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Irving Gill gets his due

THEATER P. 17



Local actor tours in 'Lion King'

New permanent exhibit at theNAT honors unsung heroes

Ken Williams | Editor

In 1874, a small group of citizen scientists who shared a love of the natural world got together to create the San Diego Society of Natural History, the forerunner to the San Diego Natural History Museum in Balboa Park.

These ordinary people — from lawyers to railroad workers — did something extraordinary for the citizens of San Diego, dedicating countless hours and personal resources to document their observations of the flora and fauna of this unique corner of California.

More than a century later, theNAT, as the museum has branded itself, is finally able to share their stories by showcasing artifacts, books, and plant and animal specimens that have been stored in the

see Exhibit, pg 13



Exhibits team members examine rare book illustrations in the Research Library ahead of construction. Margi Dykens (second from left) is the longtime director of the Research Library. (Photo by Michael Field)

The extraordinary gifts of citizen scientists

Reaching out from behind 'The Wall'

By Frank Sabatini Jr.

Rarely are residents and nearby businesses given a voice in helping property investors choose commercial tenants for their renovation projects. Yet the newest landlords of a long-neglected Hillcrest structure dating back to 1916 are tapping into the community at large for creative suggestions as to who or what should fill 5,000 square feet of prime rental space in the building's ground floor.

"We're very open-minded and all ears," said Brandon Blum, who earlier this year purchased the two-story structure at 1253 University Ave. for \$2.7 million with business partner and longtime friend Daniel Shkolnik under their real estate investment company, SBMI Group.

They have since commissioned local design firm Tecture to give the building a much-needed makeover. The upstairs, which was home in part to a Flapper-era dance hall in the late 1920s, will be



(l to r) Daniel Shkolnik and Brandon Blum stand in front of a second-floor dance floor from the Flapper-era. (Photo by Frank Sabatini Jr.)

converted into office suites and a communal mezzanine. Work is scheduled to begin in about 30 days and will take several months to complete.

"The downstairs could be a restaurant or something fitness-related or any cool concept that uplifts the neighborhood," Blum said. "We can divide the space or keep it whole."

Shkolnik, on the other hand, doesn't rule out "something interactive" going into the space.

"Maybe a store where customers can make soap, or a flower shop that allows patrons to create their own bouquets," he said.

Blum and Shkolnik recently named the building, The Wall, inspired by its expansive east-facing wall that has prompted a search for a muralist to replace the existing riot of psychedelic images spray-painted by unidentified artists over the past few years.

see The Wall, pg 16

North Park to vote on its future

Decision time on Community Plan Update

Ken Williams | Editor

Updating a Community Plan — an important policy document that guides new development in San Diego's neighborhoods — is a long, arduous process requiring patience, perseverance, compromise and a big dose of hope for the future.

The North Park Planning Committee began working on the Community Plan Update (CPU) about eight years ago, at a time when George W. Bush was in the waning months of his presidency. So much has happened in the years that

see North Park, pg 7

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Contact us

Editorial/Letters
619-961-1952
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Woof woof!

Hillcrest's 'Canine Country Club' moving to North Park

Ken Williams | Editor

With a dollop of sadness about leaving Hillcrest and a dose of excitement about heading to North Park, the team at Fido and Company Canine Country Club is busy preparing for the big move.

The owner, Lisa Wilhoit McCormick, and her staff have been counting down the days and will bid farewell to Hillcrest on Wednesday, Aug. 31, and say hello to North Park on Thursday, Sept. 1.

Fido and Company will take over two office spaces in the building that also houses The Mission Restaurant, located at the corner of 28th Street and University Avenue. The two office spaces were recently occupied by a dance studio and an optometrist, Dr. Stephen Chinn, who recently moved one block east to 2856 University Ave. Local historians say the building — which is not historically designated — was originally an auto garage and once



(l to r) Fido and Company owner Lisa Wilhoit McCormick, holding Gabi, and groomer Lisa Ann Nieblas (Courtesy of Lisa Wilhoit McCormick)

the home of Zumwalt's Bicycle Center.

McCormick said Fido and Company will be downsizing from the 7,000-square-foot Hillcrest location to a 5,000-square-foot North Park site.

"It's a really good move for us," she said. "We will also have more manageable rent."

Times have changed in the decade that has passed since McCormick came up with the

idea of opening a place to pamper pooches.

"The economy was booming when we came up with our business plan in 2006," she recalled. "People were in a 'luxury' state of mind. We wanted to create a 'Canine Country Club' for our customers."

"By the time we opened on April 14, 2008 ... it was almost

see Woof, pg 19

How to Sell Your San Diego Home Without An Agent And Save the Commission

San Diego - If you've tried to sell your home yourself, you know that the minute you put the "For Sale by Owner" sign up, the phone will start to ring off the hook. Unfortunately, most calls aren't from prospective buyers, but rather from every real estate agent in town who will start to hound you for your listing.

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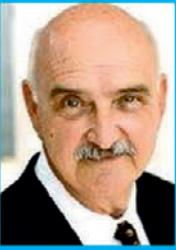
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My message is about changing perceptions about Reverse Mortgages. This financial product has taken a bad rap over the years and Editorials seems to be the right way to create conversations within the UPTOWN News' sphere of influence. I am encouraged with the results, my Facebook page Reverse Mortgage Guy is getting more activity and likes.

I am getting inquiries about doing my Power Point presentation for different social groups around town.

I can attribute this success to the written word not my Social Media activities and that I can track it. Bottom line give it a try. Ms Hamel will guide you in finding your target market in the right newspaper published by SDcnn.

4 decades of Orchids and Onions

Voting on annual juried awards event begins soon

By Dave Fidlin

Other than starting with the letter “o,” orchids and onions, of course, are plants that are polar opposites. Adorned by their sweet fragrance, orchids boast widespread, flowering plants. Onions, by contrast, are plain in appearance and offer a pungent taste and smell.

This juxtaposition has been the focal point of the San Diego Architectural Foundation's (SDAF) Orchids and Onions juried awards program since its inception in 1976.

Architecture, landscape architecture, historic preservation and interior design work considered as “orchids,” are praised for eye-catching considerations, while “onion” designees are oftentimes skewered as missed opportunities.

Fast-forward four decades and, as the saying goes, the rest is history.

“It has evolved over time,” said Perriann Hodges, SDAF director and a staffer with Studio E Architects. “It’s been a great platform for public awareness and participation. This is a way for the public to have a say beyond community planning meetings.”

While the San Diego chapter of the American Institute of Architects kicked off Orchids and Onions 40 years ago, they dropped out of sight after the 2002 competition. After a period of dormancy from 2003

– 2005, the SDAF revived the program a decade ago.

Much like a hearty perennial that comes back year after year, the Orchids and Onions program has gotten better with age, said Lauren Kim, who has co-chaired a committee tasked with organizing the logistics of the event.

While free speech is welcome, organizers have long put parameters around what makes for acceptable commentary. Off-handed, one-liner statements on why a particular project is worthy of an Orchid or Onion award will be weeded out — no pun intended — while well-crafted



The Hub, the newly redesigned shopping area in the center of Hillcrest, is up for both an Orchid and an Onion. (Courtesy SDAF)

In a typical year, SDAF receives around 100 nominees. This year, more than 130 submissions have funneled into the organization.

“[Orchids and Onions] has provided for some interesting conversations about planning and architecture over the years,” Kim said. “This is the kind of platform that gives people the complete freedom to say whatever they want.”

responses with valid arguments tend to wind up in the hands of the jury.

Vote from Sept. 1 – 15

Nominations for this year’s awards program closed recently, but the public can weigh in on submissions during the upcoming people’s choice awards, which will allow votes to be cast online from Sept. 1 – 15.

After public commentary is aired, nominees will go before the jurors for further deliberation and consideration in advance of the Oct. 13 awards ceremony that includes a reception at Horton Plaza Park and the ceremony at the Spreckels Theatre.

From the onset, the jurors designating orchids and onions have come from diverse backgrounds — from creative-minded persons in the art space to nuts-and-bolts engineers and architects. Kim said the cross-section of viewpoints have yielded some interesting and surprising awards over the years.

In a twist this year, SDAF is bringing onboard a student juror who will add a youth-filled perspective to the mix of decision-makers. Nolan Delgado joined the panel through SDAF’s participation in the Architecture, Construction and Engineering (ACE) Mentors program.

“This is a new opportunity for us and Nolan’s opinion will matter just as much as anyone else’s,” Kim said. “He will be considered a peer.”

The other nine jurors this year include Darren Bradley of Darren Bradley Photography; Kristi Byers, AIA, of Kristi Byers Architect APC; Ben Dalton, AIA, of Miller Hull; Nathan Elliott, ASLA, of the Office of James Burnett; and Marvin Malecha, FAIA, of NewSchool of Architecture + Design.

Rounding out this year’s juror panel are participants David Marshall of Heritage Architecture; Susanna Samaniego of 4 Corners

see Orchids, pg 14

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Uptown News

123 Camino de la Reina, Suite 202 East
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ACCREDITED BUSINESS

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EDITOR

Ken Williams
(619) 961-1952
ken@sdcdn.com

SALES & MARKETING DIRECTOR

Mike Rosensteel
(619) 961-1958
mike@sdcdn.com

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Jeff Clemetson, x119
Morgan M. Hurley, x110

ADVERTISING CONSULTANTS

(619) 519-7775
Andrew Bagley, x106
Sloan Gomez, x104
Lisa Hamel, x107
Lionel Talaro, x113
Todd Zukowski, x105

WEB & SOCIAL MEDIA

Jen Van Tieghem, x118
jen@sdcdn.com

COPY EDITOR

Dustin Lothspeich

CONTRIBUTORS

Charlene Baldridge
Susan A. Davis
Dave Fidlin
George Franck
Michael Good
Margie M. Palmer
Frank Sabatini Jr.
Jen Van Tieghem

ACCOUNTING

Priscilla Umel-Martinez
(619) 961-1962
accounting@sdcdn.com

WEB DESIGNER

Kim Espinoza
kim@kespinoza.com

ART DIRECTOR

Todd Kammer
(619) 961-1961
todd@sdcdn.com

PUBLISHER

David Mannis
(619) 961-1951
david@sdcdn.com

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

OPINIONS/LETTERS:

San Diego Uptown News encourages letters to the editor and guest editorials. Please email submissions to ken@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

Stronger voter protections mean a stronger democracy

By Rep. Susan A. Davis

On Aug. 6, 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed landmark legislation — the Voting Rights Act (VRA) — into law. It knocked down barriers many states had put in place that disenfranchised minority voters.

The impact of the new law was immediate. Nearly a million African-Americans registered to vote in the first four years after the VRA was signed into law.

It was a watershed moment in the history of our nation that meant millions of Americans who were previously denied the right to have a say in the direction of their country finally had a seat at the table.

The protections provided in the VRA were hard fought. The new voting rights law was the culmination of many acts of civil disobedience and numerous marches led by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

However, it was the March on Selma, led by my colleague U.S. Rep. John Lewis, in March 1965 that finally spurred Congress into action.

