. It's owned by a family from Mexico City, and based after a restaurant there that is perched beside a pond inhabited by frogs. Hence, the name El Charko, which translates to "the puddle" or "pond," manager Tony

Hinojosa explained while steering us to authentic dishes he termed as "peculiar to San Diego."

The lacy, fried queso is made with Gouda and Monterey jack cheeses. It closely resembles a Parmesan tuile in flavor and texture -- fantastically tangy and extremely fragile -- yet five times bigger in this tubular form. Served with a plop of guacamole, it felt as though we were unintentionally damaging an ancient scroll as it broke into pieces from minimal finger pressure.

A menu category titled "alambrés" allows you to choose from a variety of proteins sautéed with onions and bell peppers, and served sizzling in a cast-iron skillet.

Fajitas they're not.

Bits of bacon are hidden within the medley, which adds a dash of smokiness. There's also



(Clockwise from above) Tortilla soup; a stir-fry of marinated pork, bacon and veggies; two beef tacos flanking one filled with beer-battered fish

(Photos by Frank Sabatini Jr.)

El Charko Grill & Bar

2415 San Diego Ave. (Old Town)

619-795-0908

el-charko.com

Prices: Appetizers, \$4 to \$11.99; soups and salads, \$5.50 to \$11.99; tacos and burritos, \$3.35 to \$11; entrees and combo plates, \$12.50 to \$16.50

a small measure of jack cheese on top. We opted for marinated pork (pastor), flavored here with ginger, paprika and cinnamon. All combined, the ingredients spawned a thin, exotic sauce you won't find in Mexican kitchens along San Diego's beaten track. Served with corn or flour tortillas, the dish is an unsung staple in most provinces of Mexico.

After polishing off a bowl of tomato-based tortilla soup containing a halved, peeled avocado,

we proceeded to tacos.

One filled with beer-battered fish (probably cod) tasted pedestrian except for its inclusion of chipotle cream sauce, which added a safe zing. Two others filled with different styles of meat, however, could potentially tickle the fancy of those who haven't dabbled in the burgeoning American-hipster taco movement, which borrows heavily from Mexico City's food scene.

The "Villamelon" taco features salted, sun-dried beef mixed with chorizo, pork rinds and hot sauce. I'm not sure where the meat catches its rays, or for how long, but it ends up pleasantly chewy and slightly caramelized.

Chorizo and prime steak are combined in the "campechano" taco, although we didn't detect the chorizo. This was basically a carne asada taco with cubed meat sport-

ing familiar whispers of garlic, citrus and cumin. Regrettably, I had somehow overlooked the smoked pork chop taco accented with bacon and onions -- something I haven't yet seen north of the border.

Other precious finds include an appetizer of grilled hot peppers and onions; cactus salad; zucchini flower or huitlacoche-mushroom quesadillas; and the El Charko burrito stuffed with French fries, pastor, beans, cheese and sour cream, should you over-indulge in the house margaritas, green sours or tempranillo wine.

—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. ♦

ASK KATHY: A COLUMN ABOUT REAL ESTATE ISSUES

Kathy McSherry



COLDWELL BANKER WEST

Hi Kathy:

I own a small home that I purchased in 1980 for \$37,000. And frankly, after my wife of 22 years passed, and being 65 years of age, I never thought I would leave. That is until a miracle happened two years ago and my now bride to be came into my life. My fiancé lives in Temecula, and after our upcoming nuptials, I will be moving into her home as we have chosen to live together there. We will then rent my older, but well kept home, in San Diego. I was wondering what I need to be aware of in order to prepare my home for any tenants that may decide to rent from me. Codes and requirements may have changed since my original purchase and I would like to know what specifically I should look for, and/or what steps should I take in preparation?

Jim B.

Hi Jim:

First, allow me to congratulate you and your new bride. I've often questioned what is more difficult; finding a new home, or a new partner? Clearly you have managed both!

Here are my basic recommendations that I would consider when preparing to rent your personal home.

Since you purchased many years ago, make sure your home has carbon monoxide and smoke detectors. Considering you are over 62, you qualify for The Burn Institute of San Diego to come to your home and install free smoke detectors. This is part of their senior safety program and well worth a phone call. They can be reached at 858-541-2277.

Next I would consider the following:

- Hire a licensed home inspector to check for any items that may need repairing, need to be brought up to code, overall safety, and alleviate unexpected phone calls regarding maintenance with your tenants.
- Consider a fresh coat of paint. Repair any holes and see how amazing this can change and revamp an existing home.
- Change your air filters.
- Inspect and clean windows and sliding doors.
- Clean, repair, and/or replace screens if needed.
- Make sure the kitchen, and each floor, have a fire extinguisher.
- Professionally clean and/or replace carpet.
- Check into landlord insurance. It costs additional to your home owner's insurance, and your insurance carrier can go over all of its benefits.
- Attend to your outside landscaping. Spruce up for curb appeal and also spray for pests.
- Consider whether you will go into the landlord business or hire a professional property manager.
- Check with your CPA regarding the tax benefits of renting.

All in all Jim, rental rates have gone up in San Diego as it is a Seller's market. If you take care to make your current home safe, clean, and somewhat trendy, you will attract the best qualified tenants.

Congratulations on your upcoming nuptials and best of luck!!

Kathy

Kathy McSherry is a veteran Realtor in Mission Valley with Coldwell Banker West. Email questions to her at ask.kathy@outlook.com.

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Poutine from the \$5 happy hour menu at Circa on Adams Avenue in University Heights (Photo by Dr. Ink)

Summer ale, winter grub

Come On Get Happy! Dr. Ink

The warm, cozy ambiance left behind by the Farm House Café a couple years ago is upheld at Circa. It’s actually been enhanced with additional antique appointments that include an old record player spinning out bluesy jazz — a perfect come-on to a relaxing happy hour.

Next to it on the bar is a vintage typewriter and a vat of house-made sangria. In the back-drop are four taps featuring a rotating selection of craft beer, any of which are dispensed in glass jars for \$5 during happy hour.

Oberon Ale by Bell’s Brewery was in the lineup on my recent visit. Produced in Michigan, the beer in that state represents the passage into summer due to its soft wheat flavor and lemon undertones. After feeling as though I’d been looking at life through a gray curtain, common during our gloomy months of May and June, I ordered it as a gesture of hope for clearer skies.

