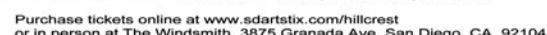




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Uptown News





Community leaders and members at the project's grand opening on Feb. 24
(Photo courtesy of SANDAG)

Uptown transit stations now up-and-running

On March 12, the region's first freeway-level transit stations opened to the public.

The four new stations, which provide access to Rapid 235 service, are located on State Route 15 (SR 15) at El Cajon Boulevard and University Avenue.

Each of the new stations — built as part of the SR 15 Mid-City Centerline Rapid Transit Stations project — consist of two freeway-level transit platforms, one northbound and one southbound platform at El Cajon Boulevard, and one northbound and one southbound platform at University Avenue.

Both platforms have a dedicated set of elevators and stairs that provide connections between the four transit platforms and local bus service at the El Cajon Boulevard and University Avenue transit plazas.

Three miles of "Transit-Only" bus lanes between Interstate 8 and Interstate 805 were also built; these lanes are not for use by private vehicles or other non-MTS buses.

"Rapid is an elevated transit experience that provides fast and convenient service to work, school, shopping and entertainment venues," said Georgette Gómez, MTS chair and District 9 councilmember. "These two new Rapid stations will better serve our Mid-City riders and improve connectivity to destinations beyond Mid-City."

Construction on the transit project began in mid-2015 and concluded in early March 2018, costing \$65 million. A grand opening for the project's completion was held on Saturday, Feb. 24.

SANDAG and Caltrans also constructed the SR 15 Commuter Bikeway, which connects Mid-City communities with Mission Valley and opened in August 2017.

The new transit and bike improvements along SR 15 are part of a broader regional effort, aiming to provide travelers with mobility choices that support the region and economy. For more information on the project, visit bit.ly/2HU3sGU.

Neighborhood safety

Homeless solutions, crime rates discussed at HTC

By Mary McKenzie

The Hillcrest Town Council (HTC) had a full agenda at its monthly meeting on March 13. Approximately 40 community members heard from public safety officers and leaders about pedestrian safety, solutions to homelessness, and crime levels in and around Hillcrest. City Councilmember Chris Ward also addressed the crowd, and elections were held for the HTC board of directors.

Captain Rudy Tai — the new captain of San Diego Police Department's (SDPD) Western Division — announced a new Neighborhood Policing Division which will focus on homelessness and crime. Officers from this division will work with the Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) to let people living on the streets know about available services.

Tai said he hopes to "make all people feel safe" and emphasized that being homeless is not a crime. Community Relations Officer David Surwilo addressed the needs of seniors and active involvement in the neighborhood, commenting that "a crime that's not reported didn't happen" and recommended using the website crimemapping.com.

Han Hershman of the City Attorney's Office addressed how the S.M.A.R.T. (San Diego Misdemeanors At Risk Track) program also plays a role in helping the homeless find critical services. Sean Redmond, executive director of Stonewall Citizens' Patrol, reported on the organization's steady growth of



(l to r) David Surwilo, Community Relations Officer, SDPD; Rudy Tai, Captain, Western Division, SDPD; and Han Hershman, San Diego City Attorney's office

its weekly patrols on Friday and Saturday nights. The patrol is well-recognized in the neighborhood, and some of the homeless population are now approaching these officers for help and guidance.

Councilmember Chris Ward then discussed his commitment to creating solutions for the homeless community in our neighborhoods. According to Ward, 40 percent of the homeless in San Diego are outside of the city.

As vice chair of the Regional Task Force on the Homeless and the City Council's Select Committee on Homelessness, Ward invited the county's mayors to discuss a statewide response to homelessness. Speakers at the HTC meeting included Mayor Annise Parker of Houston, who received national recognition for her city's successful efforts to reduce the number of people without a home.

Ward was also happy to

announce that the City Council recently approved a resolution opposing oil and gas drilling off the California coast. Ward encouraged attendees to use 2-1-1 (sandiego211.org) with questions about available social services. For city services covering dangerous sidewalks, potholes, or streetlight or traffic signal problems, he encouraged using the "Get It Done" application on the city's website.

Zach Bunshaft of Congresswoman Susan Davis' office emphasized Davis' commitment to strengthened gun safety laws. Toni Duran announced that the San Diego swearing-in celebration of Toni Atkins as the new President Pro Tempore of California's Senate will be Friday, April 13 at the Jacobs Center. Nick Serrano, representing state Assembly member Todd Gloria, spoke to Gloria's continued legislative efforts for increased spending for housing and for the homeless.

After the speakers, HTC held its annual election for its board of directors. Incumbents Mary McKenzie and Jae Mohr retained their board seats after being unopposed for re-election.

Hillcrest Town Council meetings are held at 6:30 p.m. on the second Tuesday of every month at the Joyce Beers Community Center. The next meeting will be April 10. If you would like to get involved or have comments or questions, look for HTC on Facebook or contact Kath Rogers at dognamedannie@gmail.com.

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



Councilmember Chris Ward speaks to the crowd about homelessness. (Photos by Kaimi Wenger)

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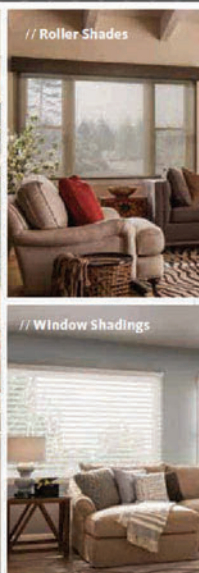
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FROM PAGE 1

NEWS BRIEFS

OPEN HOUSE FEATURES UPTOWN ARCHITECTURE

This month, San Diego Architectural Society (SDAS) will host Open House San Diego (OH! SD), the largest local architecture and design event, featuring 24 buildings in Uptown and 80 sites total. Visitors are invited to participate in designer-led tours and talks at many of the sites. Some will be first come, first served; others will require reservations. The family-friendly event is open to everyone.

In addition to the open house, tours and talks, SDAS encourages attendees to take photographs of the sites and enter them into their juried architectural photography competition.

Each OH! SD site was selected based on its contribution to the city, with architectural, historic or cultural significance. There will be a mix of new buildings and historic landmarks.

OH! SD will be held on March 24–25, with most sites open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For a 2018 guide, map, full list of sites or more information, visit bit.ly/2prZ0s1.



NORTH PARK RESIDENT RECOGNIZED BY SENATE

North Park resident Vicki Granowitz received the title of Woman of the Year in Senate District 39 for 2018. She was honored by Senator Toni Atkins on March 12.

Granowitz was one of 40 women from California recognized by the Senate this year. She has a long history of civic engagement holding various positions serving as a member of the San Diego Planning Commission, chair of the North Park Planning Committee, member of the Park and Recreation Board, chair of the Balboa Park Committee, and as a member of the Clean Syringe Exchange Program Facilitation Committee. Additionally, she previously worked as a social worker and counselor for families and victims of sexual abuse.

“Vicki Granowitz has spent two decades bringing communities together, physical communities. Economically diverse communities, geographic communities,” Atkins said in a statement read on the Senate floor. “In her myriad civic leadership roles, she has been a champion for people of all backgrounds, encouraging them to listen, engage and work together to make San Diego — and her North Park neighborhood — a better place for everyone.”❖

FROM PAGE 1

ROVE

“We’re cultivating a sense of community at our brick-and-mortar store to encourage our neighbors to explore San Diego, and beyond, in new ways,” Blake Robertson said. “As a place to find inspiration beyond social media, Rove Abouts will bring people together in a physical space to share stories and encourage new adventures every month.”

A few years back, the Robertsons sold what they could and set off on a seven-month trip of 19 countries. After returning to San Diego and settling in Normal Heights, the couple opted to create a welcoming community space to inspire others to pursue their own adventures. Rove is the result.

“We’ve always wanted to add more of a community component to the retail experience, bringing travelers with different experiences together to share different ideas related to outdoor travel that would be educational and inspirational,” Blake said about Rove’s travelogue series.

Rove’s monthly series — held every first Wednesday — kicked off with guest speaker Jamie Hampton, head of Mixte Communications. A well-known bicycle commuter, Hampton and her staff often travel on two wheels.

“My purpose is to talk about bike touring 101,” Jamie Hampton said before her group presentation. Hampton noted that she wandered into Rove one day “and fell in love with their shop.”

When asked if she was drafted to become the Robertsons’ first speaker, Hampton said, “I think I was volunteered.”

“We realized what a great idea this [speaker series] could be, and we started planning out different topics,” Blake said.

Hampton’s travelogue covered several bike tours — and years — traversing the West Coast, Europe and Morocco in North Africa. She told stories and offered common sense, best practice tips.

During her presentation, Hampton offered a handful of helpful hints.

“The first step is to start small,” Hampton said, adding everything doesn’t need to be new starting out. “If you have a backpack — start with your backpack. Most of my backpacking gear is what my bike-touring gear is.”

Hampton exhorted bike tourers to create a tour plan, carry water (or have access to it) and above all else — always bring enough to eat.

“Carry stuff like rice and beans that can be easily made,” she said, warning about “bonking,” which she described as running out of energy because you haven’t eaten enough.

“When you’re bike touring, you’re moving all day, so you have to eat the entire time, because you’re moving the entire time,” she continued.

Hampton told a story about her boyfriend, Karim Bouris, who was bonking near the end of a bike tour they rode together; she tempted Bouris with a Fig Newton bar from her pack, which he refused.

“His muscles cramped on the way up a hill,” Hampton said. “He should have had my Fig Newton.”

Other bicycling tips Hampton offered included learning how to change a tire and taking advantage of hiker-biker sites costing \$3 to \$15, which are available along the way.

