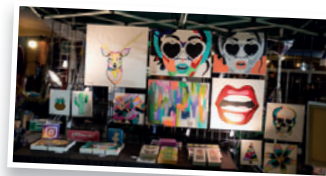




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Festival of the Arts
in North Park
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New tacos in North Park

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Diversión's dreamy show

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Moni Bloom's whimsical work

San Diego Uptown News

What's going on with sale of Truax House?



Truax House is perched on a hillside off Union Street, which dead-ends down the hill. The property includes the vacant house with the red tile roof, located on the corner of Union and Laurel streets. The vacant lot is below the hill. (Google Maps)

Developer misses escrow deadline, and seeks to subdivide property into three parcels

Ken Williams | Editor

The developer who made the winning bid to purchase the Truax House and an adjacent home and vacant lot in Bankers Hill has yet to close the deal.

Nakhshab Design & Development has “held off on escrow,” company principal Soheil

Nakhshab told members of the Metro San Diego Community Development Corp. (Metro CDC) meeting on May 8 at St. Paul's Manor in Bankers Hill.

A resident of Bankers Hill, Nakhshab is a member of the Metro CDC and recused himself from casting any votes taken at the meeting. Nakhshab is

also a member of the Uptown Planners, a citizen-elected volunteer board that advises city planners on matters related to growth and development in the Uptown District, which includes Bankers Hill.

In 2016, the city accepted the developer's offer — the highest bid — to pay \$2.5 million to buy

the surplus property. Nakhshab vowed to restore the Truax House, considered by many people to be a sacred site because it was the home of San Diego's first AIDS hospice. The local LGBT community and other groups successfully persuaded

see Truax House, pg 4

Giving back is good business

Ken Williams | Editor

Bev Oster is a woman on the go. As president of Oster and Associates public relations firm in Hillcrest, she keeps a hectic schedule overseeing the company, dealing with clients and drumming up new business. But Oster also finds time to give back, with a personal motto that volunteerism is at the forefront of good business practices.

For the past decade, Oster has volunteered with Project Amigo, a transnational nonprofit that supports impoverished students in Colima, Mexico. Presently she heads the organization's board of directors, where she works closely with the executive director, raises money, and helps guide the development of strong relationships between the nonprofit and businesses.

“The knowledge, understanding and connections developed through our volunteer efforts are much deeper than what is realized strictly through normal business operations,” Oster said. “Businesses often prefer to partner with companies that have a heart, so they will seek out those with a similar approach to business, which become the greatest professional connections.”

Here are five questions with Oster:

1. What is your role at Oster and Associates, and what does your company do?

I'm the president of Oster and Associates, a company that I started in 1986. Oster and Associates is a full-service branding and PR agency with local, regional and international clients in the agriculture, hospitality, landscaping, nonprofit, planning, produce, sports and travel industries. Some of the wonderful clients that we work with include Armstrong Garden Centers, Mountain High, Organics Unlimited, Farmer's Best, Proven Winners and Kent's Bromeliad Nursery among others.

2. What is Project Amigo and who benefits from this nonprofit?

Project Amigo is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to supporting students from Colima, Mexico, so that they can create their own educational opportunities and better their quality of life.

Since 1984, Project Amigo has worked with rural youth in Mexico to help remove financial barriers to education through scholarships that include school fees, transportation, uniforms, school

see Profile, pg 19



Bev Oster believes in helping others. (Courtesy of Oster and Associates)

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\$850,000 2505 Boundary St



SOLD 4BR 2BA • 1424 sq ft
\$650,500 3922-3924 Arizona St



SOLD 5BR 3BA • 2412 sq ft
\$942,500 1636 Granada Av



SOLD 2BR 1BA • 824 sq ft
\$441,000 3634 35th St



SOLD 2BR 1BA • 768 sq ft
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\$415,000 2313 Donnington Wy



SOLD 3BR 2BA • 1899 sq ft
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MaryMcTSoldMe.com

BIG BLOCK REALTY

Hillcrest Town Council update

By Mary McKenzie

Immigration and racial profiling were the two high-interest issues that informed this month's meeting of the Hillcrest Town Council (HTC) on May 9.

Well-known immigration attorney Lilia Velasquez spoke to the community about the difficult challenges facing immigration policy today.

As a practicing attorney and a professor of the subject, Velasquez was well-positioned to explain how these challenges affect all of us. She enumerated several issues that have renewed importance in the current political environment: visas for professional workers, potential travel bans that could affect green card holders among others, hate crimes, refugees and sanctuary cities.

Although Mayor Kevin Faulconer has said that San Diego is not a sanctuary city, Police Chief Shelley Zimmermann has stated that the "San Diego Police Department does not check the immigration status of victims and witnesses of crimes."

This is because, Velasquez said, undocumented immigrants will fear calling the police even to report a crime. Already, she said, these immigrants are calling hotlines instead of the police.

Gerlynn Gacao of the ACLU reported to the audience on a recent study of traffic stops and racial profiling (or biased policing) conducted by San Diego State University. The 2014-15 study shows that differential treatment based on skin color is supported by the data. The Hillcrest Town Council voted to support the ACLU's recommendations on transparency in the Police Department.

The HTC also welcomed public comment regarding neighborhood empowerment and parking.

Jessica Mier from Congresswoman Susan Davis' office reported on a bill that would enable K-12 teachers to teach their students how to



Immigration attorney Lilia Velasquez spoke to Hillcrest Town Council gathering. (Photos by William Pontius)



identify potential victims of human trafficking.

Brittany Bailey of City Councilmember Chris Ward's office reported on Ward's emphasis on homelessness as well as on the struggles occurring because of proposed budgetary cuts. She encouraged the audience members to contact her with any concerns regarding city programs.

David Mier of UCSD Health Center told the crowd that changes to its property will be happening because of

legislation requiring earthquake protection. He invited the audience to a community open house on June 7 to discuss what plans are in the wings for the space. The meeting will be at 6 p.m. at the Indoor Sports Club, located at 3030 Front St. in Bankers Hill.

Lastly, HTC president Kath Rogers announced that the board had chosen Jae Mohr to complete the term of HTC treasurer David Coben, who has resigned.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 13 at 6:30 p.m.

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



Gerlynn Gacao of the ACLU talked about racial profiling and traffic stops.

Christian Science: What It Is and How It Heals

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Michelle Nanouche, international speaker, practitioner and teacher of Christian Science from Paris, France, visits us to address public questions and concerns about Christian Science. She will speak about healing prayer, its effectiveness and relevance today.

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FROM PAGE 1
TRUAX HOUSE

the city’s Historical Resources Board to designate the building as a “historical resource” to make it safe from the wrecking ball.

Nakhshab said his company decided not to go into escrow on April 28, as scheduled, and must now pay the city \$10,000 every two weeks until the deal is finalized. “My deposit [of \$100,000] is gone,” he said, stressing that his company does not to plan to walk away from the deal.

Some in the community have expressed concern that the closing has not taken place, including neighbor Al Olin, who owns a home at the end of the dead-end of Union Street, and Charles “Chuck” Kaminski, a local LGBT historian and activist and a board member of the Lambda Archives of San Diego. Both have emailed their concerns to city officials and discussed the matter with San Diego Uptown News.

City officials tell Uptown News that forfeiture of a deposit is common in real estate transactions if the buyer does not cancel the sales contract prior to a specific date.

“Further, additional consideration for failing to close escrow pursuant to the terms of the contract is also a common practice in real estate transactions,” Paul Brencick Sr., a senior public information officer for the city, wrote in an email in response to a series of questions. Brencick compiled the responses from officials in several city departments that are involved in this complex transaction.

Location, location, location

The property, situated on the northeast corner of Laurel and Union streets, provides a desirable view of San Diego Bay and Downtown. The Truax House perches on a hillside between a vacant house on the corner of

Laurel and Union, and Olin’s home at the dead-end of Union Street.

The vacant lot is north of the Truax House and extends into the western opening of Maple Canyon. Supporters of the canyon trail have been heartened by Nakhshab’s promise to provide a trailhead for hikers, although Kaminski and Olin question whether this is feasible.

Meanwhile, the developer has pinned his hopes on a June 1 meeting of the Planning Commission, where Nakhshab is asking that the tentative map of the property be subdivided into three parcels. The city’s paper trail on the project shows that the subdivision request is more than a year old, despite Kaminski and Olin’s belief that it is a new request.

The developer is asking that:

- The corner house at 540 W. Laurel St. will be designated as Parcel 1.

- The Truax House at 2513-2515 Union St. will be designated as Parcel 2.

- The vacant lot will be designated as Parcel 3.

“The subdivision provides us economic security whereby allowing us to revitalize each parcel individually to avoid getting burned in a potential recession,” Nakhshab wrote in a letter sent to the Metro CDC ahead of the meeting.

He explained further at the meeting, saying that the subdivision would allow his company to “simplify costs on our side” and build one parcel at a time.

Kaminski and Olin say they are bothered by the subdivision of the large parcel. “Could the city be leaving some additional funds on the table?” Kaminski asked. Olin contends that three parcels would be worth \$500,000 more than the selling price, stating that it “seems like such a big loss for the taxpayers.”

Brencick said the city, as the owner, will consent to the buyer’s application to subdivide the property.



Developer has promised to restore the Truax House, designated by the city as a "historic resource," and has plans for the vacant lot and the vacant house with the red-tile roof. (Google Maps)

“It is not unusual for the buyer to process entitlements prior to closing escrow,” he wrote in the email.

Red tape and more

At the Metro CDC meeting, Nakhshab described the challenges of working with the city to close the deal.

