

COMIC-CON MUSEUM P. 5



Legendary San Diego game celebrates 20 years of play

FOOD BRIEFS P. 10



Hillcrest café ships in Italian dough for exceptional croissants

HAPPY HOUR P. 11



Neighborhood hangout Two Seven Eight has new vibe

FILM REVIEW P. 15



Documentary explores narrow definition of masculinity



BikeSD board president Nicole Burgess on her cargo bike leads the parade of young riders down 30th Street at San Diego's first "people-protected bike lane." (Photo by Brian Hoffman)

Climate, cycling advocates mobilize to add protections despite worries over lost parking

Kendra Sitton - Editor

The North Park Planning Committee is preparing for a vote on the addition of a protected

bike lane to 30th Street. The final vote on whether to urge the city to move forward with plans to improve biking infrastructure along the community's main

thoroughfare will happen at the committee's next meeting on Tuesday, May 14.

see Bikelane, pg 17

Music fest seizes Adams Avenue

By Joyell Nevins

Music spilled out onto the streets on Saturday, April 27, as Adams Avenue Unplugged, sponsored by the Adams Avenue Business Association, kicked off its seventh musical walk-about. Nearly 10,000 music fans came out to hear 80 different artists sporting steel drums, cellos, guitars, trumpets, and even harmonica s. The musicians performed in 24 different venues up and down Adams Avenue from Kensington to University Heights.

"It is such a pleasure to play here," singer-guitarist Nina Francis said, who was

see Adams, pg 17



Guatemalan singer-songwriter Gaby Moreno's headlining performance held in Normal Heights United Methodist Church (Photo courtesy Adams Avenue Business Association)

Annual homeless count released

By Dave Schwab

The annual 2019 Point-in-Time Count of the region's homeless population suggests their total number may be shrinking, though some news sources and others who actually counted heads doubt the total accuracy of figures released.

The Point-in-Time Count, better known as WeAllCount, was begun in the early morning hours of Friday, Jan. 25, 2019. This year's data determined that, at the very minimum, there are 8,102 homeless San Diegans living on public streets or in shelters, on any given night in San Diego County. Those numbers are down from last year's 8,576 estimate.

The Point-in-Time Count also found that the number of unsheltered homeless individuals in San Diego County was 3,626, and the number of homeless individuals in shelters was 4,476. Of the total homeless population, 10% are veterans, 36% reported having a physical disability, 12% of the total population are under age 24, and 3% are families with at least one child.

This year's count was performed by more than 1,500 volunteers and outreach workers across the region. They focused on engaging the homeless population directly. One-on-one conversations guided by informed questions were used by volunteers wherever homeless individuals were encountered. Volunteers interviewed homeless people as they contacted them, instead of conducting surveys after the fact.

Philip Ballew was one of the volunteers who conducted interviews in the Mission Valley area.

"We started the event at 6:30 a.m. I felt this was not ideal because all of the homeless people had woken up and gone out to start their day by then," Ballew said. "The event was handled well though by the leaders of the group. The time spent took about three hours. I felt we could

see Homeless count, pg 7

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Buzzfeed reporter sheds light on closure of San Diego’s only long-term shelter for asylum-seekers

Uptown News editor Kendra Sitton spoke to BuzzFeed News Reporter Ema O’Connor about her new investigative article “Inside The San Diego Church Where ICE And Border Patrol Bring Pregnant Women.” That church, Christ Ministry Center (CMC), is located in Normal Heights and is being forced to close its overnight shelter in May after it became overcrowded and a fire risk. CMC was the only long-term shelter for asylum seekers in San Diego and border agents often dropped off pregnant women and young families to the shelter. This also follows the end of the Safe Release program last fall, which stopped federal funds helping asylum seekers get to their final destination, which could be the home of a family or friend to stay with while their asylum claims are being processed. This means many asylum seekers are staying in the county for court dates instead of just passing through. O’Connor spent a week in Uptown speaking to people living in the shelter as well as the leaders who run it. This discussion has been lightly edited for brevity and clarity.