“My overall message is to have fun with your bike tour and just make it happen,” she said. “Because, when you do, you will never look backward, and your bike tours will get bigger, better and more epic.”

Keeping with the biking theme, the March 7 event featured a panel discussion by travelers who’ve hiked the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT), stretching 2,659 miles between Canada and Mexico along the West Coast.

Chas and Chelsea White, a married couple who set out on the PCT in 2014, discussed their preparation, the basics of the trail and details about different sections of the route. They also shared pictures and stories of their experience.

“Before starting the trail, I hadn’t even done an overnight backpacking trip,” Chelsea said. However, she noted that they had done a lot of hiking, biking, and other conditioning prior to the excursion.

Chas noted that the couple over packed for the trip and



(l to r) Jamie Hampton and Karim Bouris biking along the Rhine river in Europe (Courtesy of Blake Robertson)

learned what essentials were necessary along the way.

“We ended up sending a lot of stuff home,” Chas said. “There are things you think you need before starting, but just never use.”

In the future, Blake said there will be more speeches on biking, clarifying that they will “not just [focus on] going out on long-distance rides, but on making biking a part of everyday life.

“We want to have broad and different topics,” he added. Readers are welcome at the

next installment on April 4, which will cover public lands stewardship. The event will feature Erick Sauer, the sales manager at the Park Project, which is a brand Rove carries in its store.

Rove has topics sketched out throughout the rest of the year, and the series will run indefinitely. For more information about the store and Rove Abouts, visit bit.ly/2tVLU1r.

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

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FROM PAGE 1
COMMUNAL COFFEE

South Park’s spot has many similarities to the first location, such as white decor, plants and flowers, and green umbrellas. However, the new espresso bar, shop and community space is entirely outdoors. Rather than building a brick-and-mortar cafe, Byard set up shop in an old, restored trailer, which sits on the rented, renovated lot.

Years ago, Byard “got a wild hair” and bought the 1950s Shasta winged trailer on a whim for \$1,400 in Arizona. It was originally red and white, as well as piled to the ceiling with garbage. Though it needed work, she could visualize the fixer-upper from the get-go.

Once the South Park vision came into focus, she dove head-first into the project, enlisting the help of several carpenters, a handyman, a plumber, and an electrician.

Byard designed the vehicle and painted all of the gloss in white, Communal Coffee’s trademark color. She also hired a local artist, Rebecca Eichten, to paint a flower mural on the inside wall that greets customers when they walk up to the counter.

The trailer took six months to build out and an additional three weeks to set up at the new location, Byard said. The trailer is self-enclosed, meaning that all waste and water is on the trailer rather than regulated by the city.

“[We] had to figure out how to fit those health department standards within a 15-by-7-[foot] shop, so that was challenging,” she said. “And now



In addition to their signature lattes, the South Park location features pastries from Nomad Donuts, a North Park eatery. (Courtesy of Communal Coffee)

that we’re open, we’re definitely going to have to tweak things here and there just to make it work.”

The trailer is a fully functioning espresso bar that serves all of the trademark Communal Coffee flower coffees. These include the Lavender Honey and Rose Vanilla lattes, which are also available in a taster flight. Though the new location offers limited food items, the South Park spot has also added pastries from Nomad Donuts to the shop’s traditional menu.

Though the trailer is the focal point, the new coffee shop is not confined to the modest size of the vehicle. It aims to serve as a community space, offering scattered seating of picnic tables with green umbrellas and chairs draped with sheepskin rugs; a small retail section featuring a flower cart from Native Poppy, the floral business who Communal Coffee shares its North Park space with; and a black-and-white tiled stage.

The stage — a raised



Front view of Communal Coffee’s shop on Fern Street (Photo by Sara Butler)

platform to the right of the lot — is utilized as an additional seating area during store hours. Byard said that she envisions concerts, movie nights and other events happening on the stage and hopes to start planning them in the warmer months.

Though Communal Coffee has already decorated the lot with the brand’s green thumb signature of succulents, cacti and plants, Byard said that she hopes to add more greenery to the space. She plans to install planters and trellises and has already planted climbing roses along the front-facing fence.

“I think once these vines get mature and grow in, it’s going to really feel like a room,” she said. “So that’s what I really was going for — that [the shop] feels like it’s outdoors but also kind of cozy and enclosed at the same time. It’s just going to take a little time to grow.”

When thinking of expanding her business, the South Park resident wanted to bring her brand closer to home. As luck would have it, she secured a lot in her neighborhood — one block away, to be exact.

Currently, Byard lives in South Park with her husband and three sons. She notes that one of the neighborhood’s best qualities is the family-friendly aspect. She regularly frequents the local businesses lining Fern Street with her family and hopes to collaborate with some of them in the future.



The black-and-white tiled stage serves as additional seating during store hours. (Photo by Sara Butler)

“It’s just fun to know all of those people [and] they know us,” she continued. “It’s like every restaurant around here is like ‘Cheers’ — everybody knows you.”

While the North Park spot is frequented by all ages, it can often draw a younger crowd, as not many families live near University Avenue, a famously busy street. Byard envisions the new location to draw a lot more families and has already seen a lot of friendly faces at the shop.

“Most of these people [who visit the South Park location] are my neighbors,” she said.

Though it has only been a week, Byard noted that the community response has been positive so far and looks forward to the continued growth.

“I’m really hoping [our shop] brings more of a morning crowd

to the businesses here in South Park,” Byard said. “There’s a great afternoon and evening crowd already but there’s not a ton to do in the morning, so I think this will help.”

“Everyone is so excited that we’re here. South Park is actually a little low on coffee especially since Rebecca’s [Coffee House] closed,” she continued. “It’s nothing like North Park where there’s like five [coffee shops] on every block. I think it’s a need that we’re happy to be filling.”

Communal Coffee South Park is open 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. daily. For more background on Jen Byard and the North Park location, read our previous coverage at bit.ly/2DH3CyP.

—Reach Sara Butler at sara@sdenn.com.



Shiloh, Communal Coffee’s general manager, serves a customer at the window (Photo by Sara Butler)



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Uptown actors prepare for local premiere

By David Dixon

While “King Charles III” may focus on Charles, Prince of Wales, playwright Mike Bartlett has developed strong roles for other actors — including two local women hailing from Uptown — in his script.

Written in blank verse in a style similar to that of Shakespeare, the Tony Award-nominated play poses the question: What would have happened if Prince Charles of Wales (Richard Rivera) became the King of England following Queen Elizabeth II’s death?

A crucial person in Charles’ life is his wife Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall (Sandy Hotchkiss).

“I think she’s a powerful woman who had to walk through a lot of obstacles,” Hillcrest resident Sandy Hotchkiss said. “She still maintains grace and levity in her personality.”

Commoner Jess (Alyssa Salter) is a supporting character also critical to the plot. She happens to be dating Prince Henry/Harry (Travis Rynders).

“She is brave and takes a lot of risks,” Alyssa Salter, who lives in North Park, said. “Jess is really secure in who she is as a person. At times, she can be a little too smart for her own good.”



North Park resident Alyssa Salter, who plays Jess (Courtesy Alyssa Salter)

see Uptown actors, pg 7

Coming full circle at SRCY.CO

New music studio offers opportunities to create

By Jen Lothspeich

A wise woman once told me that coincidences are the universe’s way of telling you that things are as they should be. So, any time you think something is kismet or you have a sense of deja vu, you should take it as a sign that you’re doing something right.

For Normal Heights singer-songwriter Thea Searcy, that reminder came just as she was starting to build a new business with her husband, Jeffrey.

The North Park rehearsal space where the couple practiced with their former band, Cameo Kid, unexpectedly became available to lease along with its neighboring unit; the couple formed an idea to re-invent the space on El Cajon Boulevard for a multitude of creative endeavors.

Merging their shared passion for music, Thea’s enthusiasm for community building and Jeffrey’s knowledge of sound design, they came up with the plan for SRCY.CO — a music production studio and more.

“Initially, we were aiming to supplement the band we were in at the time and build a space to be able to record on our own time and dime,” Thea Searcy said. “As life would have it, [Cameo Kid] broke up shortly after signing the lease. It wasn’t till we were knocking

down walls Jeffrey mentioned it was the same place I had recorded my first songs after coming to San Diego [from Denver, Colorado].”

Thea was stunned to remember that the space — known then as Archival Sound — had actually been the birthplace of her early music and was now the focal point of such a large undertaking in her life. She recognized it as a sign.

“It helped me feel like we were on the right path,” she said.

In less than a year, the newly wedded Searcys have transformed the location into three distinct areas: a sound/control room, a “live” room for performances and practices, and a lounge area that features an ornate antique bar.

All the pieces are in place for a mountain of music making.

Jeffrey — who also works frequently with Pretzel Logic Sound doing sound design for TV and films — had to build, and re-build, the control room to be ideal for sound quality. To put it in simple terms, that is. He explained that the shape of a room affects sound (commonly referred to as “acoustics”) and thus months of physical labor went into making the room exactly as it should be. Thea says the other areas are also designed to be “recording-ready.”

“Wherever magic strikes, the vibe will not be disturbed and

magic can be captured,” Thea explained.

But Thea and Jeffrey don’t want to limit the uses of SRCY.CO to musical ventures.

In addition to putting on small, underground shows and having bands record in the space, Thea said she envisions it as being home to fundraisers, women’s meet-ups, pop-up art shows and other events.

“I want to start a monthly [industry] happy hour for artists and creatives to come together and just get to know one another,” she said. “[They can] talk shop, have a good time, and potentially get involved with each other.”

She’s also open to renting the space to anyone interested and letting them bring in their own vision. As was the case recently when a group of women booked the venue for a bachelorette party with Thea and a friend serving as bartenders.