As 600 peaceful marchers attempted to walk from Selma to Montgomery in Alabama, state troopers blocked their path and ordered them to disperse.

Movement leaders attempted to engage in a dialogue with the commanders of the state troopers. But words were met with tear gas. Officers with billy clubs moved into the crowd beating nonviolent protesters, all of which was televised.

In years past, I've had the honor of joining John in commemorating the sacrifice of the marchers in Selma. The most moving of the memorials was last year marking the 50th anniversary of the march.

Yet more than 50 years later, the struggle continues. Many states are enacting laws to make voting harder when governments have an obligation to protect the rights of citizens.

Early voting in many states is being rolled back. States are cutting funding for holding elections resulting in

fewer polling places available to voters. We are also seeing instances of racial gerrymandering.

Voter ID laws are being implemented in states across the country. These laws severely impact minority, senior, and young voters.

Proponents of voter ID laws claim the need to stop voter fraud. But facts say otherwise. A professor at Loyola Law School looked at elections from 2000-14. In that time frame, there were just 31 incidents of voter fraud in more than 1 billion ballots cast.

Fortunately, federal courts are striking down many of these voter ID laws. But Congress needs to step up and pass a restoration of the VRA.

There is legislation waiting in the wings, including two bills that I have introduced.

My Universal Right to Vote by Mail Act would end restrictions many states impose on a person's ability to vote absentee. Currently, 21 states restrict an eligible voter's ability to vote absentee.

In San Diego, we enjoy "no excuse" voting by mail. But voters in many other states are required to provide an excuse to election officials in order to vote absentee. These requirements can be a doctor's note, the details of a religious obligation, latest pregnancy status or details of a vacation destination.

My second bill, the Federal Election Integrity Act, would prohibit a chief election official of a state from serving on federal campaign committees or engaging in other political activity on behalf of federal candidates in any election over which the official has supervisory authority.

Recent elections have brought examples of leading state election officials with disturbing conflicts of interest. In some of these cases, chief state election officials have held official positions on the campaign committees of federal candidates, such as state committee chair.

Both these bills are included in the comprehensive legislation, the Voter

see Editorial, pg 16

San Diego

Uptown News

Readers Poll

✓

Poll results

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New poll

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GUEST EDITORIAL

Weighing in on North Park Community Plan Update

By George Franck

The North Park Historical Society (NPHS) has been participating in the North Park Community Plan Update process for a half-dozen years. We have commented on the Community Historical Survey and the draft Historical Element, as well as other land-use and design issues.

NPHS generally supports the intensification of the transit corridors as a way of improving our community and accommodating growth.

However, we oppose the current proposal to allow extremely high residential densities, high building height and increased lot coverage in the residential area between Howard Avenue and Lincoln Avenue. The objective of this proposed program is to replace the older infill (so-called "Huffman" apartment buildings), which have a paved front yard design (or streetscape) that makes walking and bicycle

use difficult in much of North Park.

We oppose this high-density redevelopment concept because:

1. While the proposed higher densities promote the redevelopment of Huffmans, they also encourage the redevelopment of bungalow courts, other well-designed multifamily buildings, and some remaining single-family homes. Many of these other residential buildings are potentially historic and most contribute to the historic, pedestrian-friendly design of North Park.

2. In the central corridor, all of these existing residential uses — especially the Huffmans — provide significantly lower rental costs or purchase prices than units in the new, more intensive development. One of North Park's greatest attributes is that the range of housing in the community accommodates a wide economic range of residents. North Park represents a truly balanced community; destruction of the

Huffmans would reduce adequate lower cost housing.

3. While the streetscape design of the Huffman type buildings is unfortunate, the scale of the buildings is more in keeping with community character. In contrast, the proposed city program would allow much higher multiple stories, out of character with the residential streets in North Park.

4. Other treatment of the Huffman buildings should be implemented to improve pedestrian travel and community appearance. While not a perfect solution, supplemental front yard landscaping including major street trees is an obvious option.

While some of the buildings on University Avenue and El Cajon Boulevard should be preserved because they are historic or potentially historic, these transit arteries are where redevelopment should be focused. NPHS continues to advocate those locations for increased density; we also support the preservation of an economically balanced North Park.

—George Franck is vice president of the North Park Historical Society.✶

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Letters

Bicyclists: Obey the law

Re: Letters to the editor, Vol. 8, Issue 17 or at bit.ly/2bnqoCT.

Regarding the "Irresponsible bicyclists" letter you received: I want to be pro-bike, because they're obviously good for the environment and good for maintaining health. However, after much observation, I have to agree with letter writer Michael Garrison: I doubt I've ever seen even one bicyclist stop at a light or stop sign.

Also, our "sharrows" (who the heck came up with that name!) simply don't work. We've encountered many bikers on Adams Avenue (our neighborhood) hogging the road, refusing to accommodate anyone else.

One particularly obnoxious group of three or four bikers, who we regularly encounter, insist on riding next to each other (yup, taking up the entire lane) so they can chat — riding rather slowly so cars much veer into oncoming traffic to pass.

Gone are the days of my youth when riding about 8 mph on a one-speed clunker was the norm!

Bottom line: Civility and politeness seem to be lacking, as they are in many other areas of modern life.

—Phyllis Hordin of Normal Heights via U.S. Postal Service

Michael Garrison ("Irresponsible bicyclists" letter) says that safe bike facilities like the proposed Pershing Bikeway "reward rude, scofflaw behavior." Has he witnessed the behavior of motorists? I'm also "appalled," but by the tens of thousands

of people killed (and hundreds of thousands injured) every year by drunk, distracted and aggressive driving in this country.

Let me get this straight: Because some bicyclists run stop signs, none deserve safe infrastructure? No protection from motorists like the Encinitas hit-and-run driver who intentionally drove into a bike lane and hit a bicyclist recently. No safety from the Pacific Beach hit-and-run driver who mowed down three pedestrians while speeding in the oncoming traffic lane earlier this month. Under Mr. Garrison's logic, aren't we rewarding the deadly behavior of drivers whenever we build or widen a road?

With no parking losses to complain about, Pershing Bikeway opponents have been reduced to double standards and scapegoating bicyclists. In their view, no auto lane can ever be removed anywhere, no matter how short the increase in travel time. The Bikeway's health and safety benefits are irrelevant, along with the city's Climate Action Plan bike mode share goals. Mr. Garrison even demands a San Diego residency requirement for the Bikeway's engineers.

Let's move beyond the minority of residents who want this downtown connector to remain a dangerous, high-speed road — one that has seriously injured many bicyclists. The Bikeway will finally create a safer Pershing Avenue for all users.

—Paul Jamason via our website

Caving to developers

Re: "Heading to the finish line: Uptown Planners nearly done with Community Plan Update," Volume 8, Issue 17 or at bit.ly/2bKpJYw.

What a bunch of BS. I've watched Bankers Hill put up high-rise after high-rise, ruining the character and fabric of the neighborhood and now some rich homophobes who own the Pernicano building suddenly act like they care about my neighborhood, while they want to decimate the core of Hillcrest and install high-rise apartment buildings that the average person couldn't even afford to live in.

This is disgusting. I am so sick of my community, and the communities of San Diego as a whole, caving to developers because they care more about the almighty dollar than they do about our communities.

Removing the core of Hillcrest as a historical district is a huge mistake as is allowing for major development in that area.

Do what you will on Park Boulevard; it's already a slew of ugly giant condo buildings, but what I find most laughable about all of these "high density" zones that are near public transit, is that very few, if any people living in these high-rises utilize the crap public transit that San Diego offers.

Soon our neighborhoods will retain no historical value or character, and will be nothing but dated high-rises that contribute to pollution and overcrowding. Nothing is "greener" then the buildings that already exist in an area.

—Morgan via our website, sduptownnews.com

FROM PAGE 1
NORTH PARK

have passed, including countless public meetings involving stakeholders in the community. Finally, the hard work has paid off with a final draft that has been assembled by the city's Planning Department for public review.

On Tuesday, Sept. 6, the planning committee will take a vote on the final draft. The special meeting will be held at the Lafayette Hotel, located at 2223 El Cajon Blvd., to accommodate what is expected to be a very large crowd to witness the monumental decision.

Even if the CPU is approved by the committee, the document must still get the blessing of the Planning Commission and finally the City Council. A final vote by the City Council could come in October, and the new policy document would go into effect by year's end.

The new CPU will guide development in the greater North Park area for the next 20 years. The city defines greater North Park as the 1,980 acres that comprise the neighborhoods of Altadena, Burlingame, Montclair, North Park and University Heights east of Park Boulevard. Interstate 805 marks the eastern boundary of greater North Park.

The North Park CPU is part of the General Plan, the city's constitution for development. City planners have been simultaneously working on Community Plan updates for Uptown and Golden Hill, neighborhoods that connect on two sides of North Park, and those updates are also expected to go to the City Council later this year.

Developer Impact Fees

The North Park Planning Committee met Aug. 16, and the board voted 11-2 to approve a draft version of the North Park Impact Fee Study. Board members Robert Barry and Rick Pyles voted against the motion without stating their reasons.

The study is considered a companion piece to the CPU, and determines a formula for charging development impact fees (DIF) on new construction. The fees collect money to pay for community facilities that need to be built to accommodate population growth resulting from new development.

North Park currently has a population of 46,420 living in 25,025 dwelling units, and is expected to grow to 73,170 living in 36,570 dwelling units by build-out, according to city figures.

The Community Plan Environmental Impact Report estimates that North Park at build-out will generate a total of 466,850 average daily trips, compared to the latest data from 2008 that showed 412,046 average daily trips.

The study calculated the new DIF:

● **Residential DIF** will be \$6,634 per dwelling unit. Out of that, \$5,468 would go toward Parks and Recreation, \$700 for mobility, \$394 for library, and \$72 for Fire-Rescue.

see CPU, pg 20



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UpSan Diego
town News

When prophet meets profit

The under-appreciated Irving Gill gets another shot at respect

HouseCalls Michael Good

No man's a prophet in his hometown. I learned that at a young age while sitting in the hard wooden pews of Brooklyn Heights Presbyterian Church, at 30th and Fir streets. Gazing at the stained glass windows, listening to the choir and pondering the anecdote-laden sermons of the pastor, the Rev. Ellis Shaw, I learned about art and architecture, music and literature, writing and the power of daydreaming.

These lessons came to mind recently when contemplating the fate of local architect Irving J. Gill, who no doubt spent some time in church — he de-

It was clear that Goodhue did not appreciate Gill's minimalist tendencies; he instead chose the Spanish Revival style. Sometime in 1912, Gill bailed on the project (and San Diego) and moved to Torrance, California, where he'd been hired to design an entire town.

Torrance didn't exactly work out, either. Gill designed several factories, a railroad bridge, a train station and a school, but his worker housing ran into some problems: The workers hated it. Raised a Quaker, Gill was religious about simplicity. He sought to make things thinner, smaller, sleeker and simpler. Gill believed he was making the worker's lives better. They believed he was putting them out of work.