“We were given two pills to swallow,” he said.

One, the city asked that the dead-end street be turned into a cul-de-sac, but the developer said that idea wouldn’t work.

Two, the city said the dead-end street could be vacated from the public right-of-way, providing his neighbors agreed. Nakhshab said initially all the neighbors agreed to go along with that plan, but then two residents changed their minds. He said one of those neighbors wants the two buildings demolished so she would have a better view of the bay and Downtown.

“Private views are not protected by the city,” Brencick wrote. “However, this Process

4 project decision is appealable to the City Council and can be appealed by any interested party.”

The city has five processes, and the higher the process number the more steps must be completed by a developer. Process 4 gets a staff level review, and that recommendation then goes to the Planning Commission for a vote. Any Process 4 appeal would go directly to the City Council, which has the final authority.

After realizing that he couldn’t “swallow” either of the pills,

Nakhshab said he then went back to the city seeking the current compromise. “We want to push through [the red tape], not be held back,” he said.

Olin, despite getting reassurances from the city on a number of occasions over the past year, told Uptown News that he is still worried that the street will be turned into a private driveway for the developer’s projects. He said he feared getting cut off from the sewer

system, trash pickup and mail delivery.

The city said Olin has nothing to fear.

Nakhshab told the Metro CDC that he would be making \$400,000 in infrastructure improvements along the dead-end street, including new curbs, gutters, a pedestrian ramp, asphalt, utility relocation, street widening with retaining walls, a hammerhead turnaround for fire trucks and street landscaping.

City officials confirmed that Nakhshab would be required to make a number of improvements.

“The right-of-way (ROW) improvements include the repaving and expansion of a portion of Union Street fronting the site, a new sidewalk, a new pedestrian ramp on the northwest corner of Union Street and Laurel Street, retaining walls, the relocation of a private sewer facility, new driveway apron for 2526 Union St., street trees, and a new hammerhead turnaround at the terminus of Union Street,” Brencick wrote.

“Along West Laurel Street, public ROW improvements include the replacement of curb and gutter adjacent to the site and the relocation of water and sewer facilities. No construction is proposed to the existing dwelling units with this application. City staff does not have information regarding the buyer’s costs to make these improvements.”

Nakhshab told Metro CDC that the subdivision would give his company “economic flexibility” on developing the entire property in stages. He said he wanted to provide 15 percent “very low income housing” on an “affordable” multifamily apartment building that would target young professionals and senior citizens.

Goals for Truax House

Nakhshab’s letter described his plans for the Truax House:

“Vital for my vision for the property is the preservation and restoration of Truax House. I believe this is not negotiable, as we need to protect this resource that is a part of San Diego’s philanthropic history. I also believe that an interactive visitor center with elements such as a timeline for the Truax House’s history may be a welcome addition for the property. Also in the center, I believe some sort of memorial for Dr. Brad Truax as well as his patients should be created. We have already been proactive and have prepared a detailed historic report for the city of San Diego and are hoping to have a determination with the next few weeks.

“Given my track record of revitalizing aged and historic homes while creating financially feasible projects, I would be honored to perform a restoration for a significant cultural icon. As demonstrated in both my Union 4 project just one block away and my Sofia Lofts in Golden Hill, my firm and myself have been proponents of preserving the architectural fabric of our neighborhoods while also developing architecturally significant and inviting spaces that complement, not overpower, the historic structures.

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Town halls, taxes and bunnies

Congressional Watch
Andy Cohen



In our last column, **Darrell Issa (R-49), Duncan Hunter (R-50), and Susan Davis (D-53)** had each held town hall events in their respective districts, and as we noted at the time, the tenor of the gatherings was much different for the Republican members of Congress than it was for Susan Davis — her town hall was much friendlier than those of her colleagues.

This time it was **Scott Peters’ (D-52)** turn. On April 18, Peters held his second town hall event, at Clairemont High School before a near capacity crowd in the school auditorium. Peters had held a previous town hall at the San Diego Islamic Center a month prior.

Although the audience was mostly friendly, the Q&A did not proceed without its challenges. While Peters was in sync with most of the attendees, many left less than satisfied with some of the answers to their questions. Of particular concern — as has been the case at virtually every other congressional town hall across the country — was health care. In the wake of the failure of Trumpcare, progressives as a whole have renewed their push for a single-payer health care program. The argument goes something like this: “Every other major industrial power in the world has single-payer health care, so why shouldn’t we?”

It’s an excellent question, but one without a simple answer, making for some very unsatisfied liberal-leaning constituents. As Donald Trump himself has allegedly recently learned, health care is a *very* complex issue.

“We need to fix Medicare, make sure it’s solvent for the long term before we put everyone on it,” Peters said in response to a question about a House bill being pushed by some Democrats, which he said he opposes in its current form.

Peters said there were too many unknowns in the proposal; too few details. For example, he noted that it was not clear how doctors would be reimbursed, and at what rate. How would the transition to single-payer take place?

“It’s not smart to try and quickly convert one-fifth of our national economy to single-payer,” he noted. There are things that can be done, he said, such as adding a public option to the Affordable Care Act, which could solve many problems and eventually put us on a path toward single-payer.

One other attendee left disgruntled when Peters refused to answer questions about his 2014 campaign against Carl DeMaio and allegations of wrongdoing when a former DeMaio staffer handed proprietary campaign material to the Peters camp. Peters did eventually turn the material over to police, but it was unclear for how long it was in the possession of Team



Rep. Scott Peters

Peters. That constituent found very little sympathy among those gathered.

Darrell Issa recently did an about-face on internet privacy. The Vista Republican has, until now, been a staunch advocate of online privacy, authoring and supporting bills that kept the customer data of internet service providers (ISPs) private. In fact, in 2012, he published the first draft of a “Digital Citizens Bill of Rights,” item nine of which read, “Privacy — Digital Citizens have a right to privacy on the internet.”

Apparently, Issa’s views on the matter have changed. In late March, Issa voted in favor of a Republican bill that will allow ISPs the ability to sell their customers’ browsing histories without their permission, something prohibited by Obama administration regulations.

“We’re disappointed that Rep. Issa voted to weaken privacy protections,” the Electronic

Frontier Foundation’s Ernesto Falcon told the San Diego Union Tribune. “The party line vote in Congress was a case of lawmakers putting the interests of cable and phone companies ahead of the privacy interests of Americans.”

Every Democrat voted against the bill, joined by only 15 Republicans.

Duncan Hunter will have a new companion on the campaign trail: “Duncan Thumper,” a fictitious rabbit that represents the \$600 in campaign funds Hunter spent on airline fees to transport his children’s pet rabbit. Hunter is under investigation by the Department of Justice for his misuse of campaign funds for personal use.

“It’s insane that a five-term congressman is pretending like he doesn’t know the difference between a campaign card and a regular credit card,” said Shawn VanDiver, founder of Bunny PAC, the group that hopes to keep the attention focused on Hunter’s campaign foibles by using both social media and sending someone in a rabbit costume to follow Hunter on the bunny ... err ... campaign trail.

“Listening to a bunny explain politics is as ridiculous as spending campaign money on personal enrichment,” reads the BunnyPAC.org website. “The fact is that when elected officials do ridiculous or foolish things, sometimes complicated nuance allows them to get away with it. The good news is that Duncan Thumper is an ethics advisor and a wonderful storyteller.”

Juan Vargas (D-50) has endorsed a bill authored

by New York Rep. Nydia Velazquez that would prohibit Border Patrol and ICE agents from identifying themselves as — or wearing apparel that indicates that they are — “police.” Critics of the practice, including Vargas, argue that it creates confusion and distrust between residents and local law enforcement agencies, giving the impression that local police departments are themselves conducting immigration raids.

In response to the looming tax cut plan that is expected to be introduced by the Republican Congress any day (or never), Vargas has taken the liberty of introducing a different tax plan to Congress. His proposal would impose a 14.25 percent net worth tax on all individuals and trusts with a net worth of \$10,000,000 or more.

“By my calculations, 1 percent of Americans, who control 90 percent of the wealth in this country, would be affected by my plan,” said the original author of the plan in 1999. “The other 99 percent of the people would get deep reductions in their federal income taxes.” That original author? A man named Donald J. Trump.

“In the spirit of bipartisanship, I am introducing the Donald J. Trump Wealth Tax Act of 2017 to allow the president to follow through on his original idea,” Vargas said in a statement.

No word on the plan’s chances of becoming law, but don’t hold your breath.

—Andy Cohen is a local freelance writer. Reach him at ac76@sbcglobal.net.✧

Why California should adopt single-payer health care

Notes from Toni
Toni G. Atkins



On May 4, the Republicans in the U.S. House of Representatives were finally successful in voting to repeal the Affordable Care Act (ACA). It is yet unclear whether the Senate will pass the repeal bill and replace it with their own bill, but we’ll have to be ready. There are also things the president can do to reduce funding for health care in California that don’t require legislation. We must continue to be vigilant.

The ACA isn’t perfect, and it’s had some problems in other states where insurance companies have pulled out of health care exchanges, but on balance, it’s been a success story in California. Thanks to the ACA, roughly 5 million more of our residents have obtained health insurance — either through the Covered California health care exchange or through the ACA-provided expansion of Medi-Cal.

In San Diego County, more than 350,000 people have obtained health coverage through Covered California subsidies or expanded Medi-Cal. That’s approximately 11 percent of our county’s population added to the ranks of the insured in the last few years.

Statewide, our uninsured rate has fallen to a record-low 7.1 percent. The ACA has been good for our residents, and we need to protect and defend it.