KS: When your report on CMC was published, the overnight shelter was in limbo as fire marshals said it needed to close because it was overcrowded and basically a fire trap, but border agents were still dropping off pregnant women and entire families after being released from Department of Homeland Security custody. CMC filled a unique gap by helping pregnant women with young children who needed to stay in San Diego for court dates or who had nowhere else to go. With the shelter being shut down, what potential new dangers do you see for these women and families?



(Photo courtesy Ema O’Connor)

EO: CMC and their shelter network, Safe Harbors, is working to find other spaces and homes for people in these situations — they are looking at a large place outside of San Diego as well as a church gym nearby that could be converted into a living space. Safe Harbors is not closing, and neither are the clinics at CMC, and CMC will remain an intake shelter to help asylum-seekers check in with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and hopefully find a place to go.

However, since new orders came from the White House [last] fall ending the Safe Release Program, more and more migrant families are being dumped onto the streets. Many of them have family elsewhere in the U.S., but may not have the money for bus fare to get there, so they could end up having to sleep on the streets, which can be unhealthy and dangerous for pregnant women and young children, and could result in run-ins with the law for sleeping in public places, among other concerns. Also, the immigration documentation that ICE or U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CPB) provided them with (which tells them when, where, and how often they need to check in with ICE, when their court date is, where they can go in the U.S., among other things) may not be in their language, so without an

nonprofit organization (NGO) to help them interpret the documents, they could end up violating their orders without realizing it.

KS: You previously reported on women having miscarriages in immigration detention, partially because of the harsh conditions and lack of care they experienced in detention. This came in March after President Trump ended a policy blocking the detention of pregnant women. Your investigation showed CMC actively worked to help shelter pregnant women and ensured they had access to a safe delivery. How did this new report shed light on your previous work?

EO: Most of the women I talked to for this article were not detained by ICE and were detained by CBP for only a few days. Most of them were traveling with children and San Diego does not have family detention centers, so they do not hold parents with children in detention. Because of this, I did not learn much more about the treatment of women in immigration detention. However, since my reporting on this last summer, there have been many reports about record numbers of miscarriages happening in detention and women being detained in their third trimester, which is against ICE policy in most circumstances.

However, some of the women I spoke to this time did



Overnight shelter at Christ Ministry Center in Normal Heights is being shut down (Photo by Jessica Bal for BuzzFeed News)

complain about not having much to eat in CBP detention, and one woman told me about judgmental and invasive questions a CBP officer asked her during processing. She said he asked her questions like, “Why did you risk your child’s life to come here? Does your kid actually have a father?” She said she told him she felt she and her child were safer here than in her home country, and that her husband (her child’s father) accompanied her to the border but could not cross with her.

I suppose if this article sheds light on anything, it was the same thing my prior reports have shown: contrary to (former Secretary of Homeland Security) Kirstjen Nielsen’s claims, pregnant women are likely better off out of detention than in detention. But that

having to live on the streets when there is nowhere for them to go is not good for anyone, let alone pregnant women and young children.

KS: You spoke to several asylum-seekers at the shelter during your time in Normal Heights. Which of their stories most stuck with you after you returned to Washington D.C.? Can you share it with us?

EO: I think the stories of all of the Haitian women I spoke to were striking, and ones I hadn’t heard before. There are thousands of Haitian immigrants crossing the border, but in the press, you often only hear about those from Central and South America. These women’s lives

see BuzzFeed, pg 13

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The Plaza de Panama Project Is Officially Dead

Qualcomm cofounder Irwin Jacobs, who has for years championed a plan to overhaul the park’s central mesa, said that the Plaza de Panama Committee notified the city on Thursday that it is ending its public-private agreement to help fund the project.

By Lisa Halverstadt

For decades, a mostly forgotten corner of Balboa Park known as Inspiration Point has been one of the park’s least inspiring destinations. Now city officials are turning to the area – currently home to hundreds of parking spaces, a storage depot and a dried-up fountain – as a potential moneymaker.

The city is preparing to issue a request for proposals to redevelop the area once part of the Naval Hospital campus, a prospect that’s already riling some park activists.