After so much success, the 1920s were hard on Gill. For several years he had virtually no work. He blamed Goodhue and the historicism of the Panama California Expo. Instead of a new architecture for a new land, Southern Californians embraced an old architecture gussied up for the Jazz Age: a movie set pretending to be an old Spanish castle, a Moorish bathhouse or a Shakespeare cottage. Gill was living alone and mostly forgotten on an avocado ranch near Oceanside when he died, in 1936, of a heart attack. He was 66.

On the 80th anniversary of his passing, Gill may yet receive the visionary status he deserves. Beginning in September, Southern Californians will encounter a flurry of exhibits, lectures and tours by a bevy of cultural institutions on the subject of Gill's life, work, politics, philosophy and legacy. (See sohosandiego.org for details.)

For someone who lived — and died — alone, Gill spent an awfully lot of time and energy perfecting his vision of neighborhood: harmoniously designed, interconnected single-family homes that promoted community involvement through shared common areas.

Gill's favorite was Bella Vista Terrace (Lewis Courts), a bungalow court in Sierra Madre, which was arranged in the early California manner, with the units pushed up against the street, leaving room for a communal garden, picnic area and pergola. (The owner, of course, filled in the open space with more units, to increase his profit.)

In San Diego, Gill built three similar "worker's cottages" in a row on Robinson Mews, where he lived. A few blocks to the east, on Eighth Avenue, Gill built four rental cottages in a row for developer Mary Cossitt. In 1906, he designed three Prairie Style houses in a semi-circle on Seventh Avenue, for Alice Lee and Katharine Teats. In 1912-13, Gill designed a grouping of eight houses around a terraced canyon for the same clients. And on Granada Avenue, in Brooklyn Heights, not far from the church and the house of its pastor, Gill designed three houses in a row for Peter M. Price, a seed-store owner and land developer.

Dan Davey, the current owner of one of those houses on Granada, started my ruminations on Gill when he emailed to say that his house bore an



The Model Bungalow in its new quarters at Navy Field (Courtesy of militarymuseum.org)

signed 10 places of worship in San Diego and more than 100 houses and commercial buildings before washing the dust of this Doubting Thomas of a town from his feet and setting off for what he hoped would be a better reception in Los Angeles.

Gill, who had designed houses for many of the city's movers and shakers, had good reason to believe he would be chosen as the head architect of the 1915 Panama California Exposition. In January 1911, the Exposition's building committee passed a resolution to hire Gill. Four weeks later, after considerable lobbying, East Coast architect and inveterate snob Bertram Goodhue was instead offered the job. Gill was named associate architect, at a not-insubstantial salary of \$7,500.

The workers made their feelings known in a raucous public meeting with Gill in attendance. A lesser man might have been crushed. Gill was merely ... compressed. Out of the hundreds of concrete houses he had planned, only 10 were completed (and sold for \$1,400 a piece). The rest were built of wood in traditional styles.

Today, residential Torrance looks like any other Los Angeles suburb built in historic revival style — Spanish Revival, Tudor Revival, Colonial Revival — everything Gill had railed against. Gill's worker cottages have been remodeled beyond recognition.

Despite these setbacks, Gill did some of his best work over next decade: the Walter Dodge House in West Hollywood, the Ellen Scripps House in La Jolla, the Clark House in Santa Fe Springs.

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see House Calls, pg 9

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FROM PAGE 8
HOUSE CALLS

uncanny resemblance to one covered last year in this column: the Panama California Expo “Model Bungalow.” That structure was probably designed in 1911, when Gill was still associate architect for the Expo. Among Davey’s evidence that the two houses might be related: a pot perched on his front porch looks like one pictured in a period photograph of the Model Bungalow. The general layout of the Ranch House (a “U”) resembles the house next door as well, which was also designed by Gill. Then, according to Davey, there’s original owner Peter M. Price, who was the manager of the Expo’s Model Farm, site of the Model Bungalow. (Historical records disagree, awarding that title to C.L. Wilson, who also is credited with designing



Sense of community: Gill planned a neighborhood of compatible houses arranged around canyon paths in Banker’s Hill. (Photo by Michael Good)

the bungalow. But never mind. You can’t believe what you read in the papers.) Adding to the mystique, a site plan for the farm’s irrigation system (which I found at the public library) reveals an earlier, much-more-Gill-like version of the bungalow, identified as the Ranch House. (That

term, or Ranch Home, was used interchangeably with “Model Bungalow” in early promotional material.) It appears that between conception and execution, the bungalow became less Mexican rancho and more English Tudor. On top of that, there’s no escaping the arched window openings for the two wings, which are dead ringers for the semi-circle windows at Gill’s Bella Vista court, built in 1910. And don’t forget the pots!

So does this mean Gill could have designed the Ranch House? That’s the problem with giving Gill his due in a town filled with Philistines. Unless you can produce a plan with Gill’s signature on it, unless your evidence passes the historical DNA test, it’s not a Gill, and it’s subject to the wrecking ball. For most developers, historic designation is a financial liability.

But signed original plans may not be the best way to understand

and appreciate Gill. Architecture is a collaborative enterprise. It’s only in some all-American cowboy-fantasy that a guy (and it’s always a guy) designs a house (usually on a napkin), and then builds it entirely himself (out of tools he himself forged).

At the height of his business, Gill had two offices and employed a half-dozen draftsman. He delegated. He inspired. He made connections. Gill taught, mentored, collaborated and partnered — he worked with a lot of different people in a lot of different capacities. He was the Kevin Bacon of early-20th-century architecture. No one with a T-square and a drawing board in San Diego was more than a degree or two away from Gill.

But influence doesn’t equal historic significance. Gill’s roll as a visionary has not been enough to preserve the buildings he designed, much less

an aerial photograph from that year, the disassembled Ranch House sits forlornly beside the tennis courts, just south of the old Police Station.

That may be its last portrait. The San Diego Union archives yielded nothing — no mention of Navy Field officer clubhouses, model bungalows or ranch houses designed by Gill but awkwardly remodeled in the English style by an anonymous hack.

There is an article, however, from 1980, about the decommissioning of Navy Field, which was to become Seaport Village and the Marriot Hotel. The city was looking for bids to demolish everything that remained of the former facility, including the old San Diego Rowing Club boathouse, which ultimately was saved — by SOHO — then turned into a Chart House. Ranch House. Clubhouse. Boathouse. Chart House. Do you sense a pattern?



The simple life: Gill lived in one of these interconnected “workers cottages” on Robinson Mews. (Photo by Michael Good)



Garden Party: Gill designed three Prairie style houses around a garden on Seventh Avenue in 1905. (Photo by Michael Good)

those he influenced. In “Irving Gill and the Architecture of Reform,” Thomas S. Hines lists 183 buildings that have either been destroyed or altered.

The wrecking ball appears to have been the fate of the Expo Ranch House as well. Dan Davey found a 75-year-old San Diego Union newspaper article that follows the bungalow’s relocation from Balboa Park to Navy Field, a Downtown recreation site for military people and their families, with ball fields, picnic grounds, tennis courts and barbecues. According to an article dated Jan. 26, 1941, the Ranch House was to be converted to a clubhouse — for Naval officers. In

A final footnote: The city gave one corner of Navy Field to a developer for condos. That developer, Pardee, had a clever inspiration for the architecture of their condo complex — a mostly forgotten early-20th-century architect named Irving Gill, “who was prominent after the turn of the century in breaking away from the designs of the Victorian era.” Gill’s influence would be evident, a San Diego Union article from 1980 claimed, in the form of “slanted roofs, arches and a great deal of tile work.” Finally, respect!

—Contact Michael Good at housecallssdun@gmail.com.✽

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Refill café specializes in cold brew coffee

By Margie M. Palmer

Coffee shops are a dime a dozen, which is why when Nathan Tobiason decided to open Refill in Hillcrest, he let his passion for cold brew be his guide.

For those of you who have yet to hop on the cold brew train, you should know it's nothing like its warm-steeped counterpart. Unlike a hot cup of Joe, cold brew is prepared by using room-temperature water. And because this methodology has a marked impact on the flavor, and caffeine extraction rate from, cold brew coffee can take up to 24 hours to prepare.

The result is a beverage that has a higher caffeine content and an oftentimes bold sweetness that isn't found in your standard cup of coffee.

The San Diego native turned café owner said he's always been a fan of what he calls "the diner culture." Tobiason also has an affinity for comfortable coffeehouses that are a great place to share a bite with friends. And when he learned a storefront in the Jonathan Segal-designed Mr Robinson building on the corner of Park Boulevard and Robinson Avenue was in need of a tenant, he decided to make his move.

"I'm friends with the son of the guy who owns [the building where Refill is] and once I heard the spot was available, and saw the location, I just really wanted to pursue it," Tobiason said.

The timeframe from Refill's inception to its opening date took months.

"It took a really long time. I think the initial plan really started in October and we



Nathan Tobiason jumped at the chance to open his Refill café concept in the acclaimed Mr Robinson building at the corner of Robinson Avenue and Park Boulevard. (Courtesy of Refill)

didn't open until mid-July," he said, adding that the design, layout and furniture was both collaborative and extensive.

"I went to school for product design and sculpture, and I worked with local artist Phil Audia, who is in Little Italy. We met for months and planned out layout, furniture, tables, the metal bar and all of that."

The months-long process was not in vain; feedback to date has been more than positive.

"We've been open just over a month, we love the neighborhood and we've gotten a lot of positive feedback. There aren't really any coffee or café options [southeast of Refill toward Balboa Park], which has also been really helpful," Tobiason said. "It's fun to have people come in and try a couple of the

cold brews and to be able to expose people to different flavors. We have four on tap. We have a Ugandan French roast, which is very chocolatey, and we also have an Ethiopian cold brew that is much more fruity."

The fact that they have four cold brew coffees on tap isn't the only thing that differentiates Refill from some of the other neighborhood cafes. Another unique aspect of the space is that half of it is inside while the other 50 percent is outside. The indoor/outdoor areas are separated by a big sliding glass wall, Tobiason said.


"We keep it closed on warmer days so we can have the air conditioning running and open on more reasonable days, which allows us to utilize San Diego's weather," he added.

Refill may be in its infancy but the café owner has high hopes for the future. "It is my hope that this cafe becomes a great meeting place for the residents of Hillcrest," Tobiason said. "The open design, great coffee and light fare make for a great place to gather."