So far, word-of-mouth has been an ideal way for their business to ramp up.

“It has all been fairly organic,” Thea said of people finding out about SRCY.CO. “[We] build as we go, learn as we go, and are open to opportunities as they arise. [We want to] spread the love and excitement we have for our passions by helping others do the same, and providing a space that inspires that.”

She added that they have hosted small events and let the



Thea Searcy (second from right) at a recent women's meet-up hosted at her studio (Photos courtesy SRCY.CO)

attendees lead the way on how the space is used.

“Luckily, each one has gone better than expected or planned,” Thea said. “And folks have been very impressed with the space.”

One of those “small” events was also a special day for the couple who have given the location a new life as they started theirs as man and wife.

“We christened the spot by having our wedding reception there,” Thea said. “[There was] insulation still revealed in some corners and everything.”

Of course, she couldn’t give a tour of SRCY.CO without turning on some tunes. With Jeffrey at the controls, we listened to a track entitled “Merry Go Round,” which the two crafted together. As Jeffrey’s production handiwork came to life, the electro-pop song engulfed us with an ethereal ambience in the cave-like control room.

In a serendipitous moment, Thea’s lyrics on the song mirrored her thoughts on the happy accident of SRCY.CO’s location.

“Life’s like a merry-go-round, same things coming around,” she sang over looped beats.

The place Thea recorded her fledgling songs came back into her life and gave Jeffrey and her the chance to build a sanctuary for artistic creativity in its many forms.

Thea’s next performance will be Tuesday, April 3 at The Merrow in Hillcrest. Hear her tunes at TheaTheBand.com and find SRCY.CO on social media.

—Jen Lothspeich is a wine-drinking, cat-cuddling native San Diegan who dreams of writing a best-selling true crime novel. Find her on Twitter at @Jen_Evel.❖



(l to r) A look inside SRCY.CO, a new recording studio in North Park; Jeffery Searcy working in the control room

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BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

Father Joe’s Villages, San Diego’s leader in ending homelessness, owns and operates three stores and donations centers, each selling furniture, clothing and household goods at incredible prices. The Furniture Store, right on the edge of Golden Hill at 3350 E St., features new and gently used furniture, exercise equipment, accessories and more.

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12 issues - \$18.60 or 26 issues - \$40.30

DISTRIBUTION:

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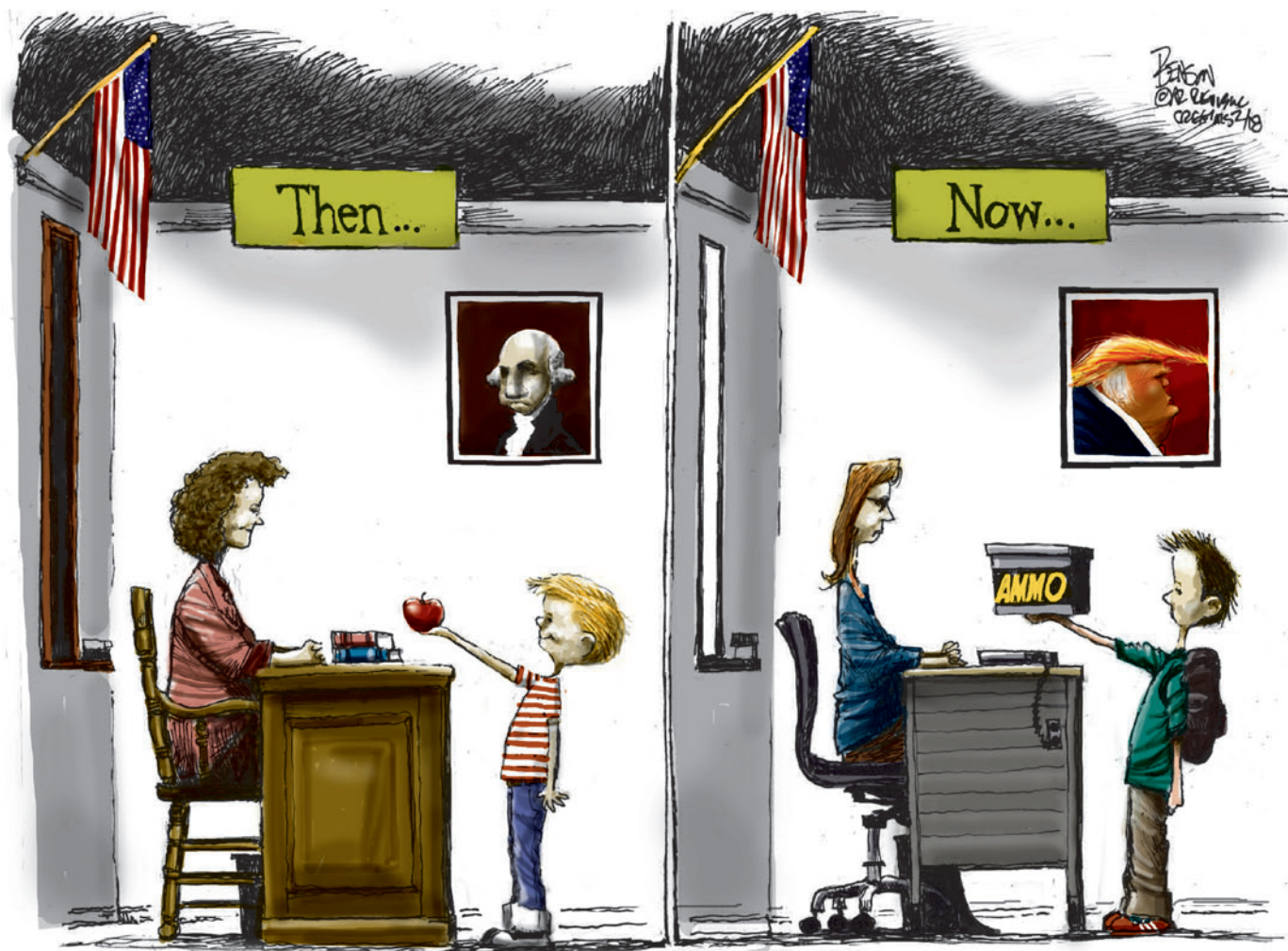
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GUEST EDITORIAL

Arm teachers with support, not guns

By Lindsay Burningham

In the wake of yet another devastating mass-casualty incident, this time in Parkland, Florida, educational leaders across the nation are calling for new gun-safety laws so that teachers and support personnel can focus on nurturing, mentoring, and inspiring students — not tasked with keeping them safe from school shootings. It's time to end the cycle of violence, to listen to the voices of educators and students, and to urge our representatives to pass common-sense gun laws.

Our district is no stranger to these tragedies. Before serving as president of the San Diego Education Association, I taught at Ellen Browning Scripps Elementary, one of the many wonderful schools in the San Diego Unified School District. As a local educator, I am also aware of one of the darkest chapters in the district's history, back in 1979. In January of that year, from her house directly across the street from Grover Cleveland Elementary, a 16-year-old opened fire, and 20 minutes of terror ensued.

As shots rang out, Principal Burton Wragg rushed to move children off the playground to safety; he was gunned down in the effort. Custodian and friend Mike Suchar attempted to save him; he, too, would be killed. After a six-hour standoff, two district employees were dead, and eight children and one police officer were injured. Despite her troubled history that included shooting out the windows of the same school with a BB gun, the assailant received the .22-caliber rifle with scope as a Christmas gift from her father a month earlier.

Since that shooting, gun violence, while exceptionally rare, has increased on campuses nationwide. In the past, events were years apart, and infrequency led to atrophy. In recent years, the problem has gotten worse. Since 2009, there have been at least two school shootings per year in California, mostly involving student possession of firearms. National statistics are even

more grim; sadly, from Lakefront to Marshall County to Sandy Hook and Virginia Tech, these acts of violence in our classrooms have become all too common. Between 2013 and 2015, an average of two school shootings each month took place at K-12 schools nationwide, according to Everytown for Gun Safety.

Thoughts and prayers are important for healing, but they aren't enough to keep our students and educators safe. We now know that it is up to communities, families, activists, educators, and the students themselves to stand up and demand that those elected officials who are trusted with protecting them do their jobs.

Arming teachers with anything except the support they need to effectively educate their students is a bad idea. All available data shows increasing the number of guns not only increases chances of overall gun-related injuries and deaths, it does not ensure safety.

Five heavily-armed and well-trained Secret Service agents were surrounding President Ronald Reagan when he was shot in Washington D.C. in 1981. In 1995, the Fort Bragg shooter's rampage was on a military base where many military men were also armed.

Educators will do the educating in their classroom and leave that protection to professionals who are called to that important work. We want our students to be safe; but we also want them to feel safe.

As I ponder the heroic actions of school personnel at Grover Cleveland Elementary almost 40 years ago, I realize armed teachers in that circumstance would have made no difference. Victims never determined the location of the gunfire and were killed in service of their students.

If we care about securing our students' futures, we must have a plan that will keep dangerous weapons out of the hands of dangerous people!

—Lindsay Burningham is president of the San Diego Education Association.❖

LETTERS

Olive Street Park alternatives

[Ref: "Olive Street Park plan draws scrutiny," Vol. 9, Issue 9, or online at bit.ly/2o0hHSN]

Thanks for shedding some light on this issue, Ken! As a resident of Bankers Hill, it's been an eyesore and I'll be glad to see it improved.

That being said, it seems a tad unnecessary to have a mini-park that will almost assuredly become a dog poop park right across the street from one of the most amazing parks in the entire country!