The sun never poked out that day, or the next. But the ale delivered the refreshing bang it promises while offering a much-needed departure from the scores

of hoppy brands that have saturated my palate lately.

Five dollars also buys you a nosh from a small list of appetizers, which oddly includes wintry fare like oven-roasted bone marrow; house-made bratwurst with sauerkraut and ale mustard; and skillet potatoes.

There’s also poutine, a French-Canadian dish of french fries tossed in gravy and cheese curds that feels like a fuzzy sweater on chilly days. And it pairs swimmingly to beer of any style because of its high salt content.

Circa’s version struck a close match to versions I’ve had in Montreal, not to mention the classic recipe captured at Mess Royale in Hillcrest before it shuttered. The difference here is that a soft farmer’s cheese is used opposed to the traditional, squeaky curds preferred by Canadians. I actually liked Circa’s construct much better.

In addition to the beer and food deals, wines by the glass are \$1 off their regular prices, which range from \$7.50 for Chateau Haut Rian Bordeaux to \$12.50 for a Napa merlot blend from Hill Estate.

The happy-hour bargains can be savored anywhere throughout the restaurant, although the experience is socially more intimate, like that of a pub, when landing a seat at the bar.❖



Oberon Ale (Photo by Dr. Ink)

Circa
2121 Adams Ave.
(University Heights)
619-269-9152
circasd.com
Happy Hour: 5 to 10 p.m.
Monday; 5 to 6:30 p.m.,
Tuesday through Sunday

RATINGS

Drinks: The tap selection is quaint, with only four rotating craft beers in the offering. The wine list yields more choices; there’s about a dozen of them available by the glass from regions throughout California, Europe and South Africa.

Food: Though succinct, the happy hour menu features irresistible dishes such as fried green tomatoes, house-made bratwurst, and comforting poutine.

Value: Wines by the glass are only \$1 off, although you save an average of \$3 on draft beers and appetizers.

Service: Arriving before the dinner rush, the server on duty doubled as the bartender and was quick to greet, seat and provide menus to the guests.

Atmosphere: The bar and dining area are contained within one cozy room adorned with homey bric-a-brac and a vintage record player.



Circa’s street charm carries through to the inside (Photo by Dr. Ink)

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FilmOut's LGBT Film Festival is ready for prime time

Ken Williams | Editor

If you like to laugh, FilmOut San Diego has something for you. If you like to cry at the movies, bring your tissues. And if you like films that are moody or dramatic, that's on the festival program, too.

The 18th annual San Diego LGBT Film Festival returns Friday through Sunday, June 3 – 5, at the Observatory North Park, located at 2891 University Ave.

Director Casper Andreas snagged both the Opening Night ("Kiss Me, Kill Me") and Closing Night ("Flatbush Luck") films. The former is a film noir with a gay murder twist and the latter is a mainstream romantic comedy with a "coming out" subplot.

Michael McQuiggan, FilmOut's longtime programming director, chose 37 full-length and short films for the 2016 festival — out of more than 900 entries from around the world. It's a daunting task to produce a final lineup.

"It's difficult at times, because we have to turn down several really good films each year," McQuiggan said. "However, we do manage to screen a few of them during our monthly screenings throughout the year."

There really isn't a formula or specific "criteria" for choosing the films for the annual festival, McQuiggan said.

"We are constantly looking at other LGBT film festivals throughout the year and of course check out the films selected for Berlin, London and Sundance," he said. "Filmmakers find us now since FilmOut is in a major LGBT film festival database."



FilmOut's 2016 San Diego LGBT Film Festival will run Friday through Sunday, June 3-5, at the Observatory North Park, 2891 University Ave. The box office and entrance are just around the corner on 29th Street.

To purchase individual tickets or an All-Access Pass to all festival events, visit filmoutsandiego.com.



(above) Scene from "Downriver," showing at 11 a.m. Sunday, June 5; scene from "S&M Sally," playing at 1 p.m. Sunday (Courtesy of FilmOut San Diego)

"Short films are definitely more difficult to select — especially when you receive 700 of them," he continued. "So hundreds of LGBT short films slip through the cracks. We could literally have an LGBT Short Film Festival and still not have enough room to

screen them all."

After 17 years, FilmOut has become special to a number of filmmakers, such as Andreas, whose films have been showcased at the festival for more than a decade. Board members regularly get highly positive feedback

from filmmakers who attend the festival.

"We are a low-maintenance festival and we treat our filmmakers/talent exceptionally well — hotel rooms, air/travel for spotlight films, additional comp tickets, etc.," McQuiggan said.

"LGBT filmmakers talk [about the festivals they attend] and I have had dozens of messages each festival from filmmakers telling me specifically how well-respected FilmOut is as an LGBT film festival."

A few years ago, FilmOut slimmed the festival down to only three days.

"Theater rental cost was a deciding factor," McQuiggan said. "Ideally, FilmOut should be four days: Opening Night on a Thursday, then two movies on Friday evening and all day the rest of the weekend. Adding Thursday would allow us to add two more features that we normally have to pass on."

"As of right now, I am OK with a three-day streamlined festival," he added. "Our festival is too big for Hazard Center in Mission Valley and Hillcrest Landmark Cinema. They only have 100-150 seats in their theaters. Some of our films draw 750 people. Observatory North Park or Ken Cinema are our only options. We will definitely expand for our 20th anniversary — the number of days to be determined."

But McQuiggan is getting ahead of himself. What about the 2016 festival?

"The selections this year were pretty much dark in tone — 'Kiss Me, Kill Me,' 'Paris 05:59 (Theo and Hugo),' 'ToY,' 'Downriver' and 'Closet Monster' — or rom-coms, 'Coming In,' 'Shared Rooms,' 'S&M Sally,' 'Front Cover' and 'Flatbush Luck,'" McQuiggan said.

"There really was no middle ground. There were a few more outstanding documentaries to include, but simply no room," he added. "And documentaries that play at FilmOut are a tough sell, unless they are about a celebrity, like 'Tab Hunter Confidential'; contain risqué themes such as 'Interior Leather Bar'; are socially relevant like 'In The Turn'; or are about our history, as in this year's 'Upstairs Inferno.'"