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

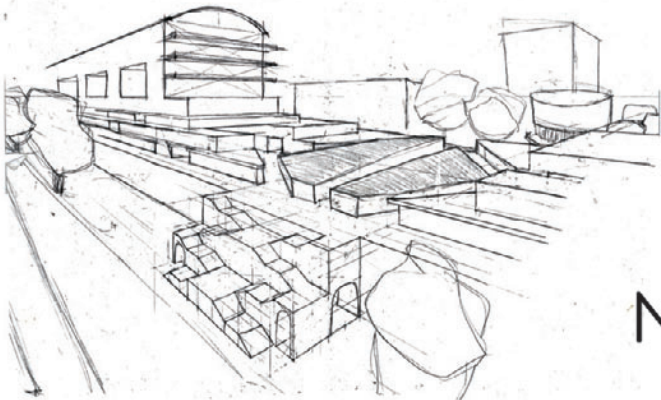


(above) Customers enjoy cold brew coffee (inset) and good conversation. (Courtesy of Refill)



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Seafood yearnings

Restaurant Review

Frank Sabatini Jr.



The annual Maine “lobster festival” at King’s Fish House had sadly ended by the time I could no longer endure seeing yet another unrelated television commercial showing beads of fresh lemon juice bouncing off shellfish in captivating slow motion.

So instead of succumbing to those compelling ads for Red Lobster, which for value reasons often disappoint, I steered my appetite to King’s for its current celebration of wild salmon from Alaska.

This long-established family-owned seafood house taps into nearly every hedonistic pleasure the oceans have to offer. With nearly a dozen locations scattered mostly throughout Southern California, including Mission Valley and Carlsbad, the regular menu offers everything from sashimi and sushi rolls to assorted oysters, South African lobster tails and red rockfish from the Pacific Northwest.

There are also steaks, chicken and burgers. And many of the side dishes such as grilled zucchini and corn cut fresh from the cob prove to be more than just boring footnotes on the plate.

King’s Mission Valley in the Westfield shopping plaza is contained within a free-standing brick structure that looks invitingly antiquated. Take away the urban density surrounding it, and you might envision the rocky coast of Maine as the backdrop.

The atmosphere is casual; perhaps a touch corporate in its template, but there is ample seating that extends comfortably to a large bar lounge and spacious patio.

Visiting as a twosome for a weekday dinner, the vibe was low-key and quiet enough to converse effortlessly despite a soundtrack of soft rock playing at medium volume. We were seated in a roomy booth, close to a tank of live East Coast lobsters, though now in shorter supply and with fewer weight

choices compared to when they were in peak season over the past three months.

A large Castroville artichoke, grilled and quartered, was a luxurious primer to our meal, considering few restaurants bother serving them. The meaty leaves were drizzled in basil vinaigrette, providing enough twang as to skip over the pesto-mayo dipping sauce altogether. Right down to the joyous tender heart, it was a well-trimmed beauty cooked perfectly.

Lump crab cocktail is presented with a generous slick of classic cocktail sauce on top. The chilled crab was sweet and

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Prices: Oysters and other raw bar items, \$2.30 to \$3.10 per single serving to \$14.25 to \$35.25 per dozen; sushi rolls, \$7.95 to \$13.50; small plates, soups and salads, \$3.75 to \$17.95; meat and seafood entrees, \$18.45 to \$45.95

reasonably abundant, but in relation to the deep well of diced celery and cucumbers underneath, it might give the impression you’ve been shortchanged.

As an interlude we slurped down a couple of fresh Kumamoto oysters, my favorite variety because of their buttery, oceanic flavor. Perched on ice alongside mignonette sauce and shaved horseradish, we could have easily consumed two dozen in the absence of everything else we ate, which included an overload of complimentary house-baked sourdough bread served warm with every table delivery.

The seasonal Coho salmon, trolled from St. Nicholas Channel in southeast Alaska, is available for the time being in four different ways — pan seared, in cake form, in “summer salad” or roasted with Creole



A pair of Kumamoto oysters on ice

Walnut-crusted white sea bass in lemon sauce with corn and mashed potatoes

Spice-rubbed wild Alaskan salmon with grilled zucchini and mac ‘n’ cheese

(Photos by Frank Sabatini Jr.)

dry spice. I chose the latter with some concern that the dry rub might overwhelm the fish.

It didn’t. The spice was like a gentle kiss to the fish, imparting a sweet and piquant essence but without violating its wild pureness. Of the two sides I chose, the elongated slices of grilled zucchini reinforced the fact that charred squash tastes better than steamed. The mac ‘n’ cheese, however, quickly lost precious moisture halfway into eating it.

My companion became love-struck over his walnut-crusted white sea bass. And for good reason. Coated also in panko crumbs and Parmesan, the exterior offered the crunch of a thin potato chip and the flavor of toasted cheese. The texture of the fish was wonderfully firm, and the lemon sauce dressing on it gave rise to everything else on the plate — creamy mashed potatoes and buttery corn straight off the cob.

We ended with a sizable slice of high-calorie key lime pie made in-house. I’m guessing a payload of condensed milk was incorporated into the curd. Accented with an equally rich graham cracker crust, we weren’t complaining.

The booze offerings at King’s include a decent wine list featuring selections from respectable labels such as Stag’s Leap, Justin and Seghisio. There are also craft and domestic beers, plus plenty of signature cocktails to satisfy most urban hipsters.

Happy hour is held in the bar area from 3 — 6 p.m. Monday through Friday. The deals apply to various drinks and food items listed within

four price categories: \$4, \$5, \$7 and \$9. Lobster and salmon dishes aren’t among them, but you can indulge in California rolls, burgers, oyster shooters or crispy calamari for a fraction of the price, and with a select glass of wine or cocktail to boot.

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

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An all-brick building distinguishes King’s Fish House in Mission Valley (Photo by Frank Sabatini Jr.)

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Vegan chocolate chip roll from the new Cinnaholic in Mission Valley (Courtesy Cinnaholic)

Famous for its vegan cinnamon rolls, **Cinnaholic** made its San Diego debut Aug. 12 in **Westfield Mission Valley** mall via a kiosk in front of **Macy's**. The rolls, which are available with flavored icings and various toppings of choice, are free of dairy and eggs. The company launched several years ago in Berkeley, and has since branched into Las Vegas, Atlanta and Southlake, Texas. Plans are in the works for two other local outlets in the Gaslamp Quarter and Pacific Beach. 1640 Camino Del Rio North, 619-546-9991, cinnaholic.com.

Without explanation, **Lil B's Urban Eatery** in North Park abruptly closed this month. The restaurant was launched in 2012 by Brian Stout, who had previously co-owned the former **Brian's American Eatery** on Washington Street. That too had suddenly closed before **Great Maple** moved in. A posting on Facebook under the name "Lil B's Restaurant," dated Aug. 14, simply states: "I'm sure I speak for everyone that worked at Lil B's that we appreciate the loyalty of all of our customers. We will miss u all." 2611 El Cajon Blvd.

Nearly a dozen local restaurants will take part in the **Third Annual Ceviche Showdown** from 2 – 5 p.m., Sunday, Aug. 28, at **57 Degrees** in Middletown. The event allows guests to sample the creative and traditional recipes from each competitor before casting their vote for the people's choice award. A panel of judges will also rate the entries for the "best of San Diego" award.

Participating restaurants include **Old Town Tequila Factory**, **Café Gratitude**, **Hope 46**, **Dobson's**, **Puesto** and more.

Tickets can be purchased through the website. The cost is \$24 in advance (by Aug. 27) and \$35 at the door. 1735 Hancock St., 619-234-5757, fiftysevendegrees.com.

One of Shelter Island's oldest seafood restaurants, **Red Sails Inn**, has been purchased by **The Brigantine Family of Restaurants** and will permanently close Aug. 31. The new ownership will remodel the space for a contemporary seafood concept called **The Katch**, which is due to open early next year.

Red Sails Inn was originally established in the late 1920s at the foot of G Street in Downtown San Diego before moving in 1957 to its current location. 2614 Shelter Island Drive, 619-223-3030, theredsails.com.

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



Lestat's Hillcrest had its soft opening on Aug. 9, marking the coffee house's third location since establishing its original spot in 1997 on Adams Avenue in Normal Heights. The Hillcrest outlet occupies a double-storefront space left behind by **Lava Sushi**.

Manager Joseph Wellman said Lestat's Hillcrest will begin operating 24 hours "in the next four or five weeks" and that it will eventually take advantage of the property's full kitchen for expanding the food menu. At present, the offerings are the same as those at the company's Park Boulevard location in University Heights — salads, paninis, house-made soups and sandwiches. 1045 University Ave., 619-564-6616, lestats.com.

Two of life's guilty pleasures, bacon and booze, will take center stage at the fourth annual **San Diego Bacon Festival**, from 1 – 5:30 p.m., Sept. 3, at **Liberty Station's Preble Field**. In past events, participating chefs and restaurants have incorporated the pork strips into everything from sandwiches and seafood items to lettuce wraps and desserts.

Nearly 20 food vendors are taking part this year, including **S&M Sausage and Meat**, **Sabuku Sushi**, **The Cork & Craft** and **The Smok'd Hog**. They'll be joined by dozens of local and national breweries doling out samples of their latest and greatest releases. Several distilleries will be on hand as well.

Guests must be 21 years or older. General admission is \$60, which includes unlimited samples of food and drink. 2600 Cushing Road, sdbaconfest.com.



Get your bacon fix in early September at Liberty Station (Photo by Frank Sabatini Jr.)

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Hats off to a happy hour debut

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At nearly 20 years old, El Agave in Old Town just introduced its first-ever happy hour to the tune of very strong Cadillac margaritas, Mexican beers and a menu that raises the bar on south-of-the-border cuisine.

The restaurant calls itself a “tequila museum” because of its dazzling collection of nearly 2,000 labels displayed throughout the dining room in all sorts of nifty bottles. Happy hour, however, is available only at the intimate five-stool bar near the entrance or on the charming patio overlooking San Diego Avenue.

Located in a small strip plaza

above a liquor store, El Agave’s enticing ambiance goes easily undetected by tourists on the hunt for fajitas and cheap tacos, which you won’t find here. Many out of towners don’t wander this far south on the drag anyhow. Yet for locals in the know, the place is a gastronomic gem.

My tagalong, who resides a block away, ordered the Cadillac margarita containing two and a half ounces of Semental blue agave tequila and a full ounce of Grand Marnier. It was an icy, delicious thing capable of rendering you silly if drinking two.

During happy hour it sells for \$9, which is about \$5 less than regular price.

With a few hours of work still ahead of me that afternoon, I stuck to Pacifico beer priced at \$4 a bottle, a buck

under normal cost.

More so with beer

El Agave

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(Old Town)

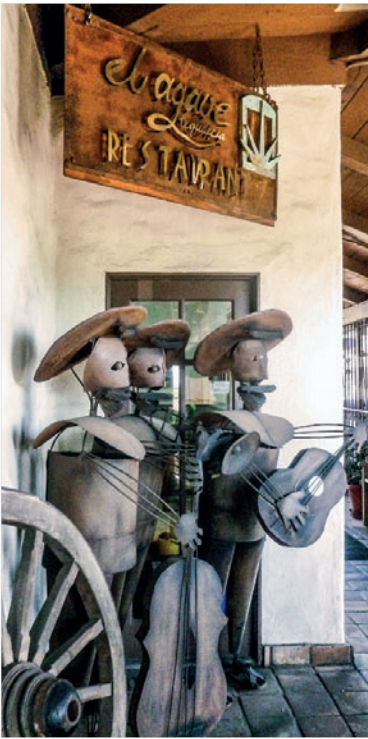
619-220-8405,
elagave.com

Happy Hour: 2:30 to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday

than margaritas, I can devour a hefty basket of table chips faster than it takes to fry them. These might have been baked, however. They were thick and non-greasy. Better yet, they were served with three salsas: tomatillo, habanero-tomato, and black bean.