City park officials say they are open to a variety of cultural, recreational and performing arts concepts – everything from shops and museums to hotel or restaurant space – they hope will complement and activate the space.

“The city is seeking proposals that serve the best interest of the public while maximizing the economic viability of the property and ensuring a sustainable revenue source to the park,” city Park and Recreation Department spokesman Tim Graham wrote in an email.

The call for proposals is a response to the park’s long-running funding woes.

Balboa Park advocates have long agreed that the park needs a sustainable source of cash for infrastructure repairs and park maintenance.

Some activists and city bureaucrats have eyed Mission Bay Park’s funding model, which has helped bankroll a planned \$40 million makeover.

Hotel and commercial leases in Mission Bay Park generate tens of millions of dollars annually. Most Balboa Park institutions, on the other hand, pay little to no rent despite the park’s lengthy list of needs and repairs.

Now the city is looking to see what prospectors envision for an area of Balboa Park that falls under the San Diego airport’s flight path and includes a parking hub, activity center, a tram stop and the Veterans Museum at Balboa Park, which operates out of the former Naval Hospital Chapel site.

Lesser known are the former hospital building east of the museum that’s been converted into a space for Park and Recreation employees or the picturesque walkways and fountains around it that are now surrounded by buildings.

Park and Recreation Department vehicles, park storage and weeds largely dominate the rest of the space – save for the empty fountain steps from the city’s dirt parking lot.

The request for proposals focuses on the latter areas, plus the portion of the Inspiration Point parking lot closest to downtown.

City officials see the process as a chance to reimagine a part of the park that’s now largely under the radar. They say they expect to have proposals to review by mid-summer and intend to involve park stakeholders in



Inside Balboa Park (Photos by Kendra Sittor)



the process.

“This is an opportunity to breathe new life into Balboa Park and the community is going to play a key role with stakeholder representation on the (request for proposal) selection committee,” said Christina Chadwick, a spokeswoman for Mayor Kevin Faulconer, in a statement. “The city looks forward to working closely with the community and Balboa Park organizations to invest in Inspiration Point and ensure the park remains an iconic destination for generations to come.”

Yet a city parks official’s announcement at a Balboa Park Committee meeting earlier this month that the city would explore Inspiration Point’s redevelopment possibilities caught even park insiders off guard.

A few activists quickly seized on the likely conflict between the Balboa Park master plan’s vision for the space and the expected proposals to redevelop the area.

The 1989 document called for the city storage area and southern-most parking lot to be “returned to open park land” and for the historic buildings and outdoor areas to be restored and maintained.

Any changes will require City Council approval.

Longtime Mission Bay and Balboa Park advocate Judith Swink and Mike Kelly, president of the Balboa Park Committee of 100, say they fear what could come next for Inspiration Point.

“I disagree with giving away what should be free and open parkland that there’s an increasing need for as populations grow,” Swink said.

Kelly said he’s particularly concerned about the possibility of a hotel.

He pointed to decades-long frustrations about San Diego High School’s failure to move out of the park as evidence of the challenges the city has had forcing tenants out once they settle.

San Diego High opened long before Balboa Park became a tourist magnet and park activists for years pushed for the school to relocate once the school district’s lease for the property expired in 2024. Then a successful 2016 ballot measure all but ensured San Diego High will

remain in the park.

If a hotel or other commercial business moves into Inspiration Point, it’s likely to become a permanent fixture too, Kelly said.

“I really want to see the details,” said Kelly.

Others said they welcomed the city’s attempt to make the most of an underutilized area of the park.

All emphasized that they want to ensure any redevelopment plans fit into the current fabric of Balboa Park but were eager to discuss concepts that could bring in new money.

“If it could be done in a way that is really compatible with Balboa Park, and it can create a permanent revenue stream, it would be a phenomenal idea,” said Tomas Herrera Mishler, who leads the Balboa Park Conservancy.

Those tied to the park’s institutions are already worried any redevelopment efforts might affect parking availability. Other park insiders note that Inspiration Point’s lower parking lot often accommodates students at City College and San Diego High rather than park visitors.