But as we do, we’re going to do the work to improve upon it. My goal is to ensure that everyone in California has access to quality health care. As I said at Assemblymember Todd Gloria’s health care town hall meeting at UC San Diego on March 25, the ACA is a floor, not a ceiling.

With my colleague Sen. Ricardo Lara, I have introduced SB 562, the Healthy California Act. The bill would create a single-payer, universal health care system in California. What that means is that the state serves as everyone’s insurer — the state pays the providers for medical services.

In addition to providing universal coverage, the goal is to reduce overall health care costs as we streamline the system. I think we can do it.

Make no mistake, this will take a lot of hard work, and it will take time. The idea behind single-payer is simple, but the health care system is complex. There are many stakeholders, and they’ll all have valuable input to provide. We’ll listen to everyone and create the system that works the best.

I believe health care is a

see Atkins, pg 8

IMAGINE THE POSSIBILITIES

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

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GUEST EDITORIAL

Where our AIDS memorial really belongs

By Morgan M. Hurley

Having lived as an adult during the ghastly time of the AIDS epidemic, I was very encouraged several years ago when Mayor Kevin Faulconer announced the launch of an AIDS Memorial Task Force to ensure the creation of an AIDS memorial.

I lost a very close friend to AIDS in San Diego after moving here in 1987, and remember the chaos, the fear and the isolation our community experienced in those dark days, so I have been eager to learn where the memorial might find its home.

As you may have read in Ken Williams' May 5 article [found online bit.ly/2qsPR1y], the current plan is to build the AIDS memorial at an obscure location in Bankers Hill which, once developed, will be named Olive Street Park.

The proposed location is not only a bird-fly mile away from the soon-to-be restored Dr. Brad Truax House, but the location is tucked away among a residential neighborhood on a short, dead-end street that will be difficult to access by car or bus. In addition, the proposal includes playground equipment for children.

With all due respect to Assemblymember Todd Gloria, who as a city councilmember identified the plot of land, and the members of the AIDS Memorial Task Force, who are working to fund and support a place for the memorial, I am completely against this site.

This location does not offer accessibility; it does not offer a place for reflection; and it does not have a direct connection to the San Diego LGBT community.

People can argue the point, but we all know — whether we like it or not — that predominately, in America, AIDS has historically been a disease related to the LGBT community.

Nearly 8,000 San Diegans have died of AIDS to date. The largest

percentage of transmissions — according to data from the County of San Diego in 2012 — were men having sex with men, at 75 percent. The other percentages are groupings of less than 10 percent, which include intravenous drug users, women, children, etc.

According to the California Department of Finance, Demographic Research Unit, 66 percent of reported AIDS cases statewide came from men having sex with men.

As a community, because of AIDS, we all experienced the discrimination and the forced isolation from a city that put fear and ignorance above the human condition. The war was all of ours, and those deaths were our deaths, first and foremost.

As such, the memorial belongs in Hillcrest, a neighborhood that was our battleground and is still our shared community; a neighborhood that has bounced back from that awful time and is open, accepting and welcoming to all.

Olive Street Park would not be any of those things.

There are many other options to consider but I wish to propose my own: Place the AIDS memorial in the median at the corner of Normal Street and Lincoln Avenue.

There are logical reasons for my proposal.

1. The memorial would be in Hillcrest, home of our LGBTQ community.

2. The plot to be developed would be anchored by Harvey Milk Street on one end.

3. It would act as a figurative bookend to the current LGBT Pride Flag and monument, located at the corner of Normal Street and University Avenue, and act as the natural extension of the area used by our community as a gathering place.

4. The location would have easy access to all: those on foot, bicycle, bus, car, etc., without

causing disruption to a residential neighborhood.

5. The memorial would not share its existence with a playground but would offer enough space to create a viable place of reflection.

6. The Hillcrest Business Association has long called for the redevelopment of the Normal Street corridor between University Avenue and Washington Street. This location and the memorial itself could act as the perfect inspiration for architects and landscape architect designers to work together to create a fitting memorial and community space to replace the unsightly median that currently exists.

7. Just like with the Pride Flag, various Hillcrest neighborhood and local LGBT organizations could supplement the fundraising efforts of the AIDS Memorial Task Force (think "Amazing High Heel Race") and offset the costs the HBA would need to beautify this location in the neighborhood.

Thousands of San Diegans are still living with AIDS, many of whom survived the indescribable loss of a mass number of close friends and acquaintances. Many other residents, able to steer clear of the disease itself, also experienced the heartbreaking loss of dozens of friends. Hundreds of LGBT and straight volunteers at AIDS service organizations throughout the years have lost countless numbers of clients. Many more of us lost a friend or a family member to the insidious disease.

All of us described above — and all of those who we have lost — deserve a beautiful, accessible place of thought and reflection in our own neighborhood.

Let's redirect the efforts and focus of the AIDS Memorial Task Force to the unkempt median that lies squarely between Harvey Milk Street and Lincoln Avenue.

—Morgan M. Hurley is the editor of Gay San Diego. She can be reached at morgan@sdcnn.com.❖

Speaking up

Voice of the people
fueled policy successes
in the budget

By Rep. Susan A. Davis

Nothing defines our values more as a nation than the budget and the investments we make for the future of American families.

These investments signal what’s important and what direction we want to take our nation.

Investments in education indicate the value we put on the future we want for our children. They say we want our kids to be better off than we are now.

Investments in the environment say we want clean air and clean water to protect the health of current and future generations.

Prioritizing life-saving medical research sends the message to loved ones that we don’t want anyone, especially our children, to have to suffer from a life-threatening or a life-debilitating disease.

These are messages I hear every day from my constituents. People have been weighing in more than ever before. It was this powerful engagement that helped Democrats fight for these priorities in the omnibus appropriations bill recently signed into law.

With a government shutdown looming, Democrats resisted demands from the Trump administration for cuts in critical investments. We secured policy priorities and investment increases for vital non-defense items, which will educate our children, save lives, and create jobs.

The administration called for a 13 percent cut in education funding and would raid \$4 billion from Pell grants. Since 1965, Pell grants have provided access to a college degree for millions of low-income students.

However, we were able to secure \$24 billion for Pell grants, as well as increase the maximum Pell grant to \$5,920.

Democrats also restored access to year-round Pell grants for hard-working students. This will give students the opportunity to accelerate their work toward a degree.

As the Ranking Member of the Higher Education Subcommittee, I will continue to push for greater funding for Pell grants along with robust investments in education at all grade levels.

Life-saving medical research was also on Trump’s chopping block with a proposed 18 percent cut for the National Institutes of Health.

San Diego receives about \$800 million in NIH funding each year. Thousands of scientists are hard at work in our region making discoveries and looking for cures.

If these cuts were to materialize it would have a significant impact on that research and our local economy.

I recently held a medical research roundtable in San Diego

see Rep. Davis, pg 8

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Uptown News Briefs

Balboa Park After Dark returns

The popular Balboa Park After Dark program will be back this summer, starting on Friday, May 26, and running through Friday, Sept. 1.

Select museums in Balboa Park will stay open late — until 8 p.m. on Fridays — as part of the program. They include Mingei International Museum, San Diego Art Institute, San Diego Museum of Man, the NAT, The San Diego Museum of Art and Fleet Science Center.

Japanese Friendship Garden and Spanish Village will also stay open late.

Hungry visitors can chow down as the Balboa Park Conservancy renews its Food Truck Friday event, when more than a dozen food trucks will park on Plaza de Panama and the Prado walkway. The food trucks will serve between 4 and 8 p.m.

Visit balboapark.org/afterdark for details.

Cyclebar has philanthropic goals

A new health environment focused on the popular “spin” exercise regimen has opened in Hillcrest and its owners are also launching a philanthropic arm.

CycleBar Hillcrest — scheduled to celebrate its grand opening at 1040 University Ave., Suite B213 on June 8 — will also introduce CycleGiving, a new philanthropic effort that plans to raise money for local

nonprofits while promoting health and fitness.

To help engage the community in its grand opening, CycleBar will be offering 70 free classes over 10 days, which will take place June 8–18.

The new work out center promises a “concert-like atmosphere” for its indoor, high energy workouts in what they describe as a “state of the art CycleTheatre” with specific CycleStar instructors leading 44 riders on the 50-minute workouts, complete with widescreen graphics, a DJ booth and LED lighting. Participants can relax and cool down post-workout with fresh fruit, enhanced water options and an aromatherapy experience throughout the new facility.

“I have been a competitive endurance athlete since college and have been very active in the San Diego group fitness community for the last 10 years,” University Heights resident and CycleBar Hillcrest owner Bob Franzetta said in a press release.

“Hillcrest is such an active, vibrant area and CycleBar fits into our community’s health and fitness lifestyle while making the experience fun for both new and experienced riders.”

For more information, visit cyclebarhillcrest.com.

Vine Affair coming June 2

Balboa Park’s newest event, The Vine Affair, will be a

stylish celebration of wine, art, beer, artisan food and live entertainment on Friday, June 2, from 6-10 p.m.

Five of Balboa Park’s museums will host unique art installations, live music, wine and wine education.

The San Diego History Center will host the wine education series. Celebrated vintners, sommeliers and brewers will reveal the secrets of wine-making and brewing to teach attendees to become true connoisseurs. Master sommelier Maurice DiMarino will guide guests through a blind tasting to help discern the nuances of a wine and fine-tune the palate.

Learn the basics of viticulture, the science, production and study of grapes with Luke Bramon, a specialist in vineyard management. Bramon is bringing wines from his Luke’s Leap Wines, a premium boutique winery where wines are handmade from small-batch and old-vine grapes. He is also a member of the Wilson Creek winemaking team, and lecturer at San Diego State University’s Business of Wine program.