In all, the film festival will showcase two world premieres,

see Film Out, pg 21

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

9/6

Sudoku
Puzzle

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

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Puzzle answers on page 20

Uptown Crossword

Watch Your Step

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

CREATORS NEWS SERVICE

By Charles Preston

ACROSS

1 A real winner

5 Drummer's concern

10 Saucy

14 ___ act

15 ___ helmet

16 Smell

17 Ait, e.g.

18 Was compelled

19 Pan's instrument

20 We, the ___

22 Drains

24 Metrical foot

26 Swing's partner

27 Fore-and-aft sails

31 Commence business

35 What poi is

36 Debtors

38 WWII agcy.

39 Member of the choir

40 Forbidding

41 Let it stand!

42 Hawaiian token of welcome

43 Anesthetic

44 Offer an opinion

45 Printing errors

47 Forebodes

49 Twine

51 Ceremony

52 It's often removed with a needle

56 Peculiar fellow

60 Mount or Robin

61 Hillside

63 Cloy

64 Gem

65 Say

66 Forearm bone

67 Gainsay

68 They're taken by the conscientious

69 Fruit

DOWN

1 Set off, as a trigger

2 French river

3 Marco's surname

4 Enter

5 Devious idea

6 Constellation

7 Hollywood name

8 Colorado park

9 Too long on the shelf

10 Certain sailorman

11 Redact

12 Bad cigar

13 Uno plus dos

21 Michigan or Ontario

23 Times around the track

25 Soup, pretty near

27 Splinter; dial.

28 Whiter

29 Out of bed

30 Chimney ___

32 Out

33 Turn over

34 Heads

37 Occasion for pardon

40 Gets the motor going

41 Accelerates

43 English poet

44 Man's palindromic name

46 With bite

48 Potato preparers

50 Triangular alluvial plain

52 Having shoes

53 English poet

54 Financial crisis pal-liative

55 Roast; Fr.

57 Strong wind

58 Sicilian mountain

59 Stern

62 Pig or fountain

Puzzle answers on page 20

Classifieds

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18TH ANNUAL

OLD HOUSE FAIR

Old House Fair home tour tickets are on sale

By SDCNN Staff

South Park's 18th annual Old House Fair is coming up on Saturday, June 18, and tickets for the Historical Home Tour are now on sale for the popular event. The festival features the historical house tour, which costs \$25 per person, and a free street fair/festival located on 30th and Beech streets in South Park. The street fair will showcase exhibitors, artists and vendors.

Highlights include the Buona Forchetta Pizza Party and live music on stage, plus South Park Brewing Co.'s Boutique Biergarten. Five houses will be open to ticketholders as part of the Historic Home Tour. A trolley will be available to commute between locations. Sponsored by South Park Business Group, the event will take place from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information or to buy tickets, visit theoldhousefair.com or call 619-233-6679.

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Uptown News

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Sudoku

Puzzle from page 19

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

Watch Your Step

Crossword from page 19

T	O	P	S	S	A	L	E	S	P	E	R	T
R	I	O	T	C	R	A	S	H	O	D	O	R
I	S	L	E	H	A	D	T	O	P	I	P	E
P	E	O	P	L	E	D	E	P	L	E	T	E
I	A	M	B	S	W	A	Y					
S	P	A	N	K	E	R	S	O	P	E	N	U
P	A	S	T	E	O	W	E	R	S	O	P	A
A	L	T	O	S	T	E	R	N	S	T	E	T
L	E	I	E	T	H	E	R	O	P	I	N	E
E	R	R	A	T	A	P	O	R	T	E	N	D
C	O	R	D	R	I	T	E					
S	P	L	I	N	T	E	R	C	O	D	G	E
H	O	O	D	S	L	O	P	E	S	A	T	E
O	P	A	L	U	T	T	E	R	U	L	N	A
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Uptown News DOWNTOWN NEWS GAY SAN DIEGO MISSION VALLEY NEWS Times COURIER COURIER

FROM PAGE 18

FILM OUT

six U.S. premieres and four West Coast premieres.

Here is the schedule of events for the festival:

FRIDAY, JUNE 3

• 7 p.m. | Opening Night film and after-party

“Kiss Me, Kill Me” (U.S.)
Directed by Casper Andreas
California premiere
Screenwriter David Michael Barrett (“Such Good People”) and director Casper Andreas (“Going Down in LA-LA Land”) team up for a gay twist on the classic film noir set in L.A.

Van Hansis (“As The World Turns”) stars as Dusty and Gale Harold (“Queer As Folk”) as his wealthy boyfriend Stephen. After angrily confronting his cheating boyfriend, Dusty blacks out and wakes up in the middle of a murder scene. His nightmare only gets worse as he becomes the prime suspect.

The stellar cast includes Brianna Brown, Yolonda Ross, Jai Rodriguez, Matthew Ludwinski, Kit Williamson, D.J. “Shangela” Pierce, Allison Lane, Jackie Monahan, Craig Robert Young, Michael Maize and Jonathan Lisecki.

Shown with a 15-minute short film, “B” (Germany), directed by Kai Stanicke. The West Coast premiere is the story of “B,” who is torn between a loveless relationship with “K” and her feelings for another woman.

Tickets cost \$30 for the Opening Night film and the after-party at the Sunset Temple.

SATURDAY, JUNE 4

• 11 a.m. | Best of LGBT Shorts

Short 1: “The Tormentors” (Australia), directed by Darren L. Downs (16 minutes)

Short 2: “Wedlocked” (U.S.), directed by Puppett (11 minutes)

Short 3: “Back Again (De Vuelta)” (Spain), directed by Gabriel Dorado (13 minutes)

Short 4: “The Future Perfect” (Canada), directed by Nick Citton (12 minutes)

Short 5: “Girl Night Stand” (U.S.), directed by Jenna Laurenzo (9 minutes)

Short 6: “Vessels” (U.S.), directed by Arkasha Stevenson (15 minutes)

Short 7: “Buddy” (Netherlands), directed by Niels Bourgonje (11 minutes)

Short 8: “Spare Parts” (U.S.), directed by Yasmin All-Manaseer (7 minutes)

Short 9: “Spoken In Jest” (Mexico), directed by Rolando Trevino (5 minutes)

Short 10: “My Life Is A Dream” (U.S.), directed by Brian Benson (9 minutes)

Tickets for the 10 short films cost \$10.

• 1:15 p.m. | Girls Centerpiece

“ToY” (U.S.)
Directed by Patrick Chapman
Southern California premiere
Briana Evigan plays Chloe, a young, wealthy, talented but naïve artist whose newest artwork leads her to a beautiful, aging call girl named Kat (Kerry

Norton). As each woman fights their own personal demons, they begin to grasp on to each other. It’s a story of second chances and the desperation to survive.