The cost for various salads, appetizers, tacos and burritos drop down between \$2 and \$5 from their normal prices, with the ultimate bargain being the \$10 langosta lobster burrito. Our dapper waiter said it’s normally about \$15. Stuffed generously with chunks of tender meat, the jalapeno tortilla also folded in pimento, chipotle sauce and a touch of cotija cheese.

My friend ordered two items at \$10 each: a trio of nicely spiced carne asada street tacos, and a trio of sopes de pulpo created expressly for the happy hour



A trio of sculpted musicians greet at the entrance (Photos by Dr. Ink)

menu. Their masa bases were rather dense, although the medley of sautéed octopus, guajillo peppers, red onions and edible flowers crowning them presented a terrific example of fine and authentic Mexican cooking that you won’t find down the street from here.

Given the restaurant’s vast inventory of tequila, the liquor appears only in the margaritas during happy hour. But I’m told that might change once the public becomes more aware of the existing bargains, after which we could see flights or sipper shots enter into the equation. ❖

RATINGS

Drinks: The bar makes one of the best Cadillac margaritas in Old Town, using 100 percent blue agave Semental Tequila and a good dose of Grand Marnier.

Food: Dishes exceed everyday Mexican fare in terms of flavor, quality and presentation. Choices include mus-sels in tequila sauce, grilled sea bass tacos, plump lobster burritos and sopos topped with octopus, guajil-lo peppers and black beans.

Value: Customers save \$4 to \$5 on the margaritas and certain tacos and burritos during happy hour. In addition, complimentary table chips come with three types of salsa.

Service: The waiters are well-dressed and take a formal, professional approach to the service they provide.

Atmosphere: Happy hour is available at the five-seat bar or on the charming patio overlooking San Diego Avenue. But don’t leave without poking further inside to marvel at the mind-bog-gling tequila selection, which is exhibited throughout the pub-like dining room.



Lobster burrito in a jalapeno tortilla

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FROM PAGE 1 EXHIBIT

Research Library’s 56,000-volume collection, unseen by the public until now.

A permanent exhibit, “Extraordinary Ideas from Ordinary People: A History of Citizen Science,” premiered Saturday, Aug. 20 in the new Eleanor and Jerome Navarra Special Collections Gallery on the third floor of theNAT. The exhibit displays 70 rare books, works of art, and photographs from the Research Library.

The exhibit’s curator, Margi Dykens, on Aug. 19 gave San Diego Uptown News a personal tour of the two-story gallery, which includes a special area for children called the Dragon’s Den.

Dykens said the new gallery and the permanent exhibit is a labor of love by the museum’s staff, and that most of the work including building the exhibit infrastructure was done in-house.

Low-intensity lighting and controlled humidity levels between 45 percent and 50 percent are designed to protect the valuable historical books, one of which is 499 years old and was published 25 years after Christopher Columbus stepped foot in America.

“Many of these books I consider works of art,” Dykens said, pointing to an extremely rare copy of the gigantic Double Elephant Folio of John James Audubon’s “Birds of America,”

published in 1860. The folio, one of only a few intact copies in existence, depicts life-size renditions of a wide variety of North America’s birds.

The book, which is about 50 inches tall, is currently open to the page featuring the Carolina Parrot, which was the only native parrot in the U.S. With its beautiful, colorful features, the parrot was ruthlessly hunted for its exquisite feathers for use in women’s hats. Sadly, the bird became extinct in 1918. The exhibit has a stuffed Carolina Parrot on display along with a historical photo of a woman wearing a fancy hat topped with numerous feathers from the parrot.

The 60-pound book was donated to theNAT in 1930.

“This is the first time we’ve been able to show it to the public,” Dykens said.

Audubon (1785-1851) was an ornithologist, naturalist and a painter who illustrated all the birds he encountered in the wild. As a result, he became one of the most celebrated wildlife illustrators of his generation.

The museum has digitally copied the pages of “Birds of America” and created an interactive version that allows visitors to flip through the book, view the illustrated birds and enlarge the images.

Also digitally copied and made into an interactive video is “The Botanical Illustrators of the Flora Londinensis,” a groundbreaking book from the late 18th century that documented all the plants growing within a 10-mile



Image of the griffin pediment, which now marks the entrance to "Extraordinary Ideas" exhibit. (Photo by Michael Field)

radius of London, England. Various artists, engravers, watercolorists and textile designers contributed to this gorgeous book, which was the first of its kind at the time.

Another multimedia gem is “Microscopes in Victorian England (1930s-1900),” which features a touch-screen selection of digitalized versions of slides from the era that allowed Victorians to look at specimens from the privacy of their own homes. Microscopes became commercially available and affordable during the Victorian era, so viewing specimen slides became a popular hobby for amateur naturalists and spurred greater interest in science and nature.

One of San Diego’s legendary citizen scientists, Laurence Klauber (1883-1968), is highlighted in the new exhibit. The chairman and CEO of SDG&E was an amateur naturalist

whose hobby was studying reptiles. Self-taught, he nonetheless became one of the leading authorities on rattlesnakes. Klauber donated 36,000 reptile and amphibian specimens to theNAT, including the most comprehensive collection of rattlesnakes in the world. Check out the five jars containing rattlesnake specimens and the stuffed rattlesnake on view.

A short flight of steps leads up to a hallway gallery displaying 10 paintings by renowned artist A.R. Valentien, who from 1908 to 1918 documented 1,500 species of California wildflowers. The museum has 1,094 watercolor paintings from the decade-long project in its collection, and will be rotating them on a regular basis. Valentien’s patron saint was La Jolla philanthropist Ellen Browning Scripps, who was one

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UpTown News
The return of Ken Video, with a twist

f **t**

FROM PAGE 4
ORCHIDS

International Design Concepts; Carmen Vann of Turner Construction Company; and Laura Warner of City Works.

When asked about some of the notable Orchid and Onion awardees over the years, Hodges and Kim were flooded with some of the orchids, including the remaking of Gaslamp Quarter and Horton Plaza’s development.

In unison, Hodges and Kim pinpointed a standout onion. In 2010, the proposed Charger stadium Downtown received the people’s choice award for that category as criticisms emerged in a hot debate that continues to this day.

“There was a statement made at that time that people didn’t want tax money used for a new Charger stadium,” Hodges said.

The Charger nomination is no longer eligible as rules have been tweaked within the past few years. Nominations for unbuilt projects are no longer accepted.

Although Orchids and Onions awards have been handed out for architecture, landscapes and interior designs across San Diego County, projects in the Hillcrest and North Park areas have been well represented over the years.

Some of the projects receiving an Orchid have included:

- Whole Foods Market (1998) — interior design.



Dunedin North Park, a New Zealand-inspired restaurant located at 3501 30th St., is nominated for an Orchid in the Landscape Architecture category. (Courtesy SDAF)

- North Park Elementary School (1998) — fine arts.

- Stephen and Mary Birch North Park Theatre (2008) — historic preservation.

Onions also have made their way into the neighborhood:

- Hillcrest LED Sign (2011) — historic preservation.

- North Park “Clones” (duplicate condo projects) (2006) — architecture.

And while the Village Hillcrest residential complex got an onion in 1992 for architecture, just two years later, the developer had made enough changes to garner a Blooming Orchid Award in 1994.

Nominees for 2016 are all available for review on the website. Readers are encouraged to peruse the list of nominees in preparation for the upcoming People’s Choice selections and it’s even fun to read the comments.

As we go to press, the nominee with the “most views” is Qualcomm Building AZ Pacific Center Campus and the “most buzz” (comments) is the County of San Diego Alpine Library.

There are a number of North Park developments up for orchids this year and even a few onions; and the HUB in Hillcrest is in the running for both an orchid and an onion.

For more details and to review all the nominees for this year’s Orchids and Onions program, visit orchidsandonions.org.

—Contributing Editor
Morgan M. Hurley contributed to this report.

—Dave Fidlin is a freelance journalist with a special affinity for San Diego and its people. Contact him at dave.fidlin@thinkpost.net.❖

FROM PAGE 13
THENAT

of the major benefactors of the museum from the 1920s until she died in 1932. A year later, the Scripps estate donated the Valentien paintings to theNAT. Again, these detailed watercolors have not been seen by the public, other than by request.

True to the name of the space, several books are devoted to the mythical dragon.

“Dragons are still a cultural icon even today,” Dykens said.

One book on dragons, “The History of Four-Footed Beasts and Serpents and the Theater of Insects,” was written and illustrated by Edward Topsell in 1758. In those days, Dykens said, “people used to believe that dragons existed.”

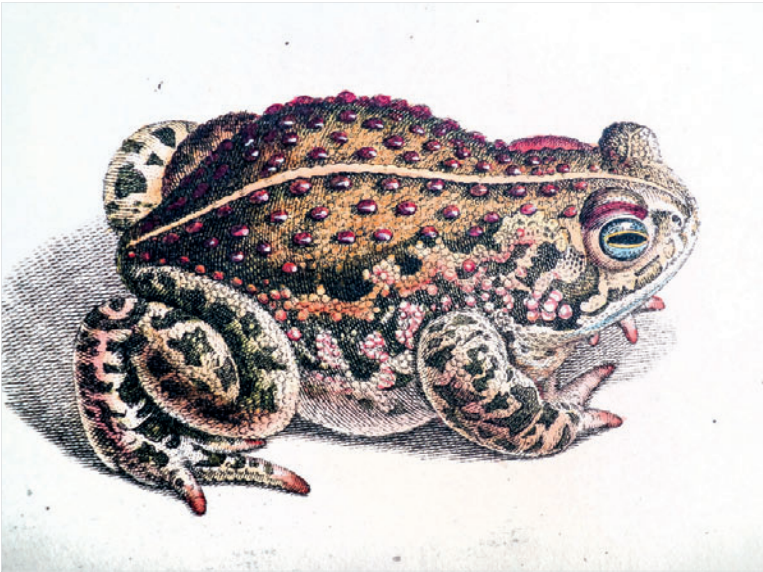


Illustration from “Historia Naturalis Ranarum, 1758.” (Photo by Michael Field)

Down the hallway from the small art gallery is the Dragon’s Den, a fun space designed specifically for children. Some of theNat’s oldest books are currently on display in the Dragon’s Den, notably “Hortus Sanitatis” (“Garden of Health”), which was published in 1517 in Germany and details plants that heal.

“Some pages have handwritten notes on them,” Dykens said, pointing to a page on display.