Balboa Park Committee Chair Katherine Johnston, a former Faulconer staffer who oversaw the mayor’s park initiatives, said she expects concerns about the impacts of any proposals to revamp Inspiration Point to be aired at multiple public workshops and forums.

Johnston said the committee will also review those plans and will focus on whether they match up with the park’s identity.

“There’s such an interest in Balboa Park that I think whatever moves forward will be something that makes sense for the park and protects the economic vitality of the park and protects the iconic nature of the park,” Johnston said.

— Lisa Halverstadt writes about San Diego city and county governments. She welcomes story tips and questions. Contact her directly at lisa@vosd.org or (619) 325-0528.

Editor’s note: this story first appeared in Voice of San Diego on April 18. To read the original story, visit bit.ly/2ZMcuj4.

Balboa Park hosts special “EverQuest” exhibit

Legendary San Diego game celebrates 20 years at the future home of the Comic-Con Museum

Kendra Sitton | Editor

As the Comic-Con Museum moves closer to opening, its Balboa Park site hosted a week-end exhibit on April 26-28 celebrating the 20-year anniversary of “EverQuest.” The video game, developed by San Diego-based Daybreak Games, revolutionized online play by popularizing massive multiplayer online role-playing games (MMORPG). Fans gathered at the former Hall of Champions locale for the week-end event to see art inspired by the franchise, listen to talks from developers of the game and participate in a special quest.

A preview night for the media, Comic-Con officials, and Daybreak developers included Brell’s Blessed Stout (named for a god-like character in “EverQuest”) from San Diego brewery BattleMage, brewed in honor of the 20th anniversary of the game. As visitors gazed upon the art and took pictures alongside cosplay character Firiona — a royal high elf in the “EverQuest” world — all while sipping their beers, Comic-Con Museum Executive Director Adam Smith said the pop-up exhibit excited him because it previewed what can be done in the planned museum.

“We’ve got a building and in the next couple of years we’re going to remodel the space and make a year-round Comic-Con. The idea is Comic-Con has been

holding a major event every summer for the past 50 years. This is a big project because we are going to be open every day of the year. We’re trying to capture the magic of Comic-Con in a building,” Smith said. “This event tonight makes me happy because it’s a little taste of what it’s going to be once it opens.”

Smith explained that the “EverQuest” event fits right into his vision for the museum, which also includes plans to offer later evening hours and regularly host events year-round for the community (contrary to many museums, which only occasionally extend hours and host events sporadically).

“There’s lots of little pieces that we plan to put in the museum in here now... art’s a really big part of popular culture and the world of Comic-Con. We’ve got original art so people can see the talent in our community. We’ve got history — the artifacts that tell the story of how ‘EverQuest’ came about. We’ve got fan art — so participation,” Smith said. “We’ve got a little bit of fun in the tavern there. A little bit of rule-breaking. I don’t want this to be a stuffy traditional museum.”

One of the main ways he sees the future Comic-Con Museum being different than other groups is that it will hopefully build a sense of community and bonds of friendship around a shared passion for something. He stated a couple at the exhibit actually met and later got married through their interactions while playing “EverQuest.” Comic-Con spokesperson David Glanzer echoed the hopes of creating a community at the permanent location.

“Comic-Con has a great community and I think we’re hoping the museum will do that as well,” Glanzer said, noting 2019 marks the 50th year since the convention began.

In addition to creating community, he remarked Comic-Con was essential in showing popular art was a valuable and dynamic art form.

“One of the things that is important to us is education and celebrating popular art. There was a period of time where people looked at movies, comics, whatever, as forms of entertainment that were easily discardable. There was no thought that anyone would want to see [it]

again [or that] there was any intrinsic value other than a first watch or a first read,” he said. Glanzer asserted the founders of Comic-Con did not have that mentality, “They thought this isn’t just something fun for entertainment, this is actually art.”

The early disregard for popular art is making filling the museum difficult, as so many items were not preserved. Comic books and early movies that did survive have skyrocketed in value. The Comic-Con Museum hopes to showcase them.