Shown with two 7-minute shorts: “Blind Date” (U.S.), directed by Adrienne Lovette, in its world premiere; “Partners” (U.S.), directed by Joey Ally, has its West Coast premiere.

Tickets cost \$10.

• 3:30 p.m. | Festival Spotlight

“Upstairs Inferno” (U.S.)
Directed by Robert L. Camina

This powerful documentary examines the true story of the largest gay mass murder in U.S. history. On June 24, 1973, an arsonist set fire to the stairwell leading up to the Upstairs Lounge, a gay bar in New Orleans. Within minutes, patrons were trapped in the raging inferno and behind barred windows.

While a few heroes led some of the patrons to safety, 32 people could not escape the flames and perished. Camina, the Texas filmmaker who made the outstanding “Raid On The Rainbow Lounge” previously shown at FilmOut, interviewed emotional survivors, relatives and friends who condemn the callous behavior of the city’s police and fire departments, and its churches that refused to conduct funerals for homosexuals, and the media that barely acknowledged the horrible tragedy. To this day, no one has been convicted of the crime.

Shown with a 10-minute short, “Intrinsic Moral Evil” (Netherlands), directed by Harm Weistra.

Tickets cost \$10.

• 5:45 p.m. | Bisexuality Showcase

“Coming In” (Germany)
Directed by Marco Kreuzpainter
West Coast premiere

Kostja Ullmann portrays Tom Herzner, a notoriously hip hair stylist in Berlin who is viewed as a role model for the gay community. But things get complicated in this sophisticated comedy when Tom finds himself attracted to Heidi (Aylin Tezel), a sassy but unpretentious — and straight — hairdresser who runs an edgy salon.

Shown with an 11-minute short, “The Memory of You” (Sweden), directed by Nils Asen and having its U.S. premiere.

Tickets cost \$10.

• 8 p.m. | Boys Centerpiece

“Shared Rooms” (U.S.)
Directed by Rob Williams
U.S. premiere

This romantic comedy looks at the meaning of home and family through three interrelated stories of gay men finding connections during the week between Christmas and New Year’s Day. Stars Justin Xavier Smith, Eric Allen Smith, Daniel Lipshutz, Robert Werner, Christopher Grant Pearson, Alec Manley Wilson, David Vaught, and Alexander Neil Miller.

Shown with the 15-minute short, “Bed Buddies” (U.S.), directed by Reid Waterer and having its U.S. premiere.

Tickets cost \$10.

see Film Out, pg 22

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Scene from "Front Cover," showing at 5 p.m. Sunday, June 5 (Courtesy of FilmOut San Diego)

FROM PAGE 21
FILM OUT

• 10 p.m. | The Late Show

"Paris 05:59 (Theo and Hugo)" (France)

Directed by Olivier Ducastel and Jacques Martineau

The extended opening scenes, filmed inside a Parisian sex club, are about as intense and graphic and sexy as a movie can be.

Two young men (Geoffrey Couet and Francois Nambot) lock eyes from across a darkened dungeon, beginning a long night of sex and conversation that leads to totally unexpected places. Couet and Nambot give electrifying performances that are totally believable and rich in depth.

Shown with the 20-minute short, "Sauna The Dead: A Fairy Tale" (U.K.), directed by Tom Frederic and having its U.S. premiere.

Tickets cost \$10.

SUNDAY, JUNE 5

• 11 a.m. | International Spotlight

"Downriver" (Australia)

Directed by Grant Scicluna
West Coast premiere

Reef Ireland plays James, a young adult just released from prison after serving time for his involvement in the drowning of a young boy in a river in Australia. Ravaged with uncertainty, dealing with his estranged family and forced to face the dead boy's mother, James sets off for the river on a journey of self-discovery and a search for the truth. A dark, brooding and intense movie from Down Under.

Shown with two shorts: "Little Elephant" (U.K.), directed by Kate Jessop and having its U.S. premiere; and "Easy: A 3-Minute Love Story" (U.S.), directed by Robert Guthrie.

Tickets cost \$10.

• 1 p.m. | Comedy Showcase

"S&M Sally" (U.S.)

Directed by Michelle Ehlen

Michelle Ehlen plays Jamie, an insecure lesbian who learns that her girlfriend Jill (Jen McPherson) has been going to sex clubs to enjoy BDSM — something she knows nothing about. But Jamie gamely decides to become "Sally" and join Jill on her sexpits. It's a hilarious comedy for all audiences.

Shown with two shorts: "Escape" (U.S.), directed by Simha Pradeep Katasani; and "Step" (Sweden), directed by Alva Lindenbaum.

Tickets cost \$10.

• 3 p.m. | Afternoon Showcase

"Closet Monster" (U.S.)

Directed by Stephen Dunn

Connor Jessup plays Oscar Madly, a creative and driven teenager who is unsure of his sexuality and haunted by horrific images of a tragic gay bashing he witnessed as a young boy. Oscar dreams of escaping the small town where he feels he is suffocating and in his fantasy he has

created a talking hamster that helps him confront his surreal demons and discover himself.

Shown with the short film "Noam" (Israel), directed by Boaz Foster.

• • • • •

• 5 p.m. | Asian Showcase

"Front Cover" (U.S.)

Directed by Ray Yeung

Jake Choi stars as Ryan, a New York City fashion stylist who has rejected his Asian upbringing. But an assignment to style a macho-acting but closeted Chinese actor (James Chen) forces him to reexamine his heritage and make a life-changing decision. This comedy/drama is nuanced and charming.

Shown with two short films: "True Colours" (Australia), directed by David Valent with its West Coast premiere; and "Family Values" (U.S.), directed by Val Singhal with its world premiere.

Tickets cost \$10.

• • • • •

• 7 p.m. | Closing Night film

"Flatbush Luck" (U.S.)

Directed by Casper Andreas
West Coast premiere

Tanner Novlan stars as former Wall Street hotshot Jimmy who works alongside his cousin Max (Robby Stahl) as telephone repairmen in the Brooklyn neighborhood of Flatbush. Jimmy overhears illegal insider trading and takes advantage of the information to make a killing in the stock market. Meanwhile, Max is engaged to be married to Donna (Jenna Perez), but gets cold feet when a massage by a hunky Latino (Juahn Cabrera) makes him question his sexuality. A terrific movie for all audiences, written by Andreas and James Balleto.