Eventually science would prove otherwise.

The Dragon’s Den also contains a fantasy book nook for children with three beanbag chairs “hidden” behind a wall of giant books, which also act as bookcases. In a whimsical touch, a giant cat sits atop the entrance.

And speaking of entrances. A griffin — another type of mythical beast — greets visitors at the unusual entry into the Eleanor

and Jerome Navarra Special Collections Gallery, a hint of what is to come in the Dragon’s Den.

The 3,100-square-foot gallery has been carved out of the 7,300-square-foot Research Library, which was formerly considered part of the “back of the house” at the museum and out of view of the public other than by appointment. The gallery’s designers added skylights for natural lighting and exposed some of the architectural elements from the original 1930s building. In the middle of the third-floor gallery is the top of the Foucault pendulum, which was installed in the 1950s and has been restored and adorned with a modern casing.

The gallery exhibit is free for members and included with general admission tickets.

“Very few people have seen the objects that are featured in ‘Extraordinary Ideas’ and its accompanying galleries,” said Dykens, the longtime director of the Research Library. “The objects and rare books on display, some dating back to the 1500s, convey the impact citizen science has had not only on our organization, but the world at large. It’s a great honor to be able to share these items with the public for the first time.”

For more information, visit sdnhm.org.

—Ken Williams is editor of 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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Sudoku Puzzle

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

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Puzzle answers on page 16

Uptown Crossword

Colorful Diet

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
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CREATORS NEWS SERVICE

By Charles Preston

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36 Follow
37 Printer's measures
38 N. African port
40 Head part
41 Kitchen utensils
43 Sphere
44 Grecian river
45 Slowpoke
46 Enemy
47 Mentioned
48 Unadorned

DOWN

1 Injection
2 Jacob's son
3 Indian Ocean arm
4 Capital of Sicily
5 Strong man
6 Prayer word
7 Salt
8 Were harmonious
9 Frontier dances
10 Belgian city
11 Pull
12 Man's name
13 Show sorrow
19 To this place
21 Faucet
25 Burma's capital
26 Signal

50 ___ Alto, CA
51 Greek letter
54 Water bird
55 Football play
58 Geographic area
61 Costa ___
62 Cheese variety
63 Cocktail relish
64 Numerical prefix
65 Desires
66 Drive back
67 Certain votes

27 Salad green
28 Famous Russian
29 Merriment
31 Caribbean country
32 Delight
33 Fine fiddle
35 Fuel
36 Mutineer
38 Bank employee
39 Anger
42 Notable
44 Airplane part
46 Ending
47 Civet
49 Shaded grove
50 Discussion group
51 Quarry
52 ___ arms
53 Terrible Russian
55 Active
56 Deed: Fr.
57 Far East land
59 W. German river
60 Dinky drink

Puzzle answers on page 16

FROM PAGE 6 LETTERS

A confusing quote
Re: "Hillcrest Town Council Update: U.S. Rep Susan Davis visits, affordable housing discussed," Volume 8, Issue 17 or at bit.ly/2bfqdEw.

I'm confused. If "70 percent of our homeless become street people while already living in the city," doesn't that mean that 30 percent come from elsewhere. How does that dispel the myth?
—Tim Gahagan via our website

Yum, yum
Re: "Secrets of the 'Palace,'" a restaurant review by Frank Sabatini Jr., Volume 8, Issue 17 or at bit.ly/2bDwLRC.

I am a local business owner, operating a real estate and mortgage company here in San Diego, though I am a transplant from Chicagoland, where I regularly was able to get authentic Chinese in Chicago's Chinatown district. I first dined at New Maxim Chinese Palace about three years ago, after hearing rave reviews from my attorney, and his secretary, who are regular lunch and dinner customers, from our Bankers Hill offices. I have been a regular ever since my first dining experience, and I routinely set client meetings at New Maxim. The staff is friendly and attentive, and the owner Kelly is adorable, and she takes a genuine interest in her customers. The atmosphere is warm and inviting, and parking is not an issue whatsoever, as there is ample space in the dedicated lot

right in front of the business. The cherry on top of the dining experience at New Maxim Chinese Palace is that the food is incredible, and the menu is priced shockingly inexpensive! I live in North County, and for a similar experience and quality of food, I am accustomed to paying double to triple. I recommend the Mongolian Beef and Walnut Shrimp. They also have an unbelievable stew that is completely unique. Ask about the stew!
There is another unaffiliated New Maxim Chinese restaurant in City Heights, which is located east of Interstate 805, so make sure to go to the right one, west of the 805, on 2810 El Cajon Blvd. in North Park, just a few blocks east of Hillcrest.

Two thumbs up!
—J.B. via our website

Where are the trees?
Re: "Transforming University Avenue in North Park," Volume 7, Issue 17 or bit.ly/1fBE8GG.

This sounds like a poorly thought-out plan, much like the city is doing in many other areas. The upsides: creating a transit-only lane and providing better pedestrian crossing and raised medians/bulb-outs. But please, PLEASE, plant some damn trees so it's actually a walkable place. This city lacks nice, tree lined, shaded streets to walk/bike/ park cars under. Make the medians look nice and not just paved over like many of the other medians the city is putting in. Really redesign the street from the ground up to provide a separated bike lane. This all can be done, it can be re-designed properly (I know — I have

a degree in urban planning, this isn't difficult).
—Dan Weiss via our website

Spooky times
Re: "Pioneer Park may haunt you – at least with its stories," published Oct. 19, 2009, or bit.ly/2beHYnE.

I was a student and part-time school bus driver. Grant Elementary was one of my routes. Discovered Calvary in 1998, and was very intrigued. That year I researched much of what you've shared, and even wrote an article, unpublished, while at SDSU, in the journalism program. I often felt a chilling energy near that corner of stones.
—Andre via our website

Dislikes firehouse design
Re: "Work to begin soon on Fire Station No. 5," Volume 8, Issue 17 or at bit.ly/2beIP7Y.

Hate the new building. It's fugly.
—Gregory May via our website

Family honor
Re: "The origins of West End in North Park," Volume 8, Issue 16 or bit.ly/2bDAQ8n.

My maiden name was Wightman. I understand a street is named (Wightman) after my great-grandfather who worked for the city of San Diego: A.J.Wightman.
—Priscilla Smith via our website

(Editor's note: Yes, Wightman Street runs east-west in the North Park and City Heights neighborhoods.)

—Letters to the editor can be sent to ken@sdcdn.com and comments can be made on our website or Facebook page.❖

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FROM PAGE 5

EDITORIAL

Empowerment Act, which I am co-sponsoring.

To ensure equal access to the ballot and modernize our voter registration, the Voter Empowerment Act would:

- Ensure online voter registration — San Diego County recently allowed online registration with successful results.
- Allow same-day registration.
- Encourage young people to vote with access to voter registration at universities.
- Ensure military and overseas Americans' ballots are counted.

This used to be a bipartisan issue. In 2006, I voted

for the last reauthorization of the VRA signed by President George W. Bush. His father signed a renewal of the VRA on Aug. 26, 1992.

It can and should be a bipartisan issue again. It's time we restore the scope and integrity of the Voting Rights Act. The more people who participate the stronger our democracy will be.

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

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FROM PAGE 1

THE WALL

"We want a mural that will become a staple in the community," said Blum, who is encouraging community members to submit suggestions about the artwork and tenant possibilities through the website thewallhillcrest.com, or by calling his office directly at 858-332-2480.

something with a solid model like Snooze that does breakfast and lunch, and with a healthy, organic approach," he said. "It would be nice to see Hillcrest compete more with North Park."

Simon Wolujewicz of Bull & Grain, a restaurant and craft cocktail bar due to open Sept. 19 one storefront east of the project, said he's amenable to more competition. "But I'd like it to be something that isn't already around here, like a Polish restaurant or a barbecue place," he said.

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San Diego Uptown News asked several Hillcrest business owners for their input regarding potential tenants and received a range of answers.

Chris Shaw, founder of MO's Universe (Baja Betty's, Hillcrest Brewing Company, Gossip Grill and Urban MO's) said he was approached by the building's new owners for putting a restaurant into the space, but said he declined because of "something else we have in the pipeline that has yet to be announced."

Shaw added, however, "It would be great to see some retail shops go in there, which would give pedestrians more places to browse."

Ken Mills of Wine Steals, located two addresses west of The Wall, had his ideas.

"I think it needs to be something food and beverage related,

Lance Crile of Uptown Pets, which adjoins The Wall, will be excited to have a new neighbor.

"I'm happy seeing anything go in there because it's been dark and empty for so long," he said.

David Michael, the project's lead designer from Tecture, points to several design enhancements that will breathe new life into the building. His company's portfolio includes work for The Patio on Goldfinch, The Patio on Lamont, Kettner Exchange (in conjunction with Blue Motif), West Coast Tavern and George's at the Cove.

"We're bridging an older building into the neighborhood, but without overwhelming it with some modern piece," he said.

see The Wall, pg 17

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PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

Sudoku
Puzzle from page 15

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

Colorful Diet
Crossword from page 15

S	L	A	P	T	A	T	A	R	S	H	O	W
H	E	R	A	I	M	A	G	E	P	A	T	E
O	V	A	L	T	E	R	R	E	H	A	U	T
T	I	B	E	T	A	N	E	L	I	L	O	P
I	R	A	N	R	E	S	T	S				
C	L	A	M	P	F	A	D	H	O	P	E	S
R	E	N	O	G	U	N	R	E	S	U	L	T
E	N	S	T	A	N	G	I	E	R	E	A	R
S	I	E	V	E	S	O	R	B	A	R	T	A
S	N	A	I	L	F	O	E	C	I	T	E	D
			P	L	A	I	N	P	A	L	O	
P	S	I	E	R	N	L	A	T	E	R	A	L
R	I	V	E	R	B	A	S	I	N	R	I	C
E	D	A	M	O	L	I	V	E	O	C	T	O
V	I	E	N	S	R	E	P	E	L	N	O	E

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A homecoming for ‘Lion King’ actor

By Charlene Baldridge

Actor Nick Cordileone is on the road and coming to a theater near you.

The San Diego native has got his act together.

Having had an exceptionally productive early career at Lamb’s Players (he estimates at least 40 productions) and other San Diego theaters, he left town in 2009, right after the close of the award-winning The Old Globe production of “Lobby Hero,” in which he played a leading role.



Nick Cordileone as Timon (Courtesy of Civic Theatre)

Cordileone took his newly earned Actors Equity card, his theatrically-inclined wife, Amy, whom he met at Lamb’s, and their infant daughter, Hero, and moved from the family enclave in Little Italy to New York City, where he aspired to become a busy, professional actor.

From Sept. 7 through Oct. 2, San Diegans may catch the fully ripened actor as the comic Timon the Meercat in the North American touring production of the incomparable Broadway show, “The Lion King,” with which he has been on the road for more than six years.