I think the space would be much better utilized as a community garden! There are many agencies in the community that could benefit from freshly grown, donated produce. A great way to be more beneficial to the community that has suffered losses of loved ones from HIV and AIDS would be to use the produce to donate healthful meals to those in our community who are living with this disease currently. The memorial is a good idea in theory, but ultimately, it's hidden in a tiny neighborhood corner park as what will likely appear to be an afterthought. The community backlash reflects this opinion as well.

In addition to this being an opportunity to help those in need of the health benefits that fresh and organic produce would provide, there are a plethora of other ways this would benefit the neighborhood:

- There are two nearby schools that are one block away that could learn about gardening and the health values of eating fruits and vegetables. Studies have shown that kids get excited about healthy food when they help grow it! It's a science, agriculture, health and community service classroom lesson all rolled into one!

see Letters, pg 13

A musical evening

Theater Review

Jean Lowerison



“Solitaire is the only thing in life that demands absolute honesty,” Madame Armfeldt (Anise Ritchie) counsels her 13-year-old granddaughter Fredrika (Faith Nibbe) in Stephen Sondheim’s “A Little Night Music.”

Perhaps. Honesty does appear to be a rare commodity on a few summer nights in turn-of-the-19th-century Sweden, though longing and nostalgia are plentiful.

Cygnnet Theatre revisits the piece — which was first

presented a decade ago to inaugurate its tenure in the Old Town location — through April 22.

Inspired by Ingmar Bergman’s film “Smiles of a Summer Night,” Sondheim explores love in several of its iterations: wished-for, disappointed, withheld, taken for granted and offered without reservation.

The show offers a large cast including a fine quintet as Greek chorus, commenting frequently but noted mostly for musical comments about “The Glamorous Life” and several iterations of the nostalgic song “Remember.”

Age is the unsung villain here. Middle-aged Fredrik Egerman, played by Cygnnet’s



(l to r) Anne Egerman (Katie Sapper) is the trophy wife of middle-aged Fredrick Egerman (Sean Murray)

‘A Little Night Music’

Through April 22
Cygnnet Theatre
4040 Twiggs St.
(Old Town)
Wednesdays and
Thursdays at 7:30 p.m.;
Fridays at 8 p.m.;
Saturdays at 3 and 8 p.m.;
Sundays at 2 and 7 p.m.

Tickets: 619-337-1525 or
cygnnettheatre.com

artistic director Sean Murray, is not aging gracefully. He has taken a trophy wife, 18-year-old Anne (Katie Sapper), who is a year younger than his son, the tortured seminarian Henrik (an adorable Nick Eiter), who feels less than holy stirrings he can’t quite handle.

There’s also Countess Charlotte Malcolm (played with great charm by Sandy Campbell), married to Count Carl-Magnus — both droll and buffoon — who is hilariously played by David S. Humphrey.

Much of the desired romantic action swirls around actress Desirée Armfeldt, now reduced to playing tours but still much desired for reasons unrelated to acting talent by the men in the show (notably Fredrik and Carl-Magnus). Karole Foreman handles the role wonderfully.

Desirée’s mother, Madame Armfeldt, seems to play mother



(l to r) Desirée Armfeldt (Karole Foreman) performing alongside Fredrik Egerman (Sean Murray) (Photos by Daren Scott)

frequently (if not especially willingly) to Desirée’s daughter Fredrika when the actress is on tour.

The excellent quintet consists of Christine Hewitt, Joseph Grienberger, Cody Ingram, Catie Marron and Debra Wanger.

Megan Carmitchel does an excellent turn as the perky maid Petra (and does the song “The Miller’s Son” proud). Jake Rosko is also funny as the butler Frid.

This is a sumptuous production, with beautiful costumes by Jeanne Reith, fine choreography by David Brannen, lovely lighting by Chris Rynne, and a remarkable set by Sean Fanning, which features a

rolling birch forest.

Live music is provided by Music Director Terry O’Donnell and his five-member ensemble, mighty though invisible.

“A Little Night Music” suffers from too many characters who are difficult to care about, too many patter songs and too few melodies. (However, that’s always my complaint about Sondheim, so take it for what it’s worth.)

Nonetheless, Cygnnet has a hit on its hands.

—Jean Lowerison is a long-standing member of the San Diego Theatre Critics Circle and can be reached at infodame@cox.net.❖

FROM PAGE 4

UPTOWN ACTORS

Hotchkiss and Salter are both performing in the regional premiere at the Coronado Playhouse. Both of them got involved with theater when they attended high school; Hotchkiss started performing during her freshman year.

“I took a period of time to get married and have kids, and then got back into [theater],” she said.

Salter became involved with the arts when she pulled a muscle playing sports at San Diego High School. Once Salter discovered that auditions that were happening on campus, she started to focus on the performing arts during her junior and senior years of school. She then attended graduate school at the East 15 Acting School in Loughton, Essex.

In pursuing their craft, Hotchkiss and Salter gained plenty of experience working behind the scenes on several projects. Aside from previously participating in a traveling theater group for kids, The Traveling Munchkins, Hotchkiss is currently the producer and co-founder of the theatrical organization, Talent to aMuse Theatre Company.

Some of Hotchkiss’ favorite shows to produce for the organization are comedies.

“We chose comedies more than anything because life



(l to r) Richard Rivera and Sandy Hotchkiss at the Coronado Playhouse (Courtesy of Barron Henzel)

is hard enough,” she said. “Shows we picked included Neil Simon scripts and ‘Parallel Lives’ by Kathy Najimy and Mo Gaffney.”

Talent to aMuse recently presented the world premiere of the play, “The Color of Light,” along with Vantage Theatre.

Currently, Salter is running her own theater company, New Match Collective.

“We’re an all-female theatre company, which is a lot of fun,” she said. “Women

are telling their stories and are sharing them with other people.”

Last year, Salter’s ensemble comedy about internet dating, “Swipe,” was presented at the 2017 San Diego International Fringe Festival.

The latest project from her group is a media project called New Match Shares.

“We get women in San Diego and internationally to submit photos, videos, art, etc., based on a theme,” she said. The first one we did was about body image and the next one we’re doing is focused on mental health.”

When asked about the strength of the women who are featured in “King Charles III,” Salter shared that she loves the fact that their characters are so well developed.

“Camilla, Jess, and Catherine/Kate, Duchess of Cambridge (Julia Gioletti), are all truly brilliant and get the men to think deeply,” Salter said. “Without them, there probably would be no show.”

“King Charles III” will play at the Coronado Playhouse from March 23 through April 22. For tickets or more information, visit coronadoplayhouse.com or call 619-435-4856.

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



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RESTAURANT SPOTLIGHT

NEW OWNERSHIP AT NUNU'S CELEBRATES THE BAR'S HISTORY AND FUTURE



The long-established neighborhood bar in Hillcrest that everyone knows as Nunu's has been given a reboot. Its new owner, Jon Stamatopoulos, is calling it Nunu's Tavern to better reflect a place where patrons can gather over beer and cocktails while savoring pressed-to-order burgers and other pub-style comfort food.

Jon is no stranger to the bar industry. He is also the proprietor of the Turf Supper Club in Golden Hill, which shares with Nunu's an illustrious past and unpretentious vibe.

Since purchasing Nunu's in January, he gave the establishment a heavy cleaning that led to fresh vinyl upholstery for the bar stools and cozy booths; a recalibrated kitchen; upgrades to the restrooms; and a fresh exterior paint job that included repairs to the structure's iconic, yellow signage.

"When you walk in the front door, it has to smell, look, feel and taste right," Jon said. "We've spent our first couple of months trying to achieve that."

The bar dates back to the early 1960s, when it operated under the name Cosmo's. Later, a Portuguese fisherman took over and renamed it Nunu's, which in Portuguese stands for the word "grandfather." The name loosely pays tribute to San Diego's thriving fishing community at the time, comprised mostly of Portuguese immigrants. And still today, the facade is adorned with a compass encircling a tuna fish – a testimonial to the establishment's steadfast longevity.

Nunu's subsequently changed hands a few more times and remained a destination for customers seeking refuge from San Diego's trendier, highbrow nightclubs. Jon assures



A refreshing Mai Tai (Photo by Al Heishman)

Nunu's will remain a casual, neighborhood hangout located conveniently between the high-energy cores of Downtown and Hillcrest.

Assisting with the revisions is bar manager Chloe Quattrociochi, who holds the same title at the Turf Supper Club. She's the "go-to leader" for enforcing quality standards for both the bar and kitchen, Jon notes.

New to the bar program are mixers using fresh-squeezed fruit juices instead of concentrates. And in the immediate pipeline is a focused list of classic cocktails such as cognac Sazeracs, Manhattans with Luxardo cherries, and ginger Mai Tais.

Nunu's famous bloody Mary – constructed with house-made mix and garnished with shrimp and pickled veggies – will remain unchanged. Available only on weekends, it's a top-selling creation by bartender Jeremiah Aker, who has worked at Nunu's for the past 10 years.

"The new bar menu will reflect a little bit of every bartender," Chloe said, adding that a goal is in place to install a tap system for craft beer. Currently, the bar offers a mix of crafts and domestics in bottles.

A streamlined food menu includes the kitchen's most popular dishes in addition to the debut of succulent baby back ribs slathered in honey-chipotle barbecue sauce made in-house.

The ribs join forces with other drink-friendly fare such as the hand-pressed house burger with cheddar on a brioche bun; a decadent patty melt; crispy dry-rubbed chicken wings with a choice of sauces; and addicting cheese fries with crumbled bacon and green onions. The kitchen's new cook, Jay Thomas, worked for 18 years at Albert's Restaurant, located inside the San Diego Zoo.