Shown with two shorts: "Lady Of The Night" (France), directed by Laurent Boileau; and "Dinner With Jeffrey" (U.S.), directed by Sam Greisman and having its U.S. premiere.

Tickets cost \$20 for the Closing Night film and the after-party inside the theater, catered by West Coast Tavern.

—Ken Williams is editor of Uptown News and can be reached at ken@sdenn.com or at 619-961-1952. He also serves a voluntary position as Film & Media Relations Director for FilmOut San Diego. ❖

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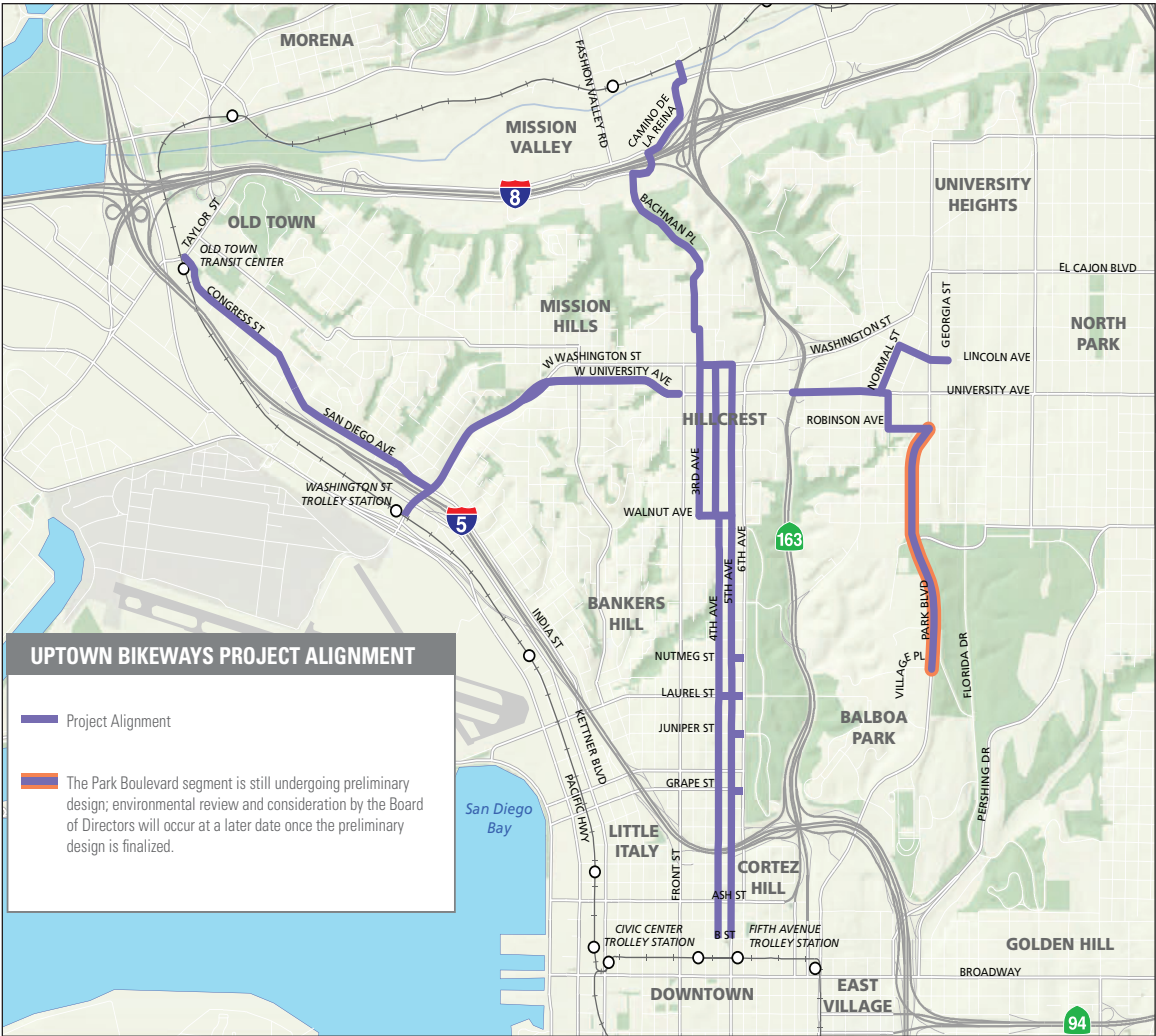
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Scene from "Shared Rooms," the Boys Centerpiece showing at 8 p.m. Saturday, June 4 (Courtesy of FilmOut San Diego)



FROM PAGE 1

BIKEWAYS

“The proposed project would make it easier and safer for people of all ages and abilities to travel on bikes among City of San Diego neighborhoods in the Uptown area, connecting Uptown to Old Town, Mission Valley, Downtown, and North Park. It also improves safety for people who walk and drive in these neighborhoods. The proposed project would create inviting and convenient bikeways that link key community destinations, including schools, parks, transit, and commercial centers. The bikeways would feature design elements that enhance the experience for people biking and walking, make streets safer for all users, and benefit people who live, work and do business in the neighborhoods served by the proposed project.”

THE PUBLIC COMMENTS

At the May 24 public hearing, the comments were largely one-sided as the bicycling community came out in force to overshadow the voices who spoke out against part of the project. The area of contention is dubbed “the gap” in the Uptown Bikeways plans, which is located in the business district of Hillcrest where the western portion of University Avenue is much narrower than the eastern portion. Not only is this a bottleneck for traffic, but it is called a nightmare for cyclists.

On June 5 last year, SANDAG’s Transportation Committee, despite widespread community opposition, voted to constrain the project’s University Avenue segment from First Avenue to 10th Avenue, roughly ending at the state Route 163 overpass.

The vote created “the gap” between protected bikes lanes that head west along West University Avenue to West Washington Street, and down the hill to the Washington Street Trolley Station and with a connection to the Old Town Transit Center via San Diego Avenue and Congress



Visual simulation of what Fifth Avenue at Ivy Street will look like when the project is finished: enhanced crosswalks and a protected bike lane. (Courtesy of SANDAG)

Street.

On the eastern end, “the gap” ends at the SR-163 overpass, where protected bike lanes head east on University Avenue to Normal Street, heading north to Lincoln Avenue. It also connects to the proposed Park Boulevard protected bikeway.