The home-schooled Hero, now 13, travels along with dad,

who describes the two of them as “the road team.” She loves the routine and the nomad lifestyle, he said. Amy visits them in almost every city (engagements are booked a minimum of three weeks in each locale).

After the couple’s move to New York, Amy got her doctorate in educational theater from New York University, where she now teaches.

“She can schedule her workload in such a way that she can get out to us pretty often,” Cordileone said. “It suits our family well.”

In addition to directing and choreographing, Amy runs what Nick deems “a great program” that advises acting students about the practicalities of the profession. “Everything I’ve found fulfilling in my career,” he said, “she’s found the equivalent in hers.”

Was it rough when he first hit New York?

“I got pretty lucky early on,” he said. “It was a bit of a hustle, going to Equity cattle call auditions, but I was able to get some work off-Broadway and with the Shakespeare Festival of New Jersey. Once I got an agent, it was kind of ‘no looking back.’ I was all over the country, doing regional theater, which was a great start.

“‘Lion King’ is kind of like regional theater because we get to stay a whole month in every city. It’s unheard of, really, in theater for sure, a real priceless opportunity. To know what you’re doing



San Diego native Nick Cordileone (Courtesy of Civic Theatre)

for more than a few months at a time is a boon. You can plan a real life that’s more of a typical life than you usually get to experience in the arts,” he said.

“The Lion King”

Music & lyrics by Elton John and Tim Rice
Additional music and lyrics by Lebo M, Mark Mancina, Jay Rifkin, Julie Taymor and Hans Zimmer
Book by Robert Allers and Irene Mecchi

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Civic Theatre, 1100 Third Ave. (Downtown)

7 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays
7:30 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays
2 and 7:30 p.m. Saturdays
1 and 6:30 p.m. Sundays
1 p.m. matinees on Thursdays, Sept. 8 and Sept. 29

Tickets at the box office, Ticketmaster and online at broadwaysd.com/the-lion-king.

“The show itself is breathtaking. It still is. When we come to a new city, we get to see the final rehearsal without an audience. I still get emotional even when people don’t have their make up on. It’s the music and the artistry. They’re just beautiful,” he continued.

“As for Timon, he’s so ‘in the moment’ that he’s on cloud 9 when he finds a grub to eat or sees a star in the sky. Then, at the drop of a hat, he’s running for his life like a chicken with his head cut off, because of some scary sound. He’s a blast to play because the highs are super high and the lows are super low. Besides, I get to sing ‘Hakuna Matata’ and operate as a surrogate parent for Simba.”

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

FROM PAGE 16 THE WALL

The exterior will be painted white, allowing greenery cascading from the roofline to visually pop. The bulky,

concrete overhang in front will be replaced by a geometric awning system, likely made of lumber and steel for providing controlled shade and sunlight to a built-out sidewalk patio.

Inside, the wood flooring throughout the entire first

level will be retained, as well as two wide staircases, a few skylights and the original front windows on the second level. Michael says if the budget allows, solar tubes and panels will be incorporated into the overall design.

“We look for buildings that we can add value to,” Blum said, referring to student-housing rentals in the College Area and a few commercial properties in other areas of San Diego County that his company has acquired.

“This is our first project in Hillcrest, and it is our objective to put in the best possible tenants that fit the neighborhood,” he said. “Community feedback will open us to ideas we haven’t heard yet. We’re listening.”

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



The Hillcrest building now renamed The Wall could be reconfigured to look like this. (Courtesy of Tecture)

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UPTOWN

CALENDAR

8th annual Make a Joyful Noise Family Fun and Fundraising Gala
Saturday, Aug. 27

This event is presented by Jamie’s Joy – a memorial fund set up in honor of Jamie Morgan Mychael Bratton-McNeeley who was killed in a car crash at the age of 5. The annual fundraising gala raises money for various charities with this year’s donations benefitting the Urban Street Angels. This program is dedicated to helping homeless transitional youth (ages 18 – 25) get off the street. The event will feature live music, dancing, artisanal goods, food, drinks, a silent auction and more. The suggested donation to attend is \$35 (\$45 at the door) with family packages available and discounts for children’s tickets. The event will be held starting at 6 p.m. at The Irenic (3090 Polk Ave., North Park). Visit jamiesjoy.org for more information.

Performance art intensive
Saturday, Aug. 27

Performance artist and teacher Jose Hugo Sanchez will guide this intensive program at the San Diego Art Institute (1439 El Prado, Balboa Park). The event is from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. and will start with an introductory lesson on the history of global performance art. Students will then practice technique and content before finishing with individual and group performances. The intensive is \$50 per student. Visit sandiego-art.org to register.

Casino Night to benefit The Center
Saturday, Aug. 27

The San Diego LGBT Community Center will host their second annual night of mock gaming with food, drinks, music and prizes. Entirety of the \$125 ticket fee benefits The Center’s programs. Casino Night will be held from 7 – 11 p.m. at a private residence (address given with ticket confirmation). Visit bit.ly/2aYSMrU for more information.

‘Genius in the House!’
Saturday, Aug. 27

“Genius in the House!” is an event that brings brainiacs from fields such as biology, art, engineering and mathematics to the Reuben H. Fleet Science Center (1875 El Prado, Balboa Park) at least once a month to enhance the exhibit experience. This is a casual event in the exhibit galleries from noon – 3 p.m. where attendees will have the chance to chat with the genius and ask questions. This month’s visitors will be members of the San Diego Virtual Reality Meetup. The event is free with paid admission. Visit rhfleet.org for more information.



Molly Ringwald in ‘The Birdland Set’
Thursday, Sept. 1

Before she was an actress, Molly Ringwald was a singer. She grew up performing with her dad’s jazz band and has returned to her roots in recent years. She’ll be performing jazz tunes along with hits from The Great American Songbook at Martinis Above Fourth (3940 Fourth Ave., Hillcrest). Tickets are \$60 for reserved seating and there is a \$15 food/drink minimum per person. Doors open at 6 p.m. with the show at 8 p.m. Visit ma4sd.com for more info.

Book groups at Mission Hills Library
Thursday, Sept. 1 and Wednesday, Sept. 7

The Mission Hills Book Group will discuss “The Worst Hard Time” by Timothy Egan on Sept. 1 at 10 a.m. The “Famous Book” club meets on Sept. 7 at 3 p.m. to discuss “My Russian Summers” by Andrei Makine. New members are always welcome to both groups. Copies of the books are available at the library’s circulation desk while supplies last. The library is located at 925 West Washington St. Visit facebook.com/mhlibrary for more information.

‘Galactic Pleasures, The Imagination of Art and Science’ exhibition reception
Saturday, Sept. 3

This exhibition at The Studio Door (3750 30th St., North Park) runs through Sunday, Sept. 25. It features artwork “powered by the imagination of art and science.” The works included explore the future, science, science fiction, fantasy and steam punk. The opening reception will be held from 6 – 9 p.m. and there is no cover charge. Visit thestudidoor.com for more information.

Rose Kingsley in ‘Through the Years With Johnny Mercer’
Thursday, Sept. 8

Singer Rose Kingsley returns to Martinis Above Fourth (3940 Fourth Ave., Hillcrest) to perform the works of Johnny Mercer. Song selections will include “Skylark,” “Moon River,” “Days of Wine and Roses,” and more. Tickets are \$20 for reserved seating with a \$15 food/drink minimum per person. Doors open at 6 p.m. with the show at 8 p.m. Visit ma4sd.com for tickets. ❖

DIGITAL GYM GEMS



Aug. 26 – Sept. 1: The documentary **“Miss Sharon Jones!”** on rhythm and blues singer Sharon Jones premieres in San Diego with this run. The film intimately follows Jones’ battle with pancreatic cancer amidst the release of a new album. Unrated. 93 minutes.

Aug. 26 – Sept. 1: **“Our Little Sister”** tells the story of three sisters who meet their teenage half-sister for the first time after their father’s death.



Aug. 27 – 31: The film **“Certified Copy”** will be screened as part of Digital Gym’s **“The Auteurs”** series. The film by Iranian filmmaker Abbas Kiarostami stars Juliette Binoche and William Shimell as a pair who meet at a lecture and spend an afternoon discussing love, life and art while pretending to be a long-married couple. Unrated. 106 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:
● “Blazing Saddles” Friday, Aug. 26
● “To Have And Have Not” Saturday, Aug. 27 and Sunday, Aug. 28
● “Roman Holiday” Thursday, Sept. 1 – Sunday, Sept. 4
● “Raiders of the Lost Ark” Thursday, Sept. 8 – Saturday, Sept. 10
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. Themorrow.com.

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

Tasty Truck Tuesdays: 6 – 9 p.m., Smitty’s Service Station hosts several food trucks under their well-lit shade structure, 3442 Adams Ave., Normal Heights. Sdfoodtrucks.com.
Uptown Democratic Club: 6:30 p.m., Joyce Beers Community Center hosts these meetings on the fourth Tuesday of every month (except November and December). 3900 Vermont Ave., Hillcrest. Uptowndemocrats.org.

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.
Gentle yoga for seniors: 2:30 – 4 p.m., presented by The Center and Silver Age Yoga Community Outreach (SAYCO) at The San Diego LGBT Center, 3909 Centre St., Hillcrest, free. Thecentersd.org.

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

—Email calendar items to ken@sdenn.com. ❖

Students to peers: School starts early this year

By Catherine Spearnak

San Diego Unified School District students took over at a press conference Thursday morning to remind their peers that classes start a week early this year. “Kids, listen up,” said Elsa Cepedes, a seventh-grader at Wilson Middle School. “We’re used to school starting the

day after Labor Day every year. But this year it starts on Monday, Aug. 29. So get ready and set your alarm clocks.” Elsa, Hoover High School 10th-grader Sherlin Cruz, about 20 middle and high school students, a group of district administrators and the United Way of San Diego County teamed up to kick off the “Attend.Connect.Succeed.” movement to get students going to school this year. “It takes one and a half days to make up one missed day of school,” Elsa said. “If you miss school, you miss out.” The Attend.Connect.Succeed. campaign, with a goal of increasing attendance by 5 percent, includes attendance incentives, recognition events and more to

celebrate improved attendance as well as the expansion of “Every Student. Every School.” The program is geared to breaking down the barriers of getting San Diego students to school. District revenue is mostly based on student average daily attendance, and the district loses \$32 per day for each absent students. A 1 percent increase in districtwide attendance would translate into an additional \$6 million in revenue.

“A great job by our student leaders,” district Superintendent Cindy Marten said, thanking Elsa and her peers. “Today’s really about our kids and our parents,” Marten said. “We want you to get together and succeed.” —Catherine Spearnak is a San Diego-based freelance writer. She can be reached at catherine.spearnak1@gmail.com. ❖

FROM PAGE 3
WOOF

to the day the economy crashed in San Diego," McCormick said.

Like many other businesses, small and large, surviving during the biggest economic crisis since the Great Depression became an enormous challenge. Yet, she said, Fido and Company built up a large clientele who had the money to spoil their pets.