"Nunu's is a timeless place where you can bring a date or your best bud," Chloe said.

Jon agrees: "This is a gem where everyone feels welcome. We're excited for the future of Nunu's and its relationship to the neighborhood. And we hope that everyone comes out to take a look at what we're doing."

Nunu's is located at 3537 Fifth Ave. The bar is open from 2 p.m. to 2 a.m., daily, and the kitchen operates from 5 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. daily. For more information, call 619-295-2878.



A timeless bar filled with fond memories and good times (Photo by Al Heishman)



Crispy chicken wings (Photo by Al Heishman)



Nunu's Manhattan: Nunu's makes exquisite, classic Manhattans (Photo by Al Heishman)

A gin Alexander (Photo by Al Heishman)



The hot-selling Nunu's burger (Photo by Al Heishman)



Sink into one of Nunu's re-upholstered, original booths (Photo by Al Heishman)

SPONSORED CONTENT

Dining in the faux outdoors

Restaurant Review

Frank Sabatini Jr.



As the name implies, One Door North is located only one door north of its older sibling, The Smoking Goat. Yet it feels an ocean away in comparison, as in the distance between the U.S. and France.

Chef-owner Fred Piehl shows off his French culinary training at the Smoking Goat, with a cozy, European-style ambiance to match. In fact, Piehl was one of the first chefs in Uptown who started making french fries with duck fat. That was back in 2010. Soon after, dozens of other kitchens around San Diego began offering them.

Conversely, the concept at One Door North takes you on something of a hiking trail through American cuisine, complete with painted nature scenes and indoor tents which house tables suited for family-size parties.

Vintage lanterns, knotty pinewood and earthy colors flow artistically throughout the 5,000-square-foot space, which Mosaic Wine Bar used to call home. In the middle of it all is an iron and brick-laden bar that appears more urban in comparison to the outdoorsy aesthetics in the main dining areas.

Visiting as a twosome, we sat in the front dining room where big, glass windows look out to this busy section of 30th Street. Though not exactly the scenery from a lodge in the Cascade Mountains, the earnest interior design was good enough for this non-nature boy.

With the exception of Idaho trout, which we passed over in lieu of a couple other entrees, Piehl's menu at One Door North is all about familiarity

and comfort. Options range from mac n' cheese, Buffalo-style wings and grilled octopus as starters, to salads, flatbreads, strip steaks and Niman Ranch pork chops for main courses.

Basically, if you're looking for campfire flavors, your best bet is to order the s'mores platter for dessert or head up to Campfire in Carlsbad, where the dishes overall taste smokier and more flame-licked.

Or perhaps start off as we did with a cast-iron pan of mini cornbread muffins accompanied by honey butter. The menu lists pimento cheese as an ingredient, a childhood favorite of mine beckoning to summer picnics back on the East Coast. I assumed the cheese would be served alongside as a spread. It was instead folded into the batter, offering no sign of life other than an occasional red fleck of pimento.

An order of fried cauliflower brought us into modern-day American cuisine, a fine composition that included a generous smear of curried butternut squash puree on the plate. Golden raisins sprinkled throughout added the right measure of sweetness.

My companion raved about the organic beet salad he ordered — and rightfully so. The tenderly cooked beets (red and yellow) were crowned with fresh arugula and set atop lemon Greek yogurt and candied pistachios. As far as ubiquitous beet salads go, this offered a refreshing dose of novelty.

Right down to the brioche bun capturing my companion's burger and the excellent fennel sausage crowning our flat bread, nearly everything is house-made.

The flatbread was also commendable for its crispy crust

One Door North

3422 30th St.
(North Park)

619-618-1285
onedoornorthsd.com

Prices: Starters, salads and boards, \$6 to \$20; flatbreads, \$17; entrees, \$17 to \$31

and fine use of roasted bell peppers, semi-hot chili oil, and melty fontina cheese. There's also an all-veggie version as well as a double-meat option topped with pulled pork and tasso ham.

The cheddar-topped burger was a monster. Too thick for the average-size mouth, it required a fork and knife to properly consume. My companion loved every bite despite an overload of caramelized onions and a bedding of leafy lettuce that had the patty slip-sliding off the bun.

I proceeded to a half chicken sourced from GoneStraw Farms, a Riverside outfit that raises its livestock humanely. The flattened chicken (spatchcocked) was evenly moist and served over mascarpone mashed potatoes. They were encircled by exceptional brown jus. The only component of the dish I didn't like was the grilled escarole, which was tough and stringy. But who needs veggies when the meat and potatoes are this good?

From a decent draft beer list, my companion stuck to a smoked lager by Societe Brewing Company while I reveled in a dry wine from the country of Georgia.



Some of the larger tables are set within tents (Photos by Frank Sabatini Jr.)

The wine falls under the rare category of "orange" due to its rusty orange color achieved when the grape skins are used in the wine's making. It paired superbly to everything I ate, especially the corn muffins, of all things.

Full bellies didn't allow us to try the s'mores, cast-iron cookie or apple cobbler. On this chilly evening, with pleasant flavors lingering on my palate, I wanted nothing more

than to crawl under a warm blanket — or a sleeping bag, had I really been eating in the wilderness.

—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.❖

Baked chicken over mascarpone mashed potatoes



Niman Ranch burger with truffle fries



Mini cornbread muffins



The sausage-mushroom flatbread



Organic beets and arugula set atop lemon yogurt

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The Denver Post

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COFFEE? NO THANKS.

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

Due to some weird allergy in which I'm hit with flu-like symptoms for a couple of hours after taking several sips of coffee, I can count on one hand the times I've ever

set foot inside a coffeehouse. Even if I did drink the stuff, loafing around in a roomful of hopelessly sober people adhered to their laptops isn't my cup of joe.

But it's different at Refill, a coffeehouse that serves beer and wine, and where people actually converse with each other — at least as they did on the outdoor patio during

my happy hour visit.

Anchored at the base of the modern-industrial Mr. Robinson lofts in Hillcrest, the coffeehouse is bright and organic. It adjoins Trust Restaurant, though falls under different ownership. During happy hour (held only Friday through Sunday) canned beer, wines by the glass and mimosas are \$5 each.

With a cold 12-ounce can of Ballast Point Mango Even Keel in my company, I initially started out at an inside table. The room was full. I was the only one drinking alcohol. And in usual coffeehouse culture, everyone appeared hypnotized by their laptops and phones while sipping caffeinated drinks, which are made here with beans from Bird Rock Coffee Roasters.

When I moved onto the flora-adorned patio, I encountered the complete opposite. Everybody was drinking beer or wine. Some people were laughing, and others were engaged in passionate conversations. Topics I overheard spanned from racism and the virtues of patience to "if only I could have an hour to tell off Donald Trump," as one woman blurted to her friend before carrying on further. I felt at home.

So I ordered another beer, which offered a stronger mango aroma than flavor. But it was smooth and semi-sweet nonetheless.

Adding further comfort to my eavesdropping session, I ordered from the regular



Where caffeine and alcohol mix (Photos by Frank Sabatini Jr.)

Refill

3752 Park Blvd.
(Hillcrest)

619-677-2242
refillcafe.com

Happy hour: 4 to 8 p.m.
Friday through Sunday

menu two slices of hearty, toasted bread slathered in crunchy "chef quality" peanut butter and organic blueberry jam. The cost was \$5.50.

Drinking beer while eating PB&J was a first for me. Surprisingly, it didn't clash with the suds, although given the hefty girth of the bread slices, I couldn't help but imagine washing them down with a tall glass of milk.

Whether solo or with a group of friends, I could actually hang out at Refill again while taking fuller advantage of the \$5 booze offerings, which also include a few other local craft beers as well as Hamms Lager from Wisconsin and Anthem Cider from Oregon.

Wines of several varietals hail mostly from California and from a couple vineyards in France. They're available also by the bottle for prices ranging between \$17 and \$20 — yet another tempting deal that can potentially shake up this caffeinated atmosphere.❖

RATINGS

Drinks: ♂♂♂♂

In the absence of cocktails, you'll find succinct beer and wine lists that hold general appeal.

Food: ♂♂♂♂

The peanut butter and jelly toast I tried was better than any from my own kitchen. You can also order the rustic-style toast slices with avocado and truffle oil; fig jam and goat cheese; turkey and provolone cheese; and more. Crepes and salads are also available.

Value: ♂♂♂♂

Happy hour discounts apply only to beer and wine, saving you about \$1 per drink. Food is sold at regular prices, which range from only \$3 to \$9 per item.

Service: ♂♂♂♂

Refill is a fast-casual operation staffed by friendly and efficient counter staff.

Atmosphere: ♂♂♂♂

A plant bed runs along one side of the patio and leads to the entrance. Big front windows look out to Park Boulevard while sturdy, light-wood tables of varying sizes offer ample seating inside and out.

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Ballast Point Mango Even Keel isn't as fruity tasting as it smells.