Mark Oberle of Meadiocrity Mead will spread the joy of mead with samples from his barrels. Meadiocrity believes good mead comes from good honey, and good honey comes from our backyards. It’s local San Diego County honey, raw and unfiltered, with distinct characteristics that change with the seasons so each mead batch is unique.

Husband and wife owners Eric and Lindsey Fillion of

San Diego’s Pardon My French Bar and Kitchen will educate event-goers on the enjoyment of pairing of a rich French-fusion dessert, Crèmeux au Chocolat, with a tasting from their boutique wine list.

As a tasting gallery, the San Diego History Center will celebrate the history and heritage of San Diego’s Jewish Community. Enjoy a double helping of live entertainment, first from San Diego harpist Charissa Barger. Then local klezmer band Yale Strom & Hot Pstromi fuses traditional klezmer, new Jewish music, Gypsy, khasidic, world beat and Balkan music. Food tastings will be comprised of Jewish-inspired food, wines and brews.

The Fleet Science Center will have a British theme in honor of its current exhibition, “Sherlock Holmes and the Clocktower Mystery.” Enjoy Victorian-era London with steampunk group The Velvetene Band, a kaleidoscopic musical sideshow that delivers a wonderland dreamscape, set to capture the imagination with puppets on vocals, a deranged mad scientist, all led by a six-foot trumpet-playing rabbit. Additional entertainment by dance troupe Moreton Bay Fig Morris performing traditional and modern English folk dances. British-themed food, sherry and a wine-style beer round out this tasting gallery.

The San Diego Art Institute’s Eclectic theme will explore wine’s place in popular culture through live performances, such as native San Diego video artist

Geoff Pritchard exploring the role of TV and internet featuring viral footage of “The Grape Fall,” a mishap during an Atlanta news segment on a grape stomping challenge at a winery. Artist Charles Snowden will perform a live sculpture. Finally, art exhibit “Extra-Ordinary Collusion” featuring more than 23 artist and scientist collaborations can be perused while event-goers enjoy a rainbow of food and beverage tastings from wine to sake, chocolate to cheese.

The Balboa Park Conservancy, in conjunction with The Prado Restaurant, will honor Balboa Park’s heritage with a Spanish themed tasting room featuring Spanish wine, paella and tapas. Crowds will delight to the true flamenco tradition courtesy of Spanish guitarist Oscar Aragon.

The San Diego Model Railroad Museum features historic railroads from the 1950s and 1960s, and will swing into mid-century glamour. San Diego-native Jason Hanna’s jazz trumpet will keep the joint jumpin’, while attendees marvel at a live-performance painting by Bonnie Chance and sip and taste retro-inspired flavors.

Tickets are on sale now at thevineaffair.org. Unlimited tasting — \$65, VIP — \$100, designated driver — \$35.

Pride’s Stonewall Rally returns to Hillcrest

San Diego Pride and the Hillcrest Business Association are working together again this

see Briefs, pg 17

FROM PAGE 5 ATKINS

right. Just as we have a right to a basic education, or to be protected by police officers and firefighters, we have the right to preventative medical care.

Healthy Californians will create a healthy and prosperous California. I’m going to work hard and do my part to help make it happen.

—Sen. Toni G. Atkins represents San Diego’s District 39 in the California State Senate. Reach her office by phone at 619-645-3133 in San Diego, 916-651-4039 in Sacramento, or visit the District 39 website at sd39.senate.ca.gov.

FROM PAGE 7 REP. DAVIS

with local life science leaders and disease advocacy groups. The discussion focused on the role of NIH investments and its particular importance to our region.

In the House, I led 206 members in urging for a \$2 billion increase in NIH investments. I was pleased to see that funding included in the omnibus.

In another win for the health and safety of American families, Democrats protected 99 percent of the budget for the Environmental Protection Agency. This is in contrast



Rep. Susan A. Davis

to Trump’s designs to slash the EPA’s budget by 30 percent.

We need to provide the EPA with the resources necessary to enforce protections that keep our air and water clean.

These are just a few of the successes secured in the omnibus. We also insisted that

more than 160 policy riders to undermine the health, safety, and financial security of the American people be removed from the omnibus.

A rider threatening women’s access to health care by defunding Planned Parenthood was stripped out of the bill. Planned Parenthood provides vital health services to both women and men, many of whom are young and low-income.

The same went for a rider to dismantle the consumer protections under Dodd-Frank. The last thing we want is a repeat of the financial meltdown of 2008.

While we can be proud of this victory, another budget fight is still ahead.

Trump has indicated that he may force a “good”

government shutdown this fall to get the cuts he wants.

There is no such thing as a good shutdown. Shutdowns hurt families, hurt seniors, and hurt our veterans.

The American people let their voices be heard and their values were defined in the omnibus. We must continue to push for these priorities.

—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 4

TRUAX HOUSE

“I have been proactive with the historic status and designated the project as a historic site.

“The Truax House sits on a gorgeous site with views out to the San Diego Bay and Downtown as well as Maple Canyon. Creating a community center with a multipurpose room and drought tolerant garden area would prove a great space for tenants, nonprofits and community organizations to enjoy. This aspect would continue the tradition started on the property by the AIDS Foundation in Dr. Truax’s spirit with values of welcoming and openness for the community.

“A section of this space may be reserved as a public art gallery that could house different local artists’ work throughout the year.”

Kaminski said he would tell the Planning Commission on June 1 that he would like to see in writing that the developer will not sell off the Truax House property without fulfilling his promise to preserving and restoring the historical building and providing a community room and communal garden.

In his letter, Nakhshab outlines his promise to provide an inviting entrance into Maple Canyon:

“Maple Canyon is beautiful open space that is not utilized enough by the community. This may be partly due to the fact that finding an inviting passage into and through is not easy. Opening up access through the Truax property would connect two public resources in a meaningful fashion that allows both places to be experienced more pleasantly.

“While this part of our proposal has some nuance of having the adjacent property owner agree to similar goals of giving the public a charming access to Maple Canyon, we are dedicated to working closely with the private property owner next door in putting together the required public access easement as this will bring tremendous benefit for the community as a whole.”

At the end of the meeting, Nakhshab asked the Metro CDC to support his proposal headed to the Planning Commission.

“I’m seeking positive energy,” he said, with a sigh. “I’ve lost sleep over this project.”

The Metro CDC members agreed to support the project and directed their administrator Leo Wilson to attend the Planning Commission meeting to speak in favor of Nakhshab’s efforts.

Learn more about the Metro CDC online at metrosandiegocdc.org and Nakhshab Development & Design at naddinc.net.

—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.❖



The Truax House property is outlined in red, and the city's Planning Commission will vote June 1 on whether to approve the buyer's request to subdivide the land into three parcels: one for the vacant lot, one for the Truax House and one for the corner lot. (Courtesy of the city of San Diego)

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Swaddled in freshness

Restaurant Review

Frank Sabatini Jr.



The new Cruiser Taco North Park conservatively bucks tradition while faithfully upholding it with puffy dough balls that are rolled out and grilled for each taco order.

Nathan Sellers, a San Diego native who owns the quaint taqueria with his wife and father-in-law, is no stranger to south-of-the-border cuisine. He grew up making regular visits to family members living in Ensenada and Mexicali and came to cherish the foods you'll find on his succinct menu: grilled street corn, citrus-marinated chicken, pork adobo and frijoles laced with bacon, which



Nathan Sellers preparing street corn

is exactly the way his mother makes them.

Still in its soft opening, the menu currently offers seven types of tacos in addition to nachos, loaded fries and side dishes such as chips with queso, the frijoles, and sweet corn slathered with aioli, cotija cheese and cilantro. Luscious and messy, they're some of the tastiest cobs in town.

Seating is all outdoors starting with a front deck that connects to a covered side patio. Beer and wine are in the pipeline, although until Sellers obtains his license, visitors are permitted to bring beer into the eatery from the adjoining Barn Brewery or make due with excellent cinnamon-spiked horchata or hibiscus-infused black tea, both made onsite and served ice-cold from taps.

Sellers' signature "chicali" pays homage to the carne asada tacos of Mexicali. The meat is finely diced and cooked to a near crisp. It's accented with frijoles, avocado, onions, shredded cabbage, cilantro and a hint of salsa roja. Compared to three other



Assorted tacos using fresh-made flour tortillas

tacos we tried, it called for extra zing from any of the four house-made salsas, which range from mild to super-hot.

Seared pork tinted rusty red from paprika-loaded adobo marinade filled the "what a pig" taco containing much of the same ingredients as the chicali, but with the additions of cubed pineapple and crema. The taco provided a mouthful of complex flavors while the supple made-to-order flour tortilla seamlessly matched the texture of the tender meat.

The "Mission Blvd." taco might best represent the Southern

named with the notion of riding a cruiser bike down the Mission Beach boardwalk.

It's filled with trendy deep-fried avocado, in this case beer-battered and topped with pickled red onions, cabbage and crema. Maybe it's just me, but in all of my encounters with the green fruit fried like this, I've found its subtle flavor flies straight out the window and the texture becomes thinner and less creamy.

While my companion ate it with gusto, I proceeded to the "big chicken" taco filled with citrus-marinated leg and



Street-style corn on the cob

thigh meat plus lettuce, avocado, onions and chipotle crema. No salsa needed, it ranked with the pork taco as my favorite.

Other taco choices include the "San Diego" tailored after a California burrito filled with carne asada, french fries and cheese, but with the bonus of avocado and crema. For vegetarians, "the Maya" equates simply to a bean and cheese taco while the "Messin' w/Texas" puts fajitas-style Portobello mushrooms at the core.