"We picked Hillcrest for the demographics," McCormick said. "The community was very welcoming."

Not a run-of-the-mill establishment, Fido and Company offers daycare, grooming, a wellness spa, pet sitting, overnight stays, cage-free boarding, professional training, birthday parties, baby showers for pregnant pets, and other special events for dogs of all sizes and shapes.

"We still operate on the same philosophy: Nothing but the best for our customers," McCormick said. "We call our dogs 'members' and their owners 'parents.' We always want to be a step above our competitors."

In her other career, McCormick is a fitness trainer at the nearby 24 Hour Fitness.

"Hillcrest has been my community," she said, since moving to San Diego from northern Virginia in 1999. "So Hillcrest was a good fit for us."

McCormick is sad to leave the Hillcrest shop, which is between Gossip Grill and Uptown Tavern.

"We will especially miss the annual Pride celebration," she said.

Work has already begun on the new site in North Park, but she said the grand opening would be put off until sometime in October.

Although the new location is smaller by 2,000 square feet, McCormick said Fido and Company would not be cutting back on any services. She said the spacious lobby at the Hillcrest location contains a lot of wasted space and the new lobby in North Park will be much smaller. Actually, she said, the business will be looking to expand services by adding more grooming times, for example.

"I plan to work with The Mission Restaurant to offer special deals, such as doing grooming while the dog's parents are dining at the restaurant," she said.

Doggie parents vow to follow McCormick and her team to North Park.

"We have been Fido customers for over two years," said Mo Bennett, a legal secretary. "We take our dog, Kona, to Fido because they really care about the dogs and treat them like their own."

"We started as Fido customers when our dog broke her leg and needed constant supervision during the day," Bennett said. "One of the workers would spend her lunch hour reading to Kona to keep her company since she had a cast and couldn't yet play with the other dogs. ... They took such exceptional care of her when she was injured. We knew we would continue with doggie daycare for her."

Bennett said she uses daycare three days per week and also gets Kona groomed there.

"Our dog always comes home exhausted from playing all day — even though they get nap time and Fido plays classical music — and then sparkly clean after a grooming session," she said.

"We most certainly will follow Fido to North Park. It's just a mile from the current location and the care and love they display is unbeatable."

Fido and Company Canine Country Club

2811 University Ave.
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FidoAndCompany.com
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McCormick herself is a big-time dog lover, and the proud owner of two pugs, Butkus Santiago Wilhoit McCormick and Gabi McCormick. She said Fido treats all "members" (the dogs) like her own furry children.

"We've been really, really blessed with really wonderful people and really wonderful pets," McCormick said. "They are like family to us. I can't imagine losing my family when we move to North Park. I know they will be coming with us."

The move 1.2 miles east on University Avenue will bring new opportunities, too, to connect with pet owners in North Park, South Park, Normal Heights, City Heights and other neighborhoods.

"I've been to a few business mixers in North Park already," McCormick said. "Everyone has made me feel very welcome."

Lisa Ann Nieblas, who has been the groomer at Fido and Company for more than seven years, said she is looking forward to the move because the new location is just steps away from KFC. That brought a

laugh from her boss, who joked about how much Nieblas loves her fried chicken.

Nieblas said she, too, has a special place in her heart for canines, and described how she tries to make dogs relax before a grooming.

"I talk to them, give them kisses, to make them comfortable. OK, I make out with them!" Nieblas said, laughing.

"She has 'the gift,'" McCormick said, noting that Nieblas has been voted "best groomer" in a number of local publications including Best of San Diego Uptown News.

Nieblas consults with dog owners before each grooming, to make sure their needs are met. Her styles range from classic to unique, and she even dyes the hair of dogs, if requested.

"We get a lot of requests for Pride," she said. "One customer even wanted their dog to have a rainbow mohawk for Pride."

Nieblas said she is respectful to older dogs, who might need more time to get their hair cut.

"Some of the older dogs can't stand on their feet for a long period of time, so I might take up to four hours to groom them," she added.

McCormick said not all dogs are welcome at Fido and Company.

"I can't take every dog," she said. "I won't take aggressive dogs."

When a dog comes by the first time, McCormick screens each and every one of them. Are they up-to-date with their vaccinations? Do they get along with other dogs? If they pass the initial inspection, the dogs are given a bath to make sure they don't have any fleas, bumps or bruises.

"I take the new dog to a sectioned-off area to introduce them to our place," she said. "We gradually introduce them to another dog, to see if they like each other. If all goes well, they are introduced to all the dogs."

Small dogs are kept separate from large dogs, McCormick said.

The same rules will apply at the North Park location.

"We are excited about the move," McCormick said. "We are excited for the new chapter in our lives, and for all the new friends we are going to make in North Park."

—Ken Williams is editor of 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 7
CPU

● **Non-residential DIF** will be \$100 per average daily trips and \$72 per 1,000 square feet. Out of that, mobility would get \$100 per average daily trips and Fire-Rescue would get \$72 per 1,000 square feet.

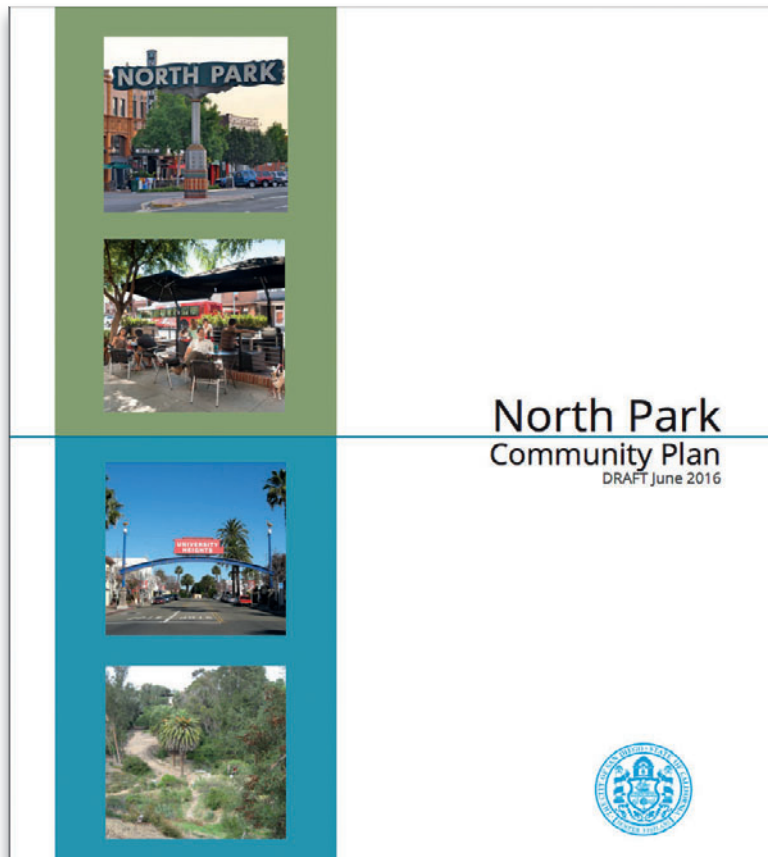
One of the functions of the draft CPU is to identify the future needs of the North Park community. The board has compiled dozens of needs and listed them by priority. To read the draft CPU, visit bit.ly/2bds6Fi.

For example, the No. 1 items by category are:

● **Sidewalk and Pedestrian Improvements** — Provide sidewalks that are 15 feet wide at minimum along El Cajon Boulevard and University Avenue. The Active Transportation goal is to enhance pedestrian and commercial activity along those busy thoroughfares.

● **Bicycle Improvements** — Support and implement bicycle priority streets and facilities that connect North Park to neighboring communities with emphasis on constructing bikeways in the bikeway network, including but not limited to Normal Heights and City Heights particularly along Adams, Meade, Lincoln and University avenues and El Cajon Boulevard.

● **Street, Traffic Signal, Signage and Traffic Calming Improvements** — Support the enhancement of Florida Drive from North Park to Downtown to create an efficient and safe multi-modal “Complete Street.”



● **Public Park and Open Space Improvement Policies** — Preserve and protect North Park’s canyons and open space areas by limiting public use to designated trails.

● **Public Facilities Improvements** — Provide facilities that accommodate a full range of city programs to serve residents and cultivate civic involvement. Locate free public meeting spaces in easily accessible locations throughout North Park, including but not limited to facilities that are to be rebuilt at North Park Community Center.

● **Community Proposed Future Park and**

Recreation Projects — North Park Community Park: Existing park and recreation facilities consisting of a recreation center, a teen center, an adult center, a comfort station, a lighted ball field, multipurpose turf area, a children’s play area, three tennis courts, handball courts, walkways, seating and picnic tables. Of the 7.9 acres, 2.8 acres is part of the joint use area with ALBA school. Replace natural turf on ball field with synthetic turf and provide new sports field lighting to increase use.

The problem is that the DIF does not raise enough money to pay for the community’s wish list.

A pie chart included in the study shows that 43 percent of the total estimated facility cost in North Park (which totals \$567 million) is included in the DIF basis.

That means \$323 million must be found in other funding sources. The breakdown by category is:

● **Mobility Facilities** — The total cost estimate is almost \$72 million, but the DIF basis is \$43 million.

● **Parks and Recreation Facilities** — The total cost estimate is nearly \$468 million, but the DIF basis is \$185 million.

● **Fire-Rescue Facilities** — The total cost estimate is \$13.4 million, but the DIF basis is \$2.6 million.

● **Library Facilities** — The total cost estimate is \$14 million, but the DIF basis is \$13 million.

Scott Mercer, from the Planning Department, explained it this way: “You can only charge new development their fair share.”

In other news

The North Park Planning Committee heard several information items:

● **Proposition A** — David Hicks, representing the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), explained the November ballot measure that proposes to raise the sales tax by a half-cent to fast-track the region’s most pressing transportation needs. About 42 percent of the money raised would go toward improving public transit. He noted that the trolley’s proposed Purple Line — which would go from San Ysidro border crossing to Kearny Mesa employment centers, would likely cross

through North Park via the 805 corridor. He said engineers have not yet plotted out the potential location of the Purple Line, but predicted that there would be trolley stations built in the North Park area.

● **Citizens’ Plan for San Diego** — Jeff Marston spoke on behalf of the November ballot issue that was crafted by attorney Cory Briggs. Long and complex, Measure D is explained at length at bit.ly/2b0q1Pk. This measure, which involves setting a Transient Occupancy Tax for hotels, authorizes a sports stadium Downtown or at the Qualcomm Stadium site but does not permit the spending of taxpayer dollars for construction costs. Marston pointed out that this was not the same as the Citizens’ Initiative proposed by the San Diego Chargers football team that wants to build a stadium and Convention Center annex in East Village.

Also, the Urban Design/Project Review subcommittee will meet at 6 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 7, at the North Park Recreation Center’s Social Room. The Public Facilities & Transportation subcommittee will meet at 6 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 14, at the North Park Recreation Center’s Adult Center. Both meetings are open to the public.

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

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