“It’s a way to acknowledge art — popular art — 365 days of the year. We don’t realize what we have until it’s gone,” Glanzer said.

Smith said that for events like the “EverQuest” anniversary, he is working with the architects of the museum to make sure there is no point at which the building is completely shut down while it is being remodeled.

“EverQuest” Executive Producer Holly Longdale was at the event and talked about the release of the low-budget creation and explained how it turned into a global phenomenon.

“In 1999, a team of a whole 20 people... in only three years



San Diego-based Daybreak Games celebrated 20 years of its game “EverQuest” in an exhibit at the future home of the Comic-Con Museum. (Photos by Kendra Sitton)

and \$5 million, launched this incredible product and they hoped to have 50,000 people to sustain it. They were completely overwhelmed. They disturbed San Diego’s internet for about a week. Their hosting service had to pipe more lines to LA because people were losing internet,” Longdale

see EverQuest, pg 12

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Superhero characters are changing how we see mental illnesses

Superhero Therapy

Janina Scarlet, Ph.D.



Superheroes and other characters from books, movies and TV shows have arguably become an important part of our modern mythology. As such, pop culture characters have an important impact in helping consumers learn about personal growth, conflict management, as well as mental health.

Historically, mental illness was something only villains struggled with. Many villains used to be depicted as one-dimensional mentally ill characters that were out to take over the world and cause chaos just for the sake of doing evil deeds. Similarly, superheroes were represented as almost infallible and invulnerable. In these representations, mental illness was something that could have been perceived as a rare and undesirable, and even evil trait. As a potential result, mental illness used to be far less understood and more stigmatized than it is now.

Nowadays, the heroes, the villains, as well as antiheroes are usually presented as more complex characters. Often both the hero and the villain may experience a similar kind of a traumatic or otherwise painful event

but the two might make different choices in regard to how they decide to cope with their experiences. Examples of heroes and villains with similar origin stories but alternate life pathways include Luke Skywalker vs. Anakin Skywalker ("Star Wars"), Charles Xavier vs. Magneto ("The X-Men"), and The Doctor vs. The Master ("Doctor Who"). Superhero stories and other pop culture media can help viewers to understand that their mental health experiences are common and that they are not alone in their struggles. They also help the viewers to recognize that it is our choices that define who we are, not our experiences.

Whereas in the past, movies and TV shows might have helped us to escape from our painful experiences, nowadays, they serve as a model for teaching us how to manage them. For example, by watching TV shows, such as "Jessica Jones" and "Daredevil," we might be able to better understand what trauma-related disorders might look like in some people, as well as how to cope with them. Specifically, these shows can teach us that finding meaning in our traumatic experiences and finding a sense of purpose can help motivate us to help others.

In addition, superhero and other pop culture films, books and TV shows can help us learn that although sometimes a particular situation may look hopeless and grim, things are

likely to change for the better with time. This is an important message, especially for those struggling with major depressive disorders and other mental health difficulties, which might make us believe that things will never get better. Superheroes teach us that by bonding together to fight a common enemy (which includes bullies, traumas, losses, and fears), we might be able to defy all odds. Sometimes, in the moment of our greatest suffering, our greatest strength is born. Our painful experiences might remind us what matters to us, what we stand for, what we care about the most, and potentially encourage us to take action to help ourselves or others. And that is the making of a true superhero.

— Dr. Janina Scarlet is a North Park-based clinical psychologist and is the author of 'Therapy Quest' (released May 7), a revolutionary self-help book, which combines therapy with an interactive fantasy quest. For more information, go to superhero-therapy.com.

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Who should be your financial advisor?

UptownMoney

Steve Doster



[Editor's note: this is part one of a two-part series on financial advisors.]

It seems like everyone wants to be your financial advisor. Banks, insurance companies, brokerage firms, and mutual fund companies — they all would like to manage your portfolio and deepen their relationship with you. The big question is, should you hire these companies as your financial advisor?

The quick and short answer is no. Financial advisors at these companies are not required to operate under the fiduciary standard. A fiduciary is a professional who is required by law to put the clients' best interests first at all times. Financial advisors who follow a fiduciary standard must disclose any conflict of interest (or potential conflict of interest) to their clients before and throughout their relationship.