We also ordered the chips and queso. Both are made in-house. The chips were just how I like them — warm, thin and delicate. The queso, however, was somewhat bland despite the inclusions of roasted chilies, cotija cheese and salsa. Sharper cheddar would do wonders for the recipe.

Sellers said his menu will soon expand with additional tacos such as birria (stewed beef), chili relleno (contained within the flour tortillas) and another filled with beet root, sweet potatoes and goat cheese.

Also, at the time of our visit, he was awaiting his first delivery of gourmet popsicles from Viva Pops in Normal Heights, which he will carry regularly in five or six flavors.

—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. Reach him at fsabatini@san.rr.com.



A newcomer to El Cajon Boulevard
(Photos by Frank Sabatini Jr.)

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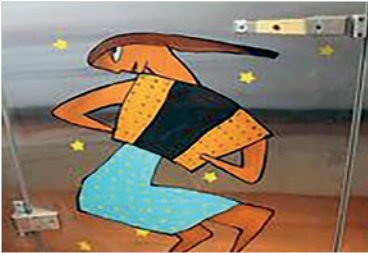


A contiguous trio of establishments by **Cohn Restaurant Group** has opened in Hillcrest. Among them is **Bo-beau kitchen + Cache**, an offshoot to Bo-beau kitchens in Ocean Beach and La Mesa that will follow suit with French bistro cuisine.



Ornate chandeliers in various styles define Bo-beau kitchen in Hillcrest (Courtesy of Cohn Restaurant Group)

Located directly next door is **Libertad**, a taqueria that has earmarked 100 percent of its profits to a different charity each month. Hidden behind it **Cache**, an intimate Parisian-style



Whimsical paintings inspired by children's art run through Libertad (Courtesy of Cohn Restaurant Group)

speakeasy specializing in craft cocktails and accessible through a rear door of the taco shop.



An imposing statue stands behind the bar at Cache (Courtesy of Cohn Restaurant Group)

The businesses are located respectively at 1027 University Ave. and 1023 University Ave. cohnrestaurants.com.

Pizza in a cone? The crafty invention was first introduced in Milan several years ago and is the staple of New Jersey-based **Kono Pizza**, which recently opened a walk-up kiosk in Westfield Mission Valley Mall.



Coned pizza has arrived in San Diego (Google Images)

Inventive dishes such as coconut-braised pork belly, tahini chicken burgers and jalapeno-glazed shrimp are in the offing at the new **OB Surf Lodge**, which was previously home to **Shades Oceanfront Bistro**. The restaurant-bar was recently unveiled by the Social Syndicate, a hospitality group with a portfolio that includes **The Rabbit Hole**, **Bootlegger**, **The Local**, and **Wonderland Ocean Pub**, located upstairs from OB Surf Lodge.

The kitchen is headed by executive chef James Ausem, formerly with **The Prado** and **Barefoot Bar & Grill**. And the bar program features classic drinks with contemporary twists, such as Mai Tais with passionfruit foam on top, and margaritas made with rosemary-ginger syrup and served with black salt on the rim.

Bar manager Sean Ward said that despite some final menu revisions in the works and a fire pit that's yet to be installed on the patio, the establishment "is fully functioning." It will hold a grand opening sometime in the coming month. 5083 Santa Monica Blvd., 619-955-5475, obsurflodge.com.

Chefs from **Waypoint Public**, **Solare**, **Galaxy Taco**, **Casa Guadalajara**, **Civico 1845** and more created imaginative dishes based on their favorite books at the eighth annual "Eat. Drink. Read. A Culinary Event for Literacy," held May 18 at the **San Diego Air & Space Museum** in Balboa Park. The event raised money for the San Diego Council on Literacy. Donate at literacysandiego.org.

Local restaurateur Paul Fatta of **Bayside Landing** in Mission Bay will take over the **Ritual Kitchen and Beer Garden** in North Park when it closes in the coming month or two. The 10-year-old restaurant has reportedly experienced financial setbacks in the face of rising competition within the neighborhood.

According to Mike Spilky of Location Matters, which is handling the real estate transfer, Fatta plans to invest nearly \$500,000 into the property for what will become **Working Class American Diner + Bar**, due to open this fall. The remodeled space will feature two bars, multiple flat screens and an expanded beer garden in the back. 4095 30th St.



Sycamore Den mixologist Jesse Ross has introduced some uncommon cocktails. (Photo by Arlene Ibarra)

In celebration of its four-year anniversary, **Sycamore Den** in Normal Heights has introduced 10 new drinks conceived by cocktail curator Jesse Ross and his bar team. They include the Hunter Gatherer, which combines in a tall glass with ice herbal Jaegermeister, an aperitif wine, raspberry syrup and fresh raspberries. Or in the Aloe Can You Go, the recently released aloe liqueur called Chateau is mixed with Liquid Alchemist (a tamarind elixir) and served in a coupe. 3391 Adams Ave., 619-563-9019, sycamoreden.com.

The baked cones are made from fresh dough and filled with tomato sauce, mozzarella cheese and a variety of options such as meatballs, sausage, chicken or vegetables. They also serve as dessert vessels when stuffed with cannoli cream, Nutella and bananas, and various combinations of Ghirardelli chocolates. The company's San Diego debut brings the number of U.S. franchises to more than a dozen. 1640 Camino Del Rio North, 619-546-9557, konousa.com.

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



The tahini chicken burger with beet aioli at OB Surf Lodge (Courtesy of Crowe PR)

The new **Liberty Public Farmers Market** is up and running with 60 vendors that include local growers, specialty food purveyors and craftspeople. Located across the street from **Liberty Public Market** on the grassy area between Sims Road and Decatur Court, the market is held from 2 to 7 p.m., every Thursday to the tune of live music. Culinary demos and local chef pop-ups will begin in July.

A portion of proceeds from market sales are earmarked for Outside the Lens, a Liberty Station-based organization dedicated to teaching youth digital media, videography and photography. libertypublicmarket.com.

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Answering to duck calls

Come On Get Happy! Dr. Ink

Comics of Disney's Darkwing Duck and Asian superheroes frame a giant chalkboard at Whistling Duck Tavern, the newest addition to the HUB shopping center in Hillcrest. The board lists about 25 tap beers, assorted wines and eight types of sake in a playful atmosphere where East meets West.

A decent portion of the drink list is discounted during happy hour: wines by the glass are \$4, select drafts are \$6, and sake flights are \$7. Although it isn't until perusing the food menu that you begin absorbing the establishment's ambitious concept of pairing Asian ingredients to familiar West Coast ones.

Resembling more of a modern gastropub

than a classic tavern, its chef-owner Charles Sun of Shanghai Saloon on Convoy Street has created an alluring spot to eat, drink and lounge.

Accordion windows open to University Avenue in the front and look out to an inviting side patio on the side from what used to be Pick Up Stix. With the exception of a small four-seat bar, the establishment offers roomy seating options at tables, window ledges or on the patio.

A flight of four cold sakes for only \$7 dissuaded me from ordering beer, which included Anchor Steam Mango Wheat, Duck Foot Contender and a tempting Schofferhofer Grapefruit Weizen. Conversely, a list of basic bulk varietals from Stone Cellars Winery didn't incite any quacking at all.

Served in 1 ½-ounce pours, the sake glasses included a milky Ozeki Nigori, which was light in alcohol and high in banana-like sweetness. Though not as creamy as expected, it offered discernible flavor compared to the three clear varieties in the lineup — an insipid Kikusui Junmai Ginjo, a pleasantly soft-tasting 10,000 Ways Honjozo, and the faintly fruity Tozai Typhoon Futsu.

Assuming the sakes would be marked by name, deciphering their identities and semblance required help from one of the cheerful servers.

About 10 appetizers are available for \$6 each. They include french fries topped with crispy duck, ground buffalo and mozzarella; fried pig ears; daikon radishes with dried shrimp and Taiwanese sausage; and a few other dishes you won't find on other happy hour menus.

Not even the crispy duck bao buns I ordered



Whistling Duck Tavern

1040 University Ave.
Suite B-111 (Hillcrest)

619-255-4046
whistlingducktavern.com

Happy hour: 4 to 7 p.m.
Tuesday through Friday

A rustic emblem outside leads into a modern gastropub (Photos by Dr. Ink)

were ordinary, mainly because the meat is folded into little chalupa-style bread buns and then deep-fried to a unique crisp. These two little darlings, filled also with julienne veggies and a smear of hoisin sauce, fell naturally in line to the sake like ducklings to their mother.

Whistling Duck Tavern is still growing into its whimsical concept since waddling ashore a few months ago. Yet from the spirited patronage I witnessed during happy hour and the good price deals available, it's off to a robust start.❖

RATINGS

Drinks: ♂♂♂♂

Beer and sake are the drink menu's strong points, offering diverse options compared to wines, which originate mostly from mass-producing Stone Cellar Winery.

Food: ♂♂♂♂

From an adventurous menu of discounted appetizers, the crispy duck tucked into deep-fried slider buns is a clever departure from traditional bao buns.

Value: ♂♂♂♂♂

A flight of four cold sakes for \$7 is a steal. Ditto for the \$6 craft beers on tap, which normally run \$7 or \$8 a glass.

Service: ♂♂♂♂♂

The servers quickly greeted me and other incoming customers with happy hour menus while accommodating everyone's seating preferences.

Atmosphere: ♂♂♂♂♂

A comic book theme prevails within an airy space marked by industrial design elements, a couple of flat-screen TVs and windows that open to front and side patios.