Critics blamed “the gap” on intensive lobbying by the 1,200-member Hillcrest Business Association (HBA).

At the public hearing, Benjamin Nicholls, executive director of the HBA, endorsed most of the project, and supported keeping “the gap” in Hillcrest. The HBA’s other objections mostly are over a loss of parking spaces, which Nicholls said would negatively impact businesses in those locations.

“I am extremely concerned about Fourth and Fifth avenues between Robinson and Washington streets,” Nicholls said. “Within a one block area of the iconic Hillcrest sign, we will lose 16 parking spaces.”

Nicholls said the HBA strongly opposed protected bike lanes north of Robinson Street.

Chris Dugan of the California Restaurant Association and Cindy Eldridge, representing Carlton Management spoke out against any loss of parking in the

Hillcrest area. Dugan said the loss of parking would pose “an economic hardship” for restaurants nearby.

But Paul Jamason, a board member of BikeSD, scoffed at the opposition to the project being based solely on a loss of a few parking spaces.

“Losing 12 to 16 parking spaces is not a lot,” Jamason said, noting that there are 700 off-street parking spaces in that area.

“There is no safe biking route through Hillcrest. To say people’s lives are worth less than a few parking spaces is ludicrous.”

Jamason’s comments drew applause from the audience.

Samantha “Sam” Ollinger, executive director of BikeSD, pointed out that San Diegans drive to Mission Valley to eat and shop at the malls, and are willing to park in garages or use off-street parking and walk considerable distances to get to their destination. “Mission Valley today is an economic engine,” she said. She suggested that Hillcrest should learn from Mission Valley’s success, and said one solution would be to build more parking options to alleviate the problem.

see Bikeways, pg 24

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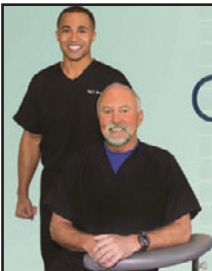


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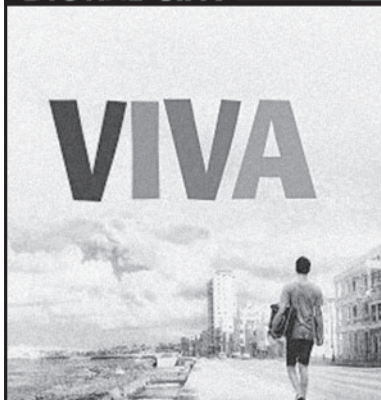
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FROM PAGE 23 BIKEWAYS

Several residents echoed the need to build a parking structure in Hillcrest, pointing to the two public parking garages built in North Park.

A handful of people, who identified themselves as motorists who were also avid bicyclists, testified that they did not come to Hillcrest very often because it wasn't safe to bike on the roads.

"I would love to spend my money in Hillcrest, if I felt safe. But biking on University is terrifying," Catherine Day said. Several other commenters also used the word "terrifying" to describe road conditions for bicyclists.

Andy Hanshaw, executive director of the San Diego County Bicycle Coalition, said his members fully support the project because it would help reduce greenhouse-gas emissions and benefit the city's ambitious Climate Action Plan — which aims to slash those emissions in half by 2035. He, too, wanted "the gap" to be upgraded for bikers.

WHAT THE PROJECT PROPOSES

The Uptown Bikeways project is a high priority portion of SANDAG's \$200 million Regional Bike Plan Early Action Program, a decade-long effort to expand the regional bike network throughout San Diego County. Building bikeways is part of a larger goal of increasing transportation choices by



Visual simulation of how the busy intersection of University Avenue and Vermont Street in Hillcrest will look: a protected bike lane on the north side of the street and an enhanced crosswalk (Courtesy of SANDAG)

making biking a viable, safe and attractive alternative to driving vehicles.

For bicyclists, the Uptown Bikeways project will link up with other ongoing projects to provide connectivity to Downtown, Old Town, Balboa Park, North Park and Mission Valley.

For community members, the goal is to promote active living and healthy lifestyles, making streets safer not only for bicyclists but for pedestrians and motorists and public transit.

Planning began in 2013 and the preliminary engineering and environmental clearance began in 2014. Dozens of public meetings were conducted along the way to get community feedback. The final design begins this year.

Phase 1 of construction is expected to begin in 2017. The first segment includes Fourth and Fifth avenues, from B Street in Downtown through Bankers Hill and Park West to Washington Street in Hillcrest.

To read more about SANDAG's Uptown Bikeways project, visit bit.ly/1CZmHnJ.

To add public comments on the project, email chris.kluth@sandag.org before the June 24 meeting.

—Ken Williams is editor of San Diego Uptown News and can be reached at ken@sdenn.com or at 619-961-1952. Follow him on Twitter at @KenSanDiego, Instagram at @KenSD or Facebook at KenWilliamsSanDiego.

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FROM PAGE 1
SHARING

intersection — and its long traffic light — guarantees high visibility to the two new businesses.

COMMUNAL COFFEE

Byard was born and raised in Olympia, Washington, then moved to Seattle in the 1980s when her mom opened a coffee shop. She returned to her hometown to attend St. Martin's College.

Now living in South Park, Byard and her husband have three boys, ages 13, 11 and 8. She has been part of the McKinley Elementary School family, and for many years was involved in fundraising through the school's annual SoNo Fest and Chili Cook-Off.

She and her husband worked for many years for Young Life, a nondenominational Christian nonprofit that serves students from middle school through college. Her husband still works there, she said.

Since leaving the nonprofit world, Byard said she has been a “stay-at-home mom” and has a son with Down syndrome. But as her boys got older, she ached to embrace her entrepreneurial spirit. She began producing the biannual Makers Arcade fair Downtown and started the Urban Craft Camp for adults.

Last year, Byard began thinking about “creating a space that was welcoming, like your living room, but with a communal aspect,” she said, adding that she wanted a shared space for two separate businesses that could co-exist. She happened to be friends with Paul Hunyady — their children went to school together at McKinley — who was operating his office in the building in front of his North Park Nursery, located on Texas Street just south of University Avenue. Their idea was to have two shops to share the 1,000-square-foot building and create a synergy that would benefit all the businesses on the property, including the nursery and Urban Plantation.

Once the idea was locked down, Byard searched for another business that would fit in well with a coffee shop. That led her to Gill, who for the past two years has operated a floral shop out of her home.