That may come as a surprise to many of you. Financial advisors at banks like Chase, Wells Fargo, and Bank of America can recommend investments and products that earn your advisor a bigger commission rather than recommend what is best for you. Financial advisors at large brokerage firms like Fidelity and Schwab are not required by law to recommend what is in your best interest as a client. Financial advisors at insurance companies like Lincoln Financial or Prudential can sell you expensive variable annuities even though low-cost mutual funds are much better for you.

That is a big list of companies that should not be your financial



(canstockphoto.com)

advisor. So, who should be? You can start your search by finding financial advisors who act as your fiduciary. The legal term for these advisors is called Registered Investment Advisor (RIA). RIAs are held to a fiduciary standard of care. By law, they must act solely in your best interest.

You can find RIAs at the website for the National Association of Personal Financial Advisors (NAPFA.org). This is a nonprofit organization promoting fee-only advice where consumers can find financial advisors who adhere to the fiduciary standard and will not sell consumers expensive and unnecessary financial products and investments.

This website also has excellent resources for consumers like a Financial Advisor Checklist. This checklist has 25 questions you can give to potential advisors before deciding to meet with them. These questions reveal an advisor's experience, how they get paid, and what services are provided. Also included is a Fiduciary Oath for the advisor to sign. If they won't sign this, do not work with them! If your current advisor won't sign the Fiduciary Oath, it's time to find a new financial advisor.

Once you have your final two or three potential advisors, you can send them the Financial Advisor Diagnostic. Compare their answers to the "answer key" provided by NAPFA. This pamphlet is written in a straight-forward way that makes it a valuable tool to use in your search. Download and send this diagnostic tool to your current financial advisor. You may be shocked at the responses you receive.

Everyone wants to be your financial advisor, but not everyone should be. Before saying yes, confirm they are legally held to the fiduciary standard. That is the most important factor in selecting someone to work with. Next month, we will dig into more detailed criteria and the value you receive in working with a financial advisor.

[Image provided by canstockphoto.com]

—Steve Doster, CFP is the financial planning manager at Rowling & Associates — a fee-only wealth management firm in Mission Valley helping individuals create a worry-free financial life. Rowling & Associates helps people with their taxes, investments, and retirement planning. Read more articles at rowing.com/blog.

The Mueller Report provides a path and Congress should follow it

District 53 Dispatch

Susan A. Davis



Probably one of the most shocking aspects — and there are many to choose from — about the attack on our democracy during the 2016 presidential election is how it has divided our nation.

Americans have always come together in a show of unity whenever we are attacked. It happened after the attack on Pearl Harbor. The same unity was on display after Sept. 11.

On one side, this attack on our sovereignty has sparked serious concern and calls for accountability. On the other side, it seems to have elicited yawns.

The release of a redacted report by special counsel Robert Mueller was unequivocal in confirming what our intelligence community had determined: The Russian government orchestrated an effort to undermine our election.

But in today's political climate, partisanship has won the day.

The president's supporters have tried to portray the report as a total exoneration, even though the report specifically says it does not exonerate him.

Despite the report's conclusion that there is not sufficient evidence to prove the Trump campaign conspired with the Russians, there were numerous contacts between Russians and campaign officials. Ignorance got them into this and also probably protected them from criminal prosecution.

If any other presidential campaign had been contacted by Russians, their next call would have been to the FBI.

The report's section on obstruction of justice shows a president desperate to thwart the special counsel's investigation and White House staff protecting him from himself.

We should not have a White House where staff must ignore orders from the president to keep him/her from breaking the law.

While the Mueller report did not make a prosecution decision on obstruction, it gives Congress a path to follow as it continues its investigations.

There have been calls from the president's supporters and even some independent observers saying it's time to move on. After all, there was no crime committed.

But as former U.S. Attorney Chuck Rosenberger recently said on MSNBC: "You don't have to complete the crime of obstruction in order to be culpable of it... Asking someone to destroy records or request that another person lie is obstruction of justice even if they don't carry out that order."