Discounted
sake flight

Chalupa-style bao
buns with crispy duck

Sweet!

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The cast of *The Old Man and The Old Moon*. Photo by T Charles Erickson.

A dreamy production

Theater Review
Charlene Baldridge

“The flying felt like God loved me,” Zoe says in Georgette Kelly’s “Ballast.” The unique play, directed in its world premiere by Diversionary Theater Executive Artistic Director Matt M. Morrow, is acted upon Ron Logan’s set, quite likely the most beautiful set ever created for this theater.

Lovers of beauty, poetry and whimsy must see the work before it closes June 4. “Ballast” is unique in its construction, for it draws upon the dreams of its four principal characters. The dreams, scenes and dialogue spew forth as if one took their

individual mid-night odysseys and randomly mixed them up, the fragments eventually coalescing into a poignant whole, rife with unrequited longing. Particularly in the case of the married Grace (attractive red-head Dana Aliya Levinson) and Zoe (beloved San Diego actor Jacque Wilke), each wants what the other cannot give, namely to return the marriage to the way it started out.

Originally theirs was a marriage between a woman, Zoe, and a man, now Grace, who was and still is a Protestant minister, at least until her denomination makes a ruling. Now that he has transitioned into a woman, continuing as clergy is uncertain for Grace, and try as she might the loving and supportive Zoe — who says, “My one is two now” — can’t help feeling that the man she loved is gone forever.



Dana Aliya Levinson in "Ballast" at Diversionary Theater in University Heights



Jacque Wilke and Skyler Sullivan (Photos by SIMPATIKA)

The other couple comprises Xavier (Maxton Miles Baeza) and Savannah (Jennifer Paredes). They have known each other since kindergarten, so know each other extremely well. They purport to be 21 but in actuality they are only 15. Xavier, born a girl, identifies as a young man, something that concerns his mother Savannah a great deal. She accepts Xavier as he is, and wants only his love.

Dana Case and Skyler Sullivan portray all the people in both couples’ lives; among them Zoe’s flying instructor, Grace’s bishop and Xavier’s mother. Both are extremely effective and seem to have a blast doing multiple characters. When Grace takes in the run-away Xavier, some of the play’s funniest and most cohesive scenes occur. But mostly, it’s all



Maxton Miles Baeza and Jennifer Paredes

glorious flying towards an upliftingly poetic conclusion.

Logan’s lovely set, as befits flying, is blue. The simplest of elements contribute to the astonishingly beautiful effect, a maypole of ropes played upon effectively by Sherrice Mojgani’s lighting and several draped shapes center stage

“Ballast”

By Georgette Kelly

Directed by
Matt M. Morrow

Diversionsary Theatre
4545 Park Blvd.
(University Heights)

Thursdays-Sundays
through June 4

Tickets \$15-\$45

diversionary.org
619-22-0097

that morph into everything else. Elisa Benzoni creates imaginative costumes and Emily Janowski is the sound designer, a veritable whoosh queen of the cosmos. Under Morrow’s leadership, Diversionary is on an upward trajectory where productions just get better and better. The transgender subject matter in “Ballast” is just one example of how timely and cutting-edge theater can be. Playwright Kelly, who operates in both Chicago and New York, is definitely one to watch.

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

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North Park ready to party

By Joyell Nevins

North Park is getting ready to explode with a colorful mix of art and music, accompanied by refreshing craft beer and cocktails. It's time for the 21st annual Festival of Arts in North Park, held on Saturday, May 20.

The festival, like North Park, has changed a lot in the last two decades. It has become the biggest festival in the neighborhood.

The Festival of Arts, sponsored by North Park Main Street and San Diego County Credit Union, started 21 years ago as a modest Spring Arts Festival. It took over a few blocks and featured less than 20 vendors. This year, the festival sprawls over nine blocks and attracts about 40,000 attendees.

"This event began as a small arts fair in what was a much

different community. The event grew each year and with the increasing popularity of North Park, it's continued to expand," said Angela Landsberg, executive director of North Park Main Street.

Some of those expansions include more live music and craft beer samplings and a children's activity zone.

Art comes alive

A plethora of art will be available for viewing and purchase. Enjoy booths of painting, photography, pottery and jewelry from North Park's talented neighbors, including featured artist, graphic designer and calligrapher Channin Fulton.

Thanks to the efforts of the contemporary local gallery The Studio Door, there will also be a juried exhibition called "Gallery in the Street." The street gallery — literally

— will be on University Avenue and Iowa Street.

Meet the participating artists in two special receptions during the festival at 2 and 7 p.m.

If you want to see art happening, head down to Herman Avenue. The gallery and art supply store Vis.ual Urban Contemporary Art has assembled some of San Diego's most renowned street artists for live painting and a pop-up exhibition that goes until 8 p.m.

Aleck Christian, Brisk, Bink, Don't Trip, Eyegator, Jason Gould, mrbbaby, MR DVICE, Maxx Moses and others will be contributing their skills, painting big canvas and designing art using everyday objects like cars, refrigerators and boom boxes (no idea where they got a hold of one of those!). FeeLit Records and Wats Today? are providing the soundtrack for this hip art in action.

"The creativity in North Park is boundless and I personally can't wait to see what this year brings," said Teresa Halleck, president and CEO of San Diego County Credit Union.

For those of legal age, craft cocktails will be sold from noon to 9:30 p.m. in the West Coast Cocktail Garden overlooking the art block. The garden is sponsored by West Coast Tavern, with cocktails provided by Cutwater Spirits.

More music

Just as the art comes in a range of styles, so does the



Festival of Arts in North Park

11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Saturday, May 20

northparkmainstreet.com
619-294-2501

Parking at a discounted rate available at public parking garage on 29th Street

All proceeds from the festival will benefit North Park Main Street, the nonprofit organization committed to the revitalization of North Park



Children are encouraged to discover their artistic side (Photos by Maria Wiles)

music. Listen to indie rock, blues, funk, dance and rock 'n' roll from four stages, along with children's entertainment and even karaoke.

On the Main Stage at 30th Street and University Avenue, the Johnny Cash tribute band Cash'd Out will be headlining in the afternoon. Music critics have anointed these locals as "the next best thing to Johnny Cash."

Stick around for some soul music and then international "cross-pollination" with The B-side Players, headlining the night. The nine-piece band pulls beats from across their homelands, incorporating funk, rock, jazz and hip-hop rhythms from Cuba, Jamaica, Mexico and Brazil. They refer to themselves as a "living, breathing, cultural art experience."

One of the stages, located on Illinois Street, is dedicated to the world of dance. Performances go from ballet to belly dancing to Bollywood.

Near the cocktail garden, spin it with several well-known deejays including headliners

Miles Maeda and DJ Collete.

Inside Queen Bee on Ohio Street, the stage will be a haven for rock from 11 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

The Kids Art Block on Grimm Street will have a stage for music and dance. Children also have the opportunity to participate in art projects designed to stimulate their imaginations.

Always, always beer

On Ohio Street, from noon-4 p.m. or 4-8 p.m., one ticket gets the attendee unlimited samples from more than 30 local craft brewers in the Waypoint Public Craft Beer Block. Established breweries and up-and-comers will both be represented.

Karaoke will also be available inside the craft beer block, in case you're moved by that liquid courage.

—Joyell Nevins is a freelance writer who can be reached at joyellc@gmail.com. Find her blog "Small World, Big God" at swgblog.wordpress.com.✽



(above) Dancers perform at the Festival of the Arts in North Park; (below) who doesn't love a painted cow?

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Spiritually attuned

North Park artist Moni Bloom finds her whimsy with totem artwork

By Lucia Viti

Many believe that pole totems hold sacred and spiritual powers. Merriam-Webster defines a carved and painted totem as an "object serving as an emblem of a family or clan." The sometimes tall-towering relic is often adopted as a family crest and/or as a token of power.

Moni Bloom — artist extraordinaire from North Park — has made "fun" totems her life's work. She builds whimsical, ornate, colorful, mystical totems that would inspire the likes of Dr. Seuss. Touting titles of Tweet Tweet, Runaway Thought, I Can't Square Dance, Hare Brained Thought, Celebrate Your Inner Party, I Love Cupcakes and Candy Explosion, she sketches, constructs and glazes slab sculptures and abstract wall pieces for commercial and private collections.

"I embody an idea," she said. "That is, I take a form and change it so the viewer gets an idea of what it is without knowing exactly what it is. I explore organic shapes that convey a message without having something that's super representational. My forms are whimsical and my colors are juicy. Bright glazes heighten their humor and motion."

Fascinating upbringing

Bloom's rise to fanciful fame has had its share of interesting twists and turns.

Born in San Francisco, Bloom lived in Tripoli, Libya, while her father worked for Dr. Armand Hammer as vice president for the Eastern Hemisphere of Occidental Petroleum. She became enamored with clay while visiting Garian, a small town in Libya built from clay. She watched "a thin shirtless potter throwing a 5-foot tall, olive-oil vessel," with its power generated by a "donkey walking in circles around the potter's wheel."

Fascinated and inspired, Bloom's interest in working with clay "never waned from that point on." The Bloom family moved to Bakersfield, California when King Idris was overthrown by Col. Muammar Gaddafi. She studied with two well-known ceramicists, Vic and Pat Bracke, and "fell in love with throwing from a wheel."

Learning and growing

Lauding degrees in studio art and education, Bloom graduated from Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, Massachusetts. During the artist's "formative years" she taught ceramics, stone and wood carving, and drama, "of all things," at the Catalina Island School on Catalina Island. She described teaching kids as fun and challenging but more importantly, as the impetus that "segued me into the arena of becoming a full-time ceramic studio artist."