The next step was to refurbish the old store, and Byard decided to serve as the contractor — a role she has never undertaken before. The place was gutted. All the plumbing had to be replaced. She learned that dealing with the city was time-consuming and daunting.

"It was a full rebuild," she said. "It took six months from the start of the lease to our soft opening on May 7."

Architecturally, Byard describes the building as a “Mid-Century base.” Utilizing her hobby as a designer, she chose “bohemian” as a secondary theme. Think white as the primary color, including cabinetry, exposed rafters and the tile backsplash.

So much for having a soft opening on Mother's Day weekend. "We had a line down the block," she said. "But I'm not really that surprised. There are no coffee shops for a mile-long stretch of University between Hillcrest and North Park."

San Diego Uptown News visited on a recent Monday afternoon.

and the place was packed. People were lined up to order coffee and tea. Customers chose flower arrangements or bought gifts. Folks introduced their friends to other customers. Some intently worked on their laptops or iPads, ignoring the hustle and bustle around them. Others enjoyed the shade under a large canopy on the outdoor patio shared by all the businesses on-site.

Communal Coffee is currently open from 6:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., but Byard expects to expand those hours after she obtains a beer and wine license and adds more food to the menu. She has a tiny kitchen space, so she is limited on what she can put on the menu.

Things are going so well that Byard has already had to hire more baristas.

The coffee shop is already a hit with the locals, many of whom walk there. That's a good thing, since there are only four parking spots on the property, but plenty of street parking in the vicinity. The No. 10 and No. 7 buses also stop nearby. There's a bike rack outside, too.

Byard has noticed visitors from Orange County, L.A. and as far away as Montreal. The French Canadians told her that they had heard about her business via Instagram, which one recent weekend named Communal Coffee as the No. 1 place to visit for coffee in San Diego.

"The craft coffee community of San Diego has really supported us," Byard said. "We don't view each other as competition; we support each other."

Communal Coffee is featuring craft coffee from Sightglass in San Francisco. "They are a great roaster," Byard said. "Their roasts are medium and floral. I also loved how the company is run. We have a lot of people who have moved here from the Bay Area who are very familiar with their coffee."

Bryard notes that she gave Seattle's legendary coffee brands a shot at being featured on the menu. "I gave Seattle a chance," she said. "But Seattle's roasts are darker and less flavorful."

Sightglass also offered “excellent training,” she said. “My girls are trained about the finer points of coffee — and tea.”

Yes, to date, Bryard has only hired women as baristas although a man was interviewing the day Uptown News was there. "It just happened that way," she said, smiling.

NATIVE POPPY

Natalie Gill wasn't sure she wanted to give up her freedom to join a brick-and-mortar business operation. After all, she was working from home where she could create a bouquet of flowers while lounging around in her pajamas, she said. "And I didn't have to clean up at night if I was too tired," she said, laughing.

"Jen approached me because she wanted to work with another vendor, and I immediately thought it would be tough," Gill said. "But Jen is so awesome, she runs great companies, so it just made so much sense."

When Gill and Byard looked at the location, they both were immediately hooked on its potential.

"We had one meeting with Paul and then we signed the lease," Gill said. "It happened really quickly."



Natalie Gill creates a floral arrangement at her shop, Native Poppy, which shares space with Communal Coffee. (Photo by Ken Williams)

Since then, Gill has gone from a home business to entrepreneur and has already hired four employees.

"It's been pretty nuts," she said. "But I am so pumped up about it."

She is not fretting about the long hours or hard work.

"After working 48 straight hours and going home with my hands bleeding, I am still so happy to be coming to work every day," she said.

Native Poppy is more than a flower shop, offering gift items that can accompany a bouquet for special occasions such as birthdays, anniversaries, baby showers, weddings and housewarmings.

"My shop is pretty packed

right now," Gill said.

She offers customers "flowers by bike" service within five miles to communities such as Little Italy, East Village, Downtown and the entire Uptown News readership area.

"I also have a subscription service," she said. "It can be weekly, monthly or seasonally—four times a year for the major holidays."

Her favorite flowers include King Protea, Japanese anemone, "fried egg" peony and Chocolate Cosmos.

"I love flowers so much," Gill continued. "I get so excited talking about flowers. It's great having a job that allows me to talk about something that I'm passionate about."



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UPTOWN CALENDAR

FEATURED EVENTS

Summer reading program Through the summer

Mission Hills Library's summer reading program will feature free events each week throughout the summer. Kids can sign up to earn prizes by reading books and attend the weekly events on Thursdays at 10:30 a.m. The first event on June 9 features information on reptiles of San Diego courtesy of the Living Coast Discovery Center. Future events will showcase live music, interactive science activities and more. There will also be special events on select Saturdays throughout the summer. The first special event on Saturday, June 18 at 10:30 a.m. will feature Joe Nyiri and a lesson on drawing animals and birds. The library is located at 925 W. Washington St. Visit facebook.com/mhlibrary for more.

18th annual FilmOut San Diego LGBT Film Festival Friday, June 3 – Sunday, June 5

The festival kicks off Friday, June 3 and continues throughout the weekend showcasing LGBT films from around the world. The Opening Night film "Kiss Me, Kill Me" will screen at 7 p.m. The new thriller by director Casper Andreas and screenwriter David Michael Barrett stars Van Hansis as a jilted lover who blacks out while confronting his cheating boyfriend played by Gale Harold. Hansis' character wakes up to find someone has been murdered and he's the prime suspect. The festival finishes up Sunday, June 5 with several screenings from 11 a.m. – 7 p.m. The Closing Night film at 7 p.m. will be "Flatbush Luck." All films screen at Observatory North Park, 2891 University Ave. Visit filmoutsandiego.com for more information.

Art Around Adams Saturday, June 4

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 for more information and a full schedule.

Live music: John Meeks Sunday, June 5

Local singer-songwriter John Meeks is celebrating the release of a new album, "On A Sea Darkly," with a mini tour that finishes up at Soda Bar (3615 El Cajon Blvd., Normal Heights). Meeks' new songs are hypnotic with their use of unique and dynamic instruments from the melodic to circuit-bent radio to trumpet. Give the first single "Exotic Reaction" a listen for a taste of the new tunes. The aptly named song features Meeks' haunting vocals and storytelling lyrics. Meeks and his band will open for Eric Bachmann of Archers of Loaf and Crooked Fingers. Tickets are \$15 and can be purchased at sodabarmusic.com. Visit johnmeeks.com for more information.