Congress does not "move on" from its constitutional obligation to act as a check on and provide oversight of the executive branch, particularly when foreign powers threaten our democracy.

And especially when we have a White House that uses lies and deceit on a daily basis to achieve its policy and political objectives.

If anything, it is a clarion call

for Congress to look further. We still don't know what we don't know.

Congress needs to hear from special counsel Robert Mueller. We need to hear from former White House counsel Don McGahn, who on more than one occasion ignored President Trump's directive to fire the special counsel.

But doesn't Congress have more important things to work on? One of the things my colleagues and I are pretty good at is multitasking.

House Democrats will still push our agenda of lowering health care costs, raising wages, and ending corruption.

Ending corruption: Another prime reason for conducting further oversight investigations.

Unfortunately, I'm not expecting much cooperation from my colleagues in the minority.

But I hope that will be different when it comes to protecting our nation from future attacks.

The Russians are still engaging in their sabotage and President Trump doesn't even want to talk about it, according to administration officials. To do so would call into question the legitimacy of his presidency and require him to stand up to Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The House, however, has already taken action when it passed comprehensive election reform legislation earlier this year.

The election security measures in the bill require the Department of Homeland Security to designate election infrastructure as critical and assess threats to the system at least 180 days prior to a federal election.

It also creates a National Commission to Protect United States Democratic Institutions to counter threats and requires testing of voting systems nine months before a federal election.

In my role in the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, I am working with our allies to prevent Russian aggression. We aren't the only nation under attack.

The threat is real. If we are going to end that threat, we need to be united in a common goal of ensuring our security.

My hope is that we will come together as a nation to make sure our elections are decided by the American people and the American people alone. The integrity of our elections should not be a partisan issue.

Neither should the honesty and integrity of those working in the White House. The founders wanted Congress to be the check on the executive branch and we must not shirk that responsibility.

— Congresswoman Davis represents central San Diego, including the communities of Old Town, Kensington, Mission Hills, University Heights, Hillcrest Bankers Hill, North Park, South Park, Talmadge, Normal Heights, as well as La Mesa, Lemon Grove, Spring Valley and parts of El Cajon and Chula Vista.✧

FROM PAGE 1

HOMELESS COUNT

have found more people if we spent time in the middle of the night, but I was told that was too risky."

He also knew of some groups that were accompanied by police officers, which he worried would deter people from talking to the volunteers.

Among those questioning the veracity of the raw data from this year's homeless count is Voice of San Diego (VOSD), a San Diego member-based nonprofit investigative news organization.

"At first glance, San Diego's latest annual Point-in-Time Count appears to show a modest drop in homelessness," said Lisa Halberstadt of VOSD. "But officials caution the data isn't comparable because of changes to the way the count is carried out and to the methodology the group uses to arrive at a final tally."

In a recent VOSD article, Halberstadt noted that the Regional Task Force on the Homeless (RTFH), which coordinates the homeless census, changed its strategy this year at the urging of federal officials and consultants who scrutinized San Diego's homelessness response during the deadly 2017 hepatitis A outbreak.

"The task force's controversial decision to exclude RVs from 2018's tally added further urgency," wrote

Halberstadt. "Local leaders said the count represents only a snapshot of a homeless population that's likely much larger."

Halberstadt points to an analysis of data from the homeless management information system the task force oversees, which reveals 27,850 people used homeless services county-wide last year — more than triple the number counted in the annual homeless census.

Deacon Jim Vargas, president/CEO of Father Joe's Villages and secretary of the board of RTFH, said in a press release that he was "encouraged to see our community finding new ways to gather more complete information about the state of homelessness in San Diego."

"An in-depth annual count is a helpful complement to what we learn every day helping people get back on their feet at Father Joe's Villages," Vargas said. "I was especially pleased to see the use of one-on-one interviews this year as well as new efforts to count people across more neighborhoods of San Diego. This is a step in the right direction toward gathering helpful data."

Vargas added the homeless count serves as "a reminder for all of us that too many people are still struggling. As we look beyond the numbers, we know that each person experiencing homelessness has a unique story and needs a unique combination of housing and services in order to achieve stability."