Graduate classes at San Diego University for welding and bronze casting followed suit. Although she enjoyed working with bronze, she turned her sights to bigger — much bigger — artifacts to work with. Bloom ventured into the corporate world and became a machinist.

"I threw on the wheel for years, but it was confining and expensive," she continued. "After college, I couldn't afford the foundry fees required for making bronze sculptures so I worked solely on sculpting after a full day of working as a machinist. I learned how to manipulate the blade, the mill

and the drill press. I had always envisioned making heavy art objects and huge wall pieces out of steel. I brought wrecked-pieces home to make sculptures. I taught myself how to hand build with slabs."

Twenty-seven years ago, Bloom was laid off from her job as a manufacturing engineer at General Dynamics. Without regret, she ventured into full-time artistry, producing an incredible array of hearts, masks, figurative work, sculptures and totems. All inspired from fairy tales, circuses, movies, candy, children's games, abstract pieces, hearts and "of course, Dr. Seuss."

Finding her niche

Today she creates ornate, glazed 12-foot, 6-foot and 4-foot-tall totems. Designs are contrasted in forms and glazing.

"These contrasts evoke joy, happiness and excitement," she said. "People love the spark, the accent my totems give living spaces and yards. Every piece is as unique as the feelings that emanate from viewing the different shapes and colors. I describe my zigzag pieces, the side-to-side movement, as a drunken Dr. Suessian look. My work is imaginative, humorous and unpredictable."

Totems are born from sketch drawings. "Drawing saves time," she said. "I augment forms. In some work, I create or add accents and accentuate what I'm trying to convey — the humor, the motion, the emotion — to give the piece a punch of joy. Colors are based on the feelings that I get from the glaze colors."

Red is Bloom's happy, exciting and eye-catching color while black and white combinations represent "an excellent leaping point."

"Black and white are colors with good energy that give the eyes a moment to rest," she said. "Black and white reminds me of See's Candy boxes, European palace floors, games, even the tiles in my own home."

Each totem takes between six and 12 months to complete.

Smaller pieces take equally as long as their larger counterparts because of the ornateness of the glazing.

Work is described as "laborious, tedious, intricate and elaborate." Since her work is labor intensive — "I work every day with few vacations" — Bloom exercises regularly. Workouts include long distance and rough water swims, weightlifting, running, yoga and Pilates.

"I wedge and lift heavy clay, so I mix up my workouts as much as I can. I have to stay strong," she said.

Finding a community

Bloom is a member of the Clay Artists of San Diego, a group of "like-minded friends and colleagues." The organization is open to everyone who poses an interest in ceramics including professional potters, clay artists, sculptors and those who use clay in mixed media.

"These ceramic artists support the future of ceramics in San Diego County," she said. "They offer fantastic, professional input and provide the clay community with seminars and workshops, including hot clay."

Bloom hosted a show at the Bakersfield Museum of Art and hopes to do the same in San Diego. "I worked every day for an entire year to assemble an extensive and thorough body of work for the Bakersfield Museum," she said. "It was a great experience. I truly hope to do the same in San Diego."

Bloom continues to show and sell her work at juried art shows in California and Arizona and exhibits in museums. She also regularly attends workshops to "broaden my scope with ongoing educational and cultural events."

She is also a member of ArtReach San Diego. She donates 5 percent of her sales at various shows because she believes that "it's invaluable for kids to have art in their curriculum."

ArtReach is a not-for-profit, 501(c)(3) organization that joins artists with San Diego County schools — kindergarten through sixth grade — to provide visual arts education. Working with thousands of students since its inception in 2007, ArtReach offers after-school programs and workshops for a myriad of



North Park artist Moni Bloom

youth organizations. ArtReach believes that all children should have access to art regardless of budgets and/or socioeconomic status.

—Contact Lucia Viti at luciviti@roadrunner.com ❖



North Park artist Moni Bloom is known for her totem pole artwork and whimsical pieces, such as "Runaway Thought" (center). (Photos courtesy of Moni Bloom)

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		4		3		5		
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	9	6					3	
				7	9			

9/6

Sudoku Puzzle

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

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Puzzle answers on page 17

Uptown Crossword

Illustrious Italians

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14					15						16			
17					18						19			
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58						59					60			
61						62					63			

CREATORS NEWS SERVICE

By Charles Preston

ACROSS

1 Type of tax
5 Chastises
10 Salad
14 Bread spread
15 Heaven
16 Insect stage
17 Hit hard
18 Footloose fellow
19 Maple tree genus
20 Chinese river
21 Uncultured
22 Ascending
24 Quartz variety
26 Soothing
27 Martial art
29 Wasteland tract
30 Hardwood
33 Confuse
34 Style
35 Great general
36 Hebrew prophet
37 Infective agent
38 Champion jumper
39 Invitation
40 Greek letters
41 Things stored
42 ___ standstill
43 Soviet sea
44 Crude

45 Corrupt
47 Orchestra instrument
48 Came up
50 Valley
51 Hand or sand
54 Desire
55 Extinguish
57 Paris priest
58 Formerly
59 Wetlands tree
60 Streamlet
61 Animal abode
62 Threadbare
63 Diamond immortal

DOWN

1 Elegant
2 Earthen jar
3 Illustrious Italian
4 Record
5 Early English king
6 Habitation
7 Alaskan locale
8 Stowe's Little ___
9 Painstaking
10 Bring forth
11 Illustrious Italian
12 Copycat
13 City section
21 Be worthy of
23 Reduce

25 Dames
26 Not genuine
27 Islam shrine
28 Confess
29 Righteous
31 Evil glances
32 Gettysburg general
34 Essential
37 Open galleries
38 Young farm animal
40 Author Grey
41 Difficulty
44 Vegetable
46 Acid salt
47 Enclosed
48 GI offense
49 Frog genus
50 ___ ranches
52 In a competent way
53 Thickens
56 Cordoba cheer
57 Weapon

Puzzle answers on page 17

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San Diego Community News Network

FROM PAGE 8

BRIEFS

year to kick off the weekend's 43rd annual Pride festivities on Friday, July 15. The Spirit of Stonewall Rally, which last year took place at the Pride Festival grounds on the West Mesa of Balboa Park — as it had in the years prior to the construction of the Hillcrest Pride Flag — is returning to the flag area at Normal Street and University Avenue prior to the Pride Block Party.

“Our community and this country could use a little more unity right now. By bringing these two organizations together over Pride weekend to

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Camps run from June 15 through Aug. 25.

To register, please visit ymca.org/copleyprice. Save up to \$50 per camp with your Y membership.

honor our history and celebrate our accomplishments we're also highlighting all that is possible when we work together,” said Fernando Lopez, director of operations for San Diego Pride.

The Spirit of Stonewall Rally — which celebrates local LGBT leaders, offers an inspirational speaker lineup that serves as a call to action during challenging times, and ends with the ceremonial raising of the Hillcrest Pride Flag — has historically kicked off the weekend's festivities.

This year, as in years past, the rally will be immediately followed by the Pride Block Party, a neighborhood event held alongside the flag area that includes local DJs, carnival rides, bars and a large dance area all in the street at the intersection of Normal Street and University Avenue.

“I am so happy that the Stonewall Rally is returning to Hillcrest this year,” said Benjamin Nicholls, executive director of the Hillcrest Business Association. “Unity is so important as we go forward in an ever more uncertain and difficult world. I know the businesses of Hillcrest are excited to be part of the kick off of Pride 2017!”

The Spirit of Stonewall Rally, which starts at 5 p.m., is free and open to the public. Advance general admission tickets for the Block Party, which will start immediately after the rally and continue until 11 p.m., are currently on sale for \$20, with VIP passes \$45. Visit fabuloushillcrest.com or sdpride.org for tickets and more information.✽

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

Sudoku

Puzzle from page 16

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

Illustrious Italians

Crossword from page 16

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

UPTOWN CALENDAR

FEATURED EVENTS



Ride with Torque!

Saturday, May 20

Torque Moto Café in North Park will host a charity ride and raffle to benefit nonprofit Center for Community Solutions. Fee/donation \$20 per bike. Amelia Earhart attire suggested for women and Charles Lindberg for men. 2001 Pan American Plaza at Air and Space Museum in Balboa Park. 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Visit bit.ly/2pH6wRX.

Bike-in movie night at Trolley Barn Park

Saturday, May 20

University Heights Community Association presents a bike-friendly film screening with giveaways to celebrate Bike Month. Free. 6:30-9 p.m. at Trolley Barn Park, 1943 Adams Ave. Visit bit.ly/2pHljvV.

‘Petals: The Journey to Self-Discovery’

Tuesday, May 23

Experience this intimate and uplifting women’s circle to explore your feminine self and connect with your body. The event also features a photographic art gallery and film screening of documentary “Petals: Journey into Self Discovery.” 6:30-9:30 p.m. 4076 Vermont St. in University Heights. Tickets online at bit.ly/2pGV493.

Uptown Democratic Program

Tuesday, May 23

Attorney and journalist John Mattes will speak on his investigation on the presidential election. 7-9 p.m. Joyce Beers Community Center, 3900 Vermont St. in Hillcrest. Visit bit.ly/2pGUCaM.

Artist Reception for Daniel James

Thursday, May 25

Torque Moto Café hosts a reception for artist and Comic-Con illustrator Daniel James. The event will also feature live music from Generation Gap. 5:30-8:30 at Torque Moto Café, 3604 30th St. in North Park. Contact noalparis@rocketmail.com.