Toast with crunchy peanut butter and organic blueberry jam



Skewers on the cheap at the new **Espettos** (Facebook)

Brazilian-style skewers containing beef, chicken, sausage, shrimp or veggies are in the offing at the new **Espettos** in Hillcrest. The eatery, which features live Brazilian music certain nights of the week, sells the skewers for \$2.99 each (or five for \$10), and also carries beer and wine. *3803 Fifth Ave., 619-600-0001.*



Chili-spiked avocado toast at **Holy Matcha** (Photo by Sergey Kolivayko)

where in San Diego next year. Her current menu includes waffles, soft serve, vegan donuts, avocado toast, specialty drinks and more. *3118 University Ave., holymatchasd.com.*



Chilled crawfish at a giant, new buffet in Mission Valley (Yelp)



A sandwich shop is offering anniversary prices on it specialties, such as this **jalapeno patty melt** (Courtesy Good Time Design)

The current six-year anniversary of **Lucky's Lunch Counter** in the East Village brings a consumer advantage. All of its classic and overstuffed sandwiches are selling for an easy \$6 between March 12–16. The sandwiches normally range between \$9 and \$13. *338 Seventh Ave., 619-255-4782, luckyslunchcounter.com.*

Everything from chilled seafood and grilled meats to a chocolate fountain and gelatos in 20 different flavors can be found at **100s Seafood Grill Buffet** in Mission Valley. The mega restaurant recently replaced **Today** with a sleek, new look reminiscent of a Vegas establishment. The daily all-you-can-eat buffet varies in size according to the time and day. They range in price from \$14.99 to \$32 per person. *2828 Camino del Rio South, 619-906-4886, 100sbuffer.com.*

The **Mission Valley Craft Beer Festival** returns March 31 to the tune of 30 local breweries and 20 restaurants taking part. Distilleries such as Henebery, Malahat Spirits Co., and others will join the lineup as well. The event, now in its eighth year, will be held from 1:30 to 5 p.m. at **SDCCU Stadium**. (Admission for VIP attendees starts at noon.) Tickets range from \$55 to \$90, depending on the date of purchase. They include drink and food samples. *9449 Friars Road, mvcbf.com.*



Octopus tacos at a new restaurant and nightclub venue in the Gaslamp Quarter. (Courtesy Volcano Rabbit)

The locally based RMD Group has opened **Volcano Rabbit**, a Gaslamp Quarter Mexican restaurant and nightclub boasting gourmet tacos and a formidable collection of agave spirits. Among the unique offerings are tequila lockers which, for an annual fee, can be rented by guests choosing to store their booze onsite; plus monthly ultra-luxe tacos that sell for \$20 each. The spendy tacos can include fillings such as lobster with caviar and poached quail eggs; sea scallops with crispy yams and bacon pop rocks; and beef cheeks with foie gras and bone marrow butter. *527 Fifth Ave., 619-232-8226, volcanorabbitsd.com.*

In addition, RMD has in the pipeline plans to open a restaurant and bar next year in the historic **Grand Pacific Hotel** (366 Fifth Ave.), which was built in the late 1800s. It will be redeveloped in conjunction with HP Investors and accommodate live music.

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

San Diego's only cafe devoted exclusively to the medicinal green tea known as matcha recently celebrated its one-year anniversary with impressive numbers. Since opening in March 2017, the pink-themed **Holy Matcha** in North Park has accrued 25,000 followers on Instagram and tripled the number of matcha-infused menu items. According to owner Geraldine Ridaura, more than 30,000 matcha lattes have been sold.

Ridaura hinted she may open another location somewhere in San Diego next year. Her current menu includes waffles, soft serve, vegan donuts, avocado toast, specialty drinks and more. *3118 University Ave., holymatchasd.com.*

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

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 13

Uptown Crossword

Classics



CREATORS NEWS SERVICE By Charles Preston

ACROSS

1 Like silk
5 Deed
9 Boundary
14 Knowledge
15 Actress Nazimova
16 Sly looks
17 San Antonio
19 Furious
20 Hors d'oeuvre
21 Team for 23 Across
23 First name in coaching
24 Destroy
25 Inventor's monogram
28 L.I., *et al.*
29 Ernie, of grid Hall of Fame
31 Heart
32 Bewitched
33 Oarsman
34 Julia and Eric, of films
37 Earth pigments
39 Princes of Araby
40 Hammett's sleuth
41 Cherbourg cherub
42 Finds out
44 Law deg.
47 Satchel's mom

48 Masculine
49 Genuflect
51 Kind of cadence or mode
53 Theater district
54 Kind of tiger
56 Buffalo
58 Mete
59 Pave the way
60 Clarinetist's need
61 Youngsters
62 Villa d'____
63 Miscalculates

DOWN

1 Trousers
2 Chopin's homeland
3 Planet
4 Re thread
5 Confront
6 Yale griddier
7 Changed
8 Hollywood's Queen Elizabeth
9 Vibrant
10 Bare
11 Boston
12 NYC subway
13 Nobel-poet monogram
18 Jacks or better

22 Norton, *et al.*
24 24th and 31st of December
26 Vicinity
27 Auction ends
30 Kind of cd.
31 Mets pitcher
32 Roll-call word
33 Washington griddier
34 Great quantity
35 Atlanta arena
36 New York City
37 Nimble
38 Janis, of Rock
40 Witticisms
42 Dawdle
43 Empower
44 Disprover
45 ____ of the law
46 Famed insurance group
48 Shops
50 Mother-of-pearl
52 A Spinks
53 Harassed
54 Harper, of TV
55 Pub quaff
57 Convened

Puzzle answers on page 13

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see Classifieds, pg 13

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UPTOWN CALENDAR

ONGOING EVENTS

San Diego Latino Film Festival

25th Anniversary San Diego Latino Film Festival will run through March 25. Individual movie tickets \$12; Festival Pass tickets \$225. Movie screenings at Digital Gym Cinema North Park and AMC Fashion Valley 18. Runs through Saturday, March 24. Visit bit.ly/2CpdLnw or call 619-230-1938.

'The Happiest Place on Earth'

Experience the West Coast premiere of the drama production "The Happiest Place on Earth" written by Philip Dawkins and directed by Jonathan L. Green. \$15-\$50. Runs through Thursday, April 15. Various times. Diversionary Theatre, 4545 Park Blvd. Visit bit.ly/2FwRzXj.

'A Little Night Music'

Cygnnet Theater presents the musical "A Little Night Music." Low-priced previews March 9 and 10. \$46. 8 p.m. at The Old Town Theatre, 4040 Twigg St. Show runs through April 22. Visit bit.ly/2F2ox4c.

'Expressions of Wabi-Sabi: Embracing Impermanence'

View the mixed-media paintings of artist Dana Mano-Flank, who incorporates the traditional wabi-sabi Japanese aesthetic to capture the beauty of nature. Free with Japanese Friendship Garden (JFG) admission. Runs through Sunday, April 29. 10 a.m.-7 p.m. daily at JFG Exhibition Hall, 2215 Pan American Road East. Visit bit.ly/2pqn3rm.



FEATURED EVENTS

Bankers Hill Art & Craft Beer Festival

San Diego Brewers Guild and Bankers Hill Business Group join up for two floors of local beer, restaurant bites and art exhibits to raise money for the neighborhood. This sixth annual event will showcase San Diego-based breweries, Bankers Hill restaurants and pop-up galleries of local artists' works. 21 and older. \$30. 6-9 p.m. at The Abbey, 2825 Fifth Ave. Visit bit.ly/2FEogVa.

Fleet Night of Science

Explore exhibits, sip cocktails, enjoy snacks, listen to music and get your geek on with science experiments, chats and the "MythBusters: The Explosive Exhibition" at this after-hours event. 21 and older. \$25. 6:30-9:30 p.m. at Fleet Science Center, 1875 El Prado. Visit bit.ly/2pOzGA.



Film screening: 'I, Tonya'

Experience Craig Gillespie's winking, darkly comic



riff on the stranger-than-fiction life of tabloid villain and disgraced figure skater Tonya Harding (Margot Robbie). \$20 with online reservation. 8 p.m. at Cinema Under the Stars, 4040 Goldfinch St., Mission Hills. Visit bit.ly/2FG8XIy or call 619-295-4221.

The Debonaires at The Merrow

Reggae/pop band The Debonaires perform with Chainska Brassi, Mochilero All-Stars and Night Doctor. 21 and older. \$10. 9 p.m. at The Merrow, 1271 University Ave. Visit bit.ly/2FGG0AR.

Old Town Saturday Market

The street market features work from local artists including paintings, jewelry, photography, hand-blown glass, clothing, pottery and more. 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. at Harney Street and San Diego Avenue, Old Town. Also held on Sundays. Visit oldtownsaturdaymarket.com.



Rhett Miller at Soda Bar

Rhett Miller, longtime lead singer of Old 97's, performs with Matthew Ryan. \$18-\$20. 21 and older. 8 p.m. at Soda Bar, 3615 El Cajon Blvd. Visit bit.ly/2ppgLbz.

Tombow Pen Lecture and Demo

The Tombow Pen Demo is a fast-paced lecture covering a technical review of brush pens and their varied application possibilities. All participants will receive free product samples and a literature packet. Free. Noon-1 p.m. at Art on 30th, 4434 30th St. RSVP recommended. Visit bit.ly/2IquRbi.

52 Weeks of Science

Join engineers and skateboarders to learn about the science behind the skateboard. This workshop features four demonstrations that discuss various STEAM-related concepts. BYOB (Bring Your Own Board) and safety gear and try different skateboards made from different materials. 1-3 p.m. at Krause Family Skate Park, 3401 Clairemont Drive. Visit bit.ly/2DFraEa.



Lestat's West Open Mic

Weekly open mic event hosted by Robby Robertson. 6:30-11 p.m. at Lestat's, 3343 Adams Ave. Visit bit.ly/2nWco63.



Showtunes Spaghetti Tuesdays

Sing your heart out with a drink, all-you-can-eat spaghetti and show tunes. Watch musical clips from your past and present TV, movie and stage productions. \$6 per person, eat in only. 5 p.m. at Urban MO's Bar & Grill, 308 University Ave. Visit bit.ly/2iHAWXA.