Anna Deavere Smith Notes from the Field: Doing Time in Education. Monday, June 6

The National Conflict Resolution Center and The Old Globe will present this production, by the acclaimed Anna Deavere Smith spotlighting a hot button issue, "the school-to-prison pipeline." Smith performs striking portraits based on interviews she conducted with more than 200 individuals across the nation affected by the pipeline's devastating policies – capturing the dynamics of a rapidly shifting social issue through her trademark performance technique. Proceeds from ticket prices will underwrite ticket costs for local high school students to attend the performance at no charge. This event will begin at 7:15 p.m. on the Donald and Darlene Shiley Stage at the Old Globe (1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park). Visit theoldglobe.org for tickets.

Live music: Pale Dian Friday, June 10

Shoegaze trio Pale Dian will make a stop in San Diego shortly after releasing their new record "Narrow Birth" via Manifesto Records on June 3. The Austin, Texas-based band have a dreamy sound with frontwoman Ruth Ellen Smith channeling Debbie Harry on many tunes. Check out their single "In A Day" for a taste, then see the band for free at The Whistle Stop (2236 Fern St., South Park) with The Victoriana and other bands. Visit facebook.com/paledianmusic and whistlestopbar.com for info.

Mother/daughter artists exhibit

Through Thursday, June 30

Local artist and Ladybug Art Center proprietor Susan Mae Hull has unveiled works by herself and her daughter Mylinda Mae Hull with this special mother/daughter exhibit. The opening event will be held Saturday, June 4 with several participating artists doing live-art demonstrations on the hour from 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. The event is free and open to the public. The art center is located at 4685 Biona Drive in Kensington. Visit ladybugartstudio.com for more information.



DIGITAL GYM GEMS



Friday, June 10 – Thursday, June 16: The LGBT drama "Viva" tells the story of a young hairdresser who clashes with his estranged father when his dream of performing in drag comes true. Unrated. 100 minutes.



Friday, June 10 – Thursday, June 16: Inspired by true events, "Dark Horse" tells the story of a group of friends in a mining village in Wales who breed and raise a racehorse to take on the "sport of kings." Unrated. 85 minutes.



Visit DigitalGym.org for show times and tickets and information on additional films.

RECURRING EVENTS

Select dates:

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

"The Philadelphia Story" on Friday, June 3
"Sixteen Candles" on Saturday, June 4 and Sunday, June 5

"Rebecca" on Thursday, June 9 and Friday, June 10

"How To Steal A Million" on Saturday, June 11 and Sunday, June 12

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

Mondays:

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

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

Unsung Genius: 6:30 p.m., 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.

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

Thursdays:

Uptown Sunrise Rotary Club meetings: 7 a.m., weekly meeting at Panera

Bread, 1270 Cleveland Ave., Hillcrest. Sdurotary.org.

North Park Thursday Market: 3 – 7 p.m., at 3000 North Park Way, between 30th Street and Granada Avenue, North Park free. Northparkfarmersmarket.com.

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

Liberty Toastmasters Club: 7 p.m., at Saint Paul's Community Care Center, 328 Maple St., Bankers Hill. Libertytoastmasters.org.

Courage to Change – Al-Anon meetings: 7:15 – 8:15 p.m., a weekly meeting for friends and relatives of alcoholics at Christ United Presbyterian Church (in the chapel), 3025 Fir St., South Park.

Fridays:

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

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

Saturdays

Old Town Saturday Market: 9 a.m. – 4 p.m., on Harney Street and San Diego Avenue, Old Town, free. Also held on Sundays. Oldtown-saturdaymarket.com.

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

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

Sundays

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

To view local community organization meeting information online, visit: sduptownnews.com/community-organization-meetings.

—Email calendar items to ken@sdcnn.com.

FROM PAGE 3
ENRICH

tices – cut down on costs.

“The practical reason I joined Enrich was I had the opportunity to split the overhead and keep the expenses down,” said soloist Nikolas Djordjevski of NTD Law, who practices employment law.

“It’s kind of like I’m working at a law firm, but I still have my own business, too,” he said.

But Djordjevski also likes the law firm feel, as well as the beautiful, casual environment of Enrich.

“It’s not dry and stuffy like a law firm,” he said. “I also like to be in a place surrounded by other very intelligent attorneys.”

Enrich offers solo practitioners eight private offices, and seven co-working spaces for a total of 15, but Allen said the office could expand to accommodate 25 attorneys. There is a large conference room that converts to a pingpong table, and a raft of enjoyable, non-legal books.

Besides creating a beautiful, colorful open space for Enrich, Allen’s heart seems to be in creating a community atmosphere. Enrich offers quarterly health classes, and also focuses on nutrition, cutting back on stress, and ergonomics.

“We’re really encouraging lawyers to live healthy lives because if you’re going to be a lawyer, it’s hard work,” she said.

Thus, Enrich.

Allen also offers classes in business development and financial success. Allen learned from her own try at working from home and having her own practice that developing a clientele was harder than she thought.

“I knew how to be a lawyer, but getting a client base and keeping a client base was much different,” she said. “It was something that was so important to me that I wasn’t going to wing it.”

Allen thinks her co-working model for attorneys is a concept that will grow. Because she’s had such success since her March 1 opening, she’s already thinking of expanding from her 3170 Fourth Ave. office space.

“A lot of attorneys do enjoy working from home, but they also want that community, that sense of being engaged,” she said. “I think we are seeing a paradigm shift in the way lawyers work.”

—Catherine Spearnak is a San Diego-based freelance writer. She can be reached at catherine.spearnak1@gmail.com.

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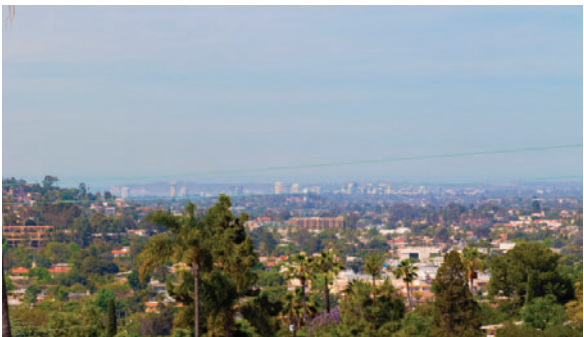
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