Crossover: Where Comics and Science Meet

Friday, May 26

IDW Publishing and the Fleet Science Center will host an event that explores the connection between comics, art, science and technology. This is a 21-and-older event. Tickets \$15 and include two beers and one comic book. 6:30-8 p.m. at San Diego Comic Art Gallery, 2765 Truxtun Road, Barracks 3, Liberty Station. Visit bit.ly/2pHj5wz.

‘Gidion’s Knot’

Friday, May 26-Saturday, June 10

InnerMission Productions presents a two-woman play about the aftermath of a child’s suicide. Times vary. Diversionary’s Black Box Space, 4545 Park Blvd. in University Heights. Tickets \$20-25 at bit.ly/2pHfzN.

Jessica Hernandez & The Deltas at Soda Bar

Sunday, May 28

Alternative/indie band Jessica Hernandez & The Deltas will perform at 7:30 p.m. at Soda Bar, 3615 El Cajon Blvd. in North Park. This is a 21-and-older show. Tickets \$12-14 at ticketf.ly/2pH3H3n.

Too Many Zooz at Soda Bar

Thursday, June 1

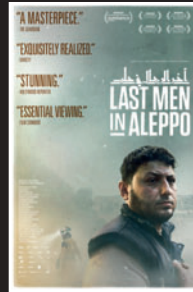
Jazz band Too Many Zooz will perform at 8:30 p.m. at Soda Bar, 3615 El Cajon Blvd. This is a 21-and-older show. Tickets \$17 at ticketf.ly/2pGXQuJ.

see Calendar, pg 20

DIGITAL GYM GEMS



‘Hounds of Love’ – This thriller follows the abduction of a teenager and her attempt to drive a wedge between a serial-killer couple in order to survive. Unrated. Friday, May 19 to Thursday, May 25.



‘Last Men in Aleppo’ – Acclaimed filmmaker Feras Fayyad presents a documentary on the White Helmets and their heroic journey to save Syrian lives. Unrated. Friday, May 19 to Thursday, May 25.



‘Last Chance Indies: Citizen Jane: Battle for the City’ — Follow the life of 1960s activist and author Jane Jacobs, who fought the power to preserve urban communities. Unrated. Friday, May 19 to Thursday, May 25.❖

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

RECURRING EVENTS

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

●“Top Gun” Friday, May 19 and Saturday, May 20

●“Roman Holiday” Thursday, May 25-Sunday, May 28

●“Rear Window” Thursday, June 1 and Friday, June 2

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

Aja Project / REFLECT + UNFOLD

This Japanese Friendship Garden photography exhibition focuses on identity and features work from Momentum Learning students. Exhibit open 10:45 a.m.-4:45 p.m. Monday-Sunday. 2215 Pan American Road East. Visit niwa.org.

Mondays

North Park Toastmasters meeting: 6:30–8 p.m., weekly meeting at St. Luke’s Episcopal Church, 3725 30th St., North Park. 619-694-9148. 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.

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.

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. bit.ly/2pezpnR.

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.

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

Kornflower’s Open Mic: Signups at 6:30 p.m., open mic (no poetry or comedy) 7–10 p.m. Family-friendly event at Rebecca’s Coffee

House, 3015 Juniper St., South Park, free. Rebeccascoffeehouse.com.

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

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

2017 San Diego Film Series: 7:30 p.m., every third Thursday view a film representative of Italian cinema at the Museum of Photographic Arts, 1649 El Prado, Balboa Park. Sandiegoitalianfilmfestival.com.

Kirtan Musical Meditation: 8:30 p.m., chant and sing ancient and contemporary mantras celebrating love and life at Pilgrimage of the Heart Yoga, 3301 Adams Ave., Normal Heights. Free – donations welcome. Pilgrimageyoga.com.

Fridays

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

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

Saturdays

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

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

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

Sundays

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

West African dance class: 5:30–7 p.m., Master dancer Djibril Camara from Guinea teaches these classes that are also a great workout for all ages and skill levels at La Vie Dance Studio, 325 W. Washington, Hillcrest. Lavie.dance.

To view local community organization meeting information online, visit bit.ly/2esLpLR.

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

FROM PAGE 1

PROFILE

supplies and a hot lunch. The staff provides tutoring and mentoring during its Project Amigo Homework Clubs.

3. What do you do with Project Amigo, and how has this impacted your life?

I am currently chairman of the board for Project Amigo, an organization I've been involved with since 2006. It has impacted my life in a number of ways. Project Amigo is a program that I can directly see all the good that it does for people. I actually get to know the kids who we work with, which is extremely fulfilling. One of the things that I really wanted to do in my life was to be a Peace Corps volunteer — this is like that because it's very hands on in making a positive difference for others.

4. Some people think public relations is still like the "Mad Men" TV series. In reality, though, how has public relations changed since you've been in the business?

There's an increasing need to show a return on investment (ROI) for businesses including our clients. Traditional print media used to be a main focus for the industry. Now, social media is woven into everything these days.



Bev Oster (center) and other volunteers (Photos by Oster and Associates)

Technology has completely changed public relations. For example, when putting out a press release, we used to mail 100 copies of the release through the Postal Service for media outlets to do their own thing with it such as rewriting or reworking the information with their own personnel. Compare that to today where media take a digital file and can instantaneously use the press release in their reporting and coverage. It's pretty incredible to see how far we've come as an industry in just the past 30 years.

5. Oster and Associates is located in Uptown. Why did you locate your office in Hillcrest and what do you like about the neighborhood?

We chose to locate our office in Hillcrest because it's an extremely


vibrant neighborhood and that lends itself to creativity. Hillcrest is centrally located by being near Downtown San Diego, yet not quite as congested. We're just steps away from great restaurants, shops and other small businesses like ours that are all proud to call Hillcrest home.

It's a warm and friendly area to have a business — we love being here. Find Oster and Associates online at osterads.com and Project Amigo at projectamigo.org.

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



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Mentors invite 7- to 18-year-olds to audition for the summer production of "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs." Participants will receive nine weeks of dance, acting, and voice workshops and rehearsals. Times vary. North Park Recreation Center, 4044 Idaho St. Visit t3triplethreat.com.

Electronic/synth-pop duo will perform at 8 p.m. at Observatory North Park, 2861 University Ave. All ages. Tickets \$10 at bit.ly/2pHdre7.

Balboa Park Cultural Partnerships presents an evening of wine, art and entertainment. Park museums will offer art installations, live music and wine tasters for guests.



Tickets \$35–\$100 online. 6–10 p.m. Museums participating are San Diego Art Institute, San

Diego Museum of Art, the San Diego Model Railroad Museum, Fleet Science Center, San Diego

History Center and the Balboa Park Conservancy. Visit thevine-affair.org.

Michelle Nanouce, a teacher of Christian Science from Paris, France, will speak on "Christian Science: What It Is and How It Heals" — about healing prayer, its effectiveness and relevance today — at 1 p.m. at First Church of Christ, Scientist, 2450 Second Ave. at Laurel Street in Bankers Hill. Free.❖

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Fresh STRAWBERRIES

3 for \$5
1 lb Containers

California Grown

SWEET CHERRIES

\$1.39
lb

California Grown

Large CUCUMBERS

3 for \$1

Organic MANGOS

97¢ Each

Organic GALA APPLES

\$1.47
lb

Washington

Organic RAINBOW & ORANGE BABY CARROTS

\$1.49
Each
1lb Bags

PREMIUM CUT BEEF TRI-TIP

\$7.99
lb

Great on the BBQ!

Barons market

Large CHICKEN CAESAR SALAD

\$4.99
Each

TAYLOR FARMS JUICING KALE

\$2.49
16oz Bag

Barons market

CALAMARI RINGS

\$6.59
lb

CHEESE OF THE WEEK

JARLSBERG

JARLSBERG IS A MILD, SEMI-SOFT,
COW'S MILK CHEESE THAT'S NUTTY AND SLIGHTLY SWEET.
"COME IN FOR A TASTE"

QUORN VEGAN BURGERS

\$4.69
8.4oz

ILLY COFFEE K CUPS

\$10.99
4.1oz

STASH ORGANIC TEA

\$3.49
18count

LA TERRA FINA GREEK YOGURT DIPS

\$3.99
10oz

CROFTERS ORGANIC FRUIT SPREADS

\$3.99 - \$5.99
10oz-16.5oz

DON'T FORGET...

Roland Organic Lo Mein Noodles.....\$1.99 12.8oz
Max's Wildflower Honey.....\$7.99 12oz
Alexia Oven Fries.....\$3.99 15oz-16oz
Eat Well Hummus.....\$4.99 10oz
Soy Vay Veri Veri Teriyaki Sauce.....\$4.99 21oz
Made In Nature Organic Dried Cranberries...\$5.69 5oz

BEER CORNER

Sierra Nevada/Karl Strauss NxS IPA.....\$5.69 24oz Bot
21st Amendment Blood Orange Brew Free or Die IPA.....\$9.99 6pk Cans
Deschutes Hop Slice Summer Ale.....\$9.99 6pk Bot
Pizza Port Grandview Golden Ale.....\$10.99 6pk Can
Fremont Summer Ale.....\$10.99 6pk Can
Ale Smith Orange X Extra Pale Ale.....\$10.99 6pk Can +CRV

ANDALOU BODY LOTION

\$8.59
8oz

Point Loma

4001 W. Point Loma Blvd.
1 Blk. W. of Midway Dr. (619) 223-4397

Rancho Bernardo

11828 Rancho Bernardo Road
In the Mercado (858) 485-8686

Temecula

31939 Rancho California Road
Corner of Meadows Pkwy. (951) 693-1111

Wildomar

32310 Clinton Keith Rd.
1 Blk. W. of I-15 (951) 60