Lestat's West Comedy Night

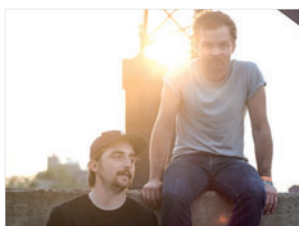
Weekly comedy night event hosted by Dustin Nickerson. 9-11 p.m. at Lestat's, 3343 Adams Ave. Visit bit.ly/2nWco63.



Film Screening:

'The Homeless Chorus Speaks'

View the new documentary film "The Homeless Chorus Speaks," which highlights Voices of Our City Choir and the work they are doing to help alleviate homelessness in San Diego. Q&A with the director and producer, as well as a live music performance, will follow. Free. 6:45 p.m. at The San Diego Central Library, 330 Park Ave. Visit bit.ly/2DC07YJ.



Michigan Rattlers at Soda Bar

Americana, rock n' roll and folk band Michigan Rattlers performs with The Paragraphs. \$10. 21 and older. 8:30 p.m. at Soda Bar, 3615 El Cajon Blvd. Visit bit.ly/2pusk1h.

'Science-ing with LXS: Making Waves'

Come join the League of Extraordinary Scientists to

learn more about the ocean, including how marine plants photosynthesize to create the atmosphere and help reduce global warming. Free. 6 p.m. at North Park Library, 3795 31st St. Visit bit.ly/2F7LHPM.



Thursdays at The Ken

San Diego's late-night jazz jam convenes every Thursday night. Hosted by musicians Ian Buss, Robert Dove and Hugo Suarez. This week features the music of Miles Davis. \$5. 10 p.m.-1:30 a.m. at The Kensington Club, 4079 Adams Ave. Visit bit.ly/2DFUTwS.



Film showing: 'The Last Jedi'

Experience the widely popular, latest edition to the Star Wars film series. \$20 with online reservation. 8 p.m. at Cinema Under the Stars, 4040 Goldfinch St., Mission Hills. Visit bit.ly/2FG8XIy or 619-295-4221.



Crossover: Where Comics & Science Meet

Comic book artists, writers and local scientists will give short talks, followed by open discussion, addressing the creative and scientific sides of comics. Enjoy local brews and conversations with comic book creators and fans. 6:30-8 p.m. at San Diego Comic Art Gallery, 2765 Truxtun Road.



Lindi Ortega at Soda Bar

Canadian country singer-songwriter Lindi Ortega performs with Hugh

Masterson. \$15. 21 and older. 8:30 p.m. at Soda Bar, 3615 El Cajon Blvd. Visit bit.ly/2poxHx.



Old Town Saturday Market

The street market features work from local artists including paintings, jewelry, photography, hand-blown glass, clothing, pottery and more. 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. at Harney Street and San Diego Avenue, Old Town. Also held on Sundays. Visit oldtownsaturdaymarket.com.



Moose Blood at Quartyard

Soda Bar presents Moose Blood, a fusion of '90s British emo and American indie. \$18-\$22. All ages. 7 p.m. at Quartyard, 1102 Market St. Visit bit.ly/2plLqGM.

Lestat's West Open Mic

Weekly open mic event hosted by Robby Robertson. 6:30-11 p.m. at Lestat's, 3343 Adams Ave. Visit bit.ly/2nWco63.

Singing Storytime

Find out what's going on in your child's mind and strengthen your bond with your baby. Event includes sing-alongs and bubble time, ending with Q&A period. 1:30-2:15 p.m. at Mission Hills Library, 925 W. Washington St. Visit bit.ly/2CpxK5M.



Lestat's West Comedy Night

Weekly comedy night event hosted by Dustin Nickerson. 9-11 p.m. at Lestat's, 3343 Adams Ave. Visit bit.ly/2nWco63.

Showtunes Spaghetti Tuesdays

Sing your heart out with a drink, all-you-can-eat spaghetti and show tunes. Watch musical clips from your past and present TV, movie and stage productions. \$6 per person, eat in only. 5 p.m. at Urban MO's Bar & Grill, 308 University Ave. Visit bit.ly/2iHAWXA.

Neighbor Lady at Soda Bar

Americana rock band Neighbor Lady performs with mini-horse. \$8. 21 and older. 8:30 p.m. at Soda Bar, 3615 El Cajon Blvd. Visit bit.ly/2poxRpJ.



Mission Hills Book Group

This month, Mission Hills

Book Group will discuss "Persepolis" by Marjane Satrapi. Read the book beforehand; copies available at the library's circulation desk. 10-11 a.m. at Mission Hills Library, 925 W. Washington St. Call 619-692-4910.

Breaking News @ The Library: Be a Citizen Journalist

Learn the basics of the news business from local working journalists who will answer your questions on what goes into covering the news of the day. Free. 6-7 p.m. at Kensington-Normal Heights Library, 4121 Adams Ave. Visit bit.ly/2DCPrLb.

Jaden Smith at Observatory

Rapper and singer-songwriter Jaden Smith performs his Vision Tour in North Park. \$22. All ages. 8 p.m. at The Observatory North Park, 2981 University Ave. Visit bit.ly/2ppuuz3.



Thursdays at The Ken

San Diego's late-night jazz jam convenes every Thursday night. Hosted by musicians Ian Buss, Robert Dove and Hugo Suarez. \$5. 10 p.m.-1:30 a.m. at The Kensington Club, 4079 Adams Ave. Visit bit.ly/2DFUTwS.

UPTOWN FARMERS MARKETS

Thursdays

North Park Farmers Market

Shop more than 90 tents of locally grown produce, artisan grocery items, prepared foods and hand-crafted goods. 3-7:30 p.m. at 3000 North Park Way, stretching from 31th Street to Utah Street, North Park. Visit bit.ly/2H9AItc.

Saturdays

Golden Hill Farmers Market

Stop by the open community space to pick up California Certified Organic Produce from local farmers. 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at B Street between 27th and 28th streets, Golden Hill. Visit bit.ly/2DHRZrg.

City Heights Farmers Market

Stock up on local groceries, produce, bakery items, prepared foods, and imported items from Latin America, East Africa and Southwest Asia. 9 a.m.-1 p.m. on Wightman Street between Fairmount and 43rd streets, City Heights. Visit bit.ly/2DHProw.

Sundays

Hillcrest Farmers Market

About 175 vendors offer a variety of locally grown fruit, produce, gifts, arts and crafts, flowers, and more. 9 a.m.-2 p.m. on Normal Street between University and Lincoln avenues. Visit bit.ly/2FC4slg.

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

—Compiled by Sara Butler. Email calendar items to sara@sdcnn.com. ❖



One of the houses included in Mission Hills Heritage's walking tour, slated for April 14 (Courtesy MHH)

Old and improved

Mission Hills Heritage's annual walking tour departs from tradition

HouseCalls Michael Good

For an organization devoted to keeping things the same, Mission Hills Heritage (MHH) has been changing it up a bit lately.

Last year, the organization moved their winter lecture series to the spring and merged it with their annual walking tour. The lectures, which previously steered toward the academic, took on a more populist tone; one discussion focused on building a modern Craftsman, rather than preserving an old Craftsman in amber.

MHH added a panel discussion last year as well, which I moderated. In a bit of a departure, homeowners were invited to ask the experts for advice on how to update, upgrade, maintain and repair their house. Some of the best advice came from the homeowners themselves.

This year, MHH is departing even further from the past. The lectures — now called seminars — are shorter, and the audience will be invited to participate. Though the details are still being refined, at this point, some of the seminars might closely resemble workshops — although you won't be asked to bring your tools. (Actually, please don't bring your tools.)

As with last year, there will be a number of tradespeople on hand, stationed at tables in the courtyard of the Francis Parker School, the event's location. Homeowners can quiz these experts, look at photographs of their work, handle wood samples and hardware, and set appointments for in-home visits.

The 12 exhibitors have been carefully selected. Expect experts on window repair, wood refinishing, finish carpentry and chimneys, as well as historical architects and researchers.

There will be seven seminars. Brick and tile expert Jim Crawford will cover "Chimney Safety" and architect Ione Stiegler will discuss "The Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation."

Carpenter William Van Dusen is presenting an overview of millwork, starting with the definition, "since a lot of people don't know what it is," he explained. (Simply put, millwork is wood trim.)

According to Dusen, he will also cover "the wood that was used and where it came from, the universal millwork numbering system, and the different styles of entry doors that were available in San Diego."

Local real estate agent Krista Lombardi will discuss the effect of the Mills Act on real estate values. In 2008, University of San Diego (USD) economist Andrew Narwald found that when a house qualified for the Mills Act — as well as a property tax reduction — the value of the house, and the entire neighborhood, went up; this benefits both the homeowner and the city, in terms of tax revenue. Lombardi has completed follow-up research on Narwald's findings, which undoubtedly will show that prices for historic houses are rising in Mission Hills.

Amie Hayes, Save Our Heritage Organisation's historic resources specialist, will cover historic designation and the oft-misunderstood Mills Act. According to her, she'll touch on the facts, the process and the benefits.

"Some people don't understand you have to be designated first before entering into a contract," Hayes said. "You have to do step one before you can do step two."

With every passing day, and every dumpster in the driveway piled with splintered redwood, the early-20th-century bungalow is becoming increasingly rare in San Diego. The homeowner who seeks to preserve it is becoming rarer still.

The Mills Act aside, it seems that no one in government is looking out for the old house, or the old house owner. In the for-profit world, it's easy to find a plethora of bad advice and bad advisors. That leaves the nonprofits — the historical groups and neighborhood associations — to guide the novice old house owner.

Both Mission Hills Heritage

see HouseCalls, pg 16



Bankers Hills' hidden treasure

Past and present of Spruce Street Bridge

By Leo Wilson

The Spruce Street Suspension Bridge is one of Bankers Hills' historic treasures. Relatively unknown until recently, it is located a block west of First Avenue on Spruce Street. Often visitors discover the landmark while walking through western Bankers Hill and are surprised to come upon such a unique, old bridge.

The bridge was built in 1912. It is an impressive 375 feet in length, and at its center about 70 feet above the canyon floor. It crosses the Kate Sessions Canyon — named after the famous San Diego horticulturist — which is also referred to as Arroyo Canyon. The canyon is full of eucalyptus trees, many over 100 feet high. It is widely believed that Kate Sessions planted many of these stately trees.

The bridge also has a view of San Diego Harbor. Edward Capps, the engineer who designed the bridge, was also responsible for the design of a major upgrade of San Diego's harbor in preparation for the opening of the Panama Canal in 1914. Capps had been appointed San Diego's city engineer in 1909, and later assumed the title of the city's port engineer. As if this was not enough, Capps also was elected mayor of San Diego twice — serving from 1889-1901, and again from 1915-1917.

The purpose for building the bridge was to provide convenient access for those living west of the bridge to street cars that ran along what are now Fourth and Fifth avenues, which are located on the east side of the bridge. Some of the most architecturally distinct homes in San Diego are located on



Chris von Huene, the co-administrator of the Metro San Diego CDC, walks on the Spruce Street Bridge in January 2018 (Photo by Leo Wilson)

the west side of the bridge and are definitely worth seeing.

Being a suspension bridge, the Spruce Street Bridge can sway in the wind or when you walk across it. Often people jump about on the bridge to make it sway. This does not mean the bridge is in any way unsafe. It is anchored into the ground by massive concrete piers at each end of the bridge, which in some sections are over 20 feet high.

Although partially shrouded in vegetation, the concrete piers are visible at both ends of the bridge. The steel suspension cables that span the bridge have the ability to support a load of 164 tons, which would be the weight of over 2,000 people. The bridge is also frequently inspected; in 2007, it was briefly closed for a retrofit.

Despite its structural integrity, crossing a bridge that is swaying — especially when you are seven stories above the ground — might still be unsettling to some visitors. Many years ago, I used to regularly ride my bicycle across the bridge in the morning; now just

walking across the bridge creates an uneasy feeling.

Unfortunately, the increased popularity of the bridge is causing a negative impact upon the adjacent neighborhood. Late at night, loud and often inebriated individuals frolic on the bridge.

About 14 years ago, at the request of local neighbors and with the support of Uptown Planners, a 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. curfew was established for the bridge.

Despite the curfew, increasing late-night activity is taking place on the bridge, often instigated through social media. This activity has been accompanied by illicit behavior, graffiti and littering. Additionally, alcohol containers and drug paraphernalia are now often found at the bridge.

In an attempt to address these problems, the San Diego Police Department (SDPD) has increased its patrol of the bridge, and the city is now considering additional action.

—Leo Wilson is administrator for Metro San Diego CDC and is a Bankers Hill resident.✳



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Community meetings

Mondays

Bankers Hill Parking Committee
First Monday of the month. 5–6:30 p.m. at Merrill Gardens, 2567 Second Ave. in Bankers Hill.

North Park Maintenance Assessment District
Second Monday of the month. 5 p.m. at North Park Recreation Center, 1044 Idaho St. in North Park.

Bankers Hill Community Group
Third Monday of the month. 6:30–8 p.m. at San Diego Indoor Sports Club, 3030 Front St. in Bankers Hill.

Hillcrest Business Association
Beautification Committee
Fourth Monday of the month. Visit bit.ly/2odxT3m to confirm monthly meeting date. 3 p.m. at 3737 Fifth Ave., Suite 202 in Hillcrest.

Tuesdays

Adams Avenue Business Association
First Tuesday of the Month. Board of directors meeting. 8 a.m. at Normal Heights Community Center, 4649 Hawley Blvd. in Normal Heights.

North Park Main Street Design Committee
First Tuesday of the month. 5:30–7:30 p.m. at North Park Main Street office, 3939 Iowa St., Suite 2 in North Park. 619-294-2501.

Normal Heights Community Planning Group

First Tuesday of the month. 6 p.m. at Normal Heights Community Center, 4649 Hawley Blvd. in Normal Heights.

Uptown Planners

First Tuesday of the month. 6 p.m. at Joyce Beers Community Center, 3900 Vermont St. in Hillcrest.

Hillcrest Business Association

Second Tuesday of the month. Board of directors meeting. 5 p.m. at Joyce Beers Community Center, 3900 Vermont St. in Hillcrest.

Hillcrest Town Council

Second Tuesday of the month. 6:30 p.m. at Joyce Beers Community Center, 3900 Vermont St.

North Park Planning Committee

Third Tuesday of the month. 6:30 p.m. at North Park Christian Fellowship, 2901 North Park Way in North Park.

Talmadge Maintenance Assessment District

Fourth Tuesday of the month. 6:30 p.m. at Copley-Price YMCA, 4300 El Cajon Blvd. in Talmadge.

Wednesdays

University Heights Community Development Corporation

First Wednesday of the month. 6:30 p.m. at 4452 Park Blvd., Suite 104 in University Heights.

University Heights Community Parking District

First Wednesday of the month.

6:30 p.m. at 4452 Park Blvd. Suite 104 in University Heights.

North Park Main Street

Second Wednesday of the month. Board of directors meeting. 7:30 a.m. at North Park Main Street office, 3939 Iowa St., Suite 2 in North Park. Call 619-294-2501.

Old Town Community Planning Group

Second Wednesday of the month. 3:30 p.m. at The Whaley House, 2476 San Diego Ave. in Old Town.

Greater Golden Hill Community Planning Group

Second Wednesday of the month. 6:30 p.m. at Balboa Golf Course Clubhouse, 2600 Golf Course Drive.

Ken-Tal Community Planning Group

Second Wednesday of the month. 6:30 p.m. at Copley-Price Family YMCA, 4300 El Cajon Blvd. in Talmadge.

Burlingame Neighborhood Association

Second Wednesday of the month. 7 p.m. at Mazara Trattoria, 2302 30th St. in Burlingame.

Mission Hills Business Improvement District

Third Wednesday of the month. 3:30 p.m. For meeting location, visit missionhillsBID.com.

North Park Community Association

Fourth Wednesday of the month. 6 p.m. at Lafayette Hotel, 2223 El Cajon Blvd. in North Park.

South Park Business Group

Last Wednesday of the month. 8:30 a.m. at Eclipse Chocolate, 2145 Fern St. in South Park.

Thursdays

University Heights Community Association

First Thursday of the month. 6:30 p.m. at Alice Birney Elementary School auditorium, 4345 Campus Ave. in University Heights.

Mission Hills Town Council Board of Trustees Meeting

Second Thursday of alternating months; next meeting March 8. 6 p.m. at 902 Fort Stockton Drive in Mission Hills.

Mission Hills Town Council Town Hall

Second Thursday of alternating months; next meeting is March 8. 6 p.m. at Francis Parker Lower School Library, 4201 Randolph St. in Mission Hills.❖

FROM PAGE 15

HOUSECALLS

(MHH) and Save Our Heritage Organisation (SOHO) have compiled lists of recommended tradespeople, but MHH's spring event provides a rare chance to talk to these carefully vetted experts in one place on one day. Additionally, you can also walk around the neighborhood and enjoy beautiful houses.

Speaking of which, this spring the walking tour departs from tradition as well, venturing below University Avenue into South Mission Hills — a neighborhood once dismissed as not deserving of the Mission Hills moniker by certain members of the Architecture Police.

Yet the neighborhood is full of spectacular surprises, as the tour's title — "Gems of South Mission Hills" — would indicate. The seven seminars and workshops run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The exhibitors will be on hand until 4 p.m.; the walking tour runs until 3 p.m.

For those who don't want to actually go there, or aren't able to, historian Ron May will be providing a virtual tour at 10 a.m. that day, back at Francis Parker Auditorium.

While much is new at this celebration of the old, some things never change. As in years past, there will be handcrafted cookies. For the chronically hip, there will also be food trucks parked outside the Francis Parker School. (What's next? A beer garden?)

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

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BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

Michael Jensen Designs Trunk Show sale and "Meet the Designer" event

Bold, dramatic and enchanting are three words that help describe the finely crafted jewelry of Michael Jensen Designs. With award-winning designs that inspire images from the popular "Game of Thrones" series on HBO, they are being featured as the Designer Spotlight for March by Stuart Benjamin & Co. Jewelry Designs.

For more than 20 years, Stuart Benjamin & Co. has presented the finest jewelry designs in San Diego, and this month it features a large collection of the stunning Michael Jensen Designs jewelry in-store. On Saturday, March 24, join them for an exclusive one-day Trunk Show sale and "Meet the Designers" event with the opportunity to meet Michael and Catherine Jensen in person.

Michael Jensen Designs is the partnership of Michael and Catherine Jensen. Michael has been a designer and metalsmith for more than 34 years. He has a background in sculpture and experience in engineering that compliment his degree in fine arts. Catherine is a Graduate Gemologist (GIA) with a passion for jewelry's art and history. She is a member of the American Gem Trade Association and the American Society of Jewelry Historians. Michael Jensen Designs is Jewelers Board of Trade (JBT) listed.

For more information, contact Stuart Benjamin & Co. Jewelry Designs at 619-297-7666 or online at StuartBenjamin.com.

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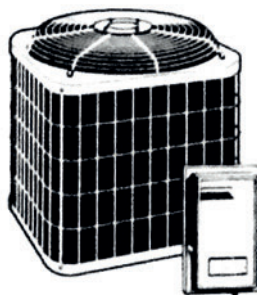
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