Added Vargas, "A comprehensive plan that spans the region will be necessary to effectively and efficiently deploy adequate resources."

Fellow RTFH board member County Supervisor Nathan Fletcher said the latest homeless count will help authorities target public services offered to San Diego's homeless.

"The county of San Diego works collaboratively with local governments and our community partners, to connect people experiencing homelessness with resources that put them on a path to a healthier, more stable life," Fletcher said. "Now that we have a clearer, more precise picture of the individuals' needs, we are going to be able to establish the right mix of services and programs to those experiencing homelessness."

It's up to the RTFH now to complete the annual Point-in-Time Count by using critical statistics gathered to secure federal funding for needed homeless housing and services.

"We have leveraged the capacity and resources of the RTFH as an expert on homelessness to deliver an accurate and verifiable count that has already improved our understanding of this vulnerable population," said District 3 Councilmember Chris Ward, who chairs the RTFH. "The improved methods used focus on direct, consistent engagement with homeless San Diegans aligning us with nationally recognized best-practices. This improved outreach methodology sets the tone for formalizing and standardizing a qualified outreach protocol for use throughout the county."

— Reach Dave Schwab at reporter@sdnews.com.✧



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A Tribute to the Pekin Cafe

PastMatters
Katherine Hon

The elaborate Oriental facade of 2877 University Ave. has been a North Park constant since the 1930s. The bright neon sign announcing "Pekin Cafe CHOP SUEY" seemed to smile as you walked through the double wooden doors. But those doors are closed for now.

A sign posted on the window announces to all "loyal and amazing customers" that the difficult decision to retire the restaurant as of March 2019 was made "with a full and heavy heart," but staff "are ready for the next chapter of retirement and new endeavors." A thank you sign on the door notes, "It has been an absolute pleasure knowing you all and serving you through the generations...Thank you for welcoming us into your lives and making us a part of your tradition."

The uniquely-styled restaurant building sits between the stately white brick Granada Building and the elegant terra cotta Spanish Renaissance North Park Theatre — more recently rebranded as The Observatory North Park — on the south side of University Avenue east of Granada Avenue. The contrasts in architecture were not always so exuberant. The Pekin Cafe building started life in 1922 as the North Park Furniture store owned by Frank J. Crover, who came to the United States from Germany in 1911. The building

was constructed in a Spanish Revival style with a parapet roofline and four long, narrow windows on the half floor above the first floor.

In 1923, Pabco Paint took over the building and operated there until 1931.

In June and July of 1931, permits for plumbing, plastering, electrical and gas work recorded in the Evening Tribune indicated major changes were happening at 2877 University Ave. The Evening Tribune's July 10, 1931 issue recorded permits by San Diego Neon Sign Company for an "electric sign" at the building.

The San Diego Union's July 12, 1931 issue announced Pekin Cafe was "just opened" and would serve their regular \$1 dinner for only 50 cents "to get acquainted with the people of San Diego." The restaurant advertised it was a place to dine and dance on New Year's Eve in 1931 and placed similar ads for many years afterwards.

The San Diego Union's June 23, 1935 issue noted "Pekin Cafe Reopened After Redecoration — Entirely redecorated in an Oriental motif, Pekin cafe, 2877 University Ave., has reopened. The same policies that prevailed before will be in effect, it was stated, with the same Chinese cooks, food, prices and service." Newspaper advertisements through the 1940s highlighted the cafe's "exclusive booths." In 1948, the restaurant advertised being newly decorated with "all private booths."

A fire on Oct. 21, 1981

extensively damaged the kitchen, but the restaurant reopened on Feb. 24, 1982 after repairs and redecoration that eliminated the private booths.

Pekin Cafe has been owned and operated by a close-knit circle of friends and family throughout nearly nine decades. In addition to creating some of the first "Chinese-American" dishes — including their brightly advertised chop suey — these courageous immigrants provided employment and housing for others who had just come to America. Pekin Cafe became a safe place for many Chinese immigrants to take their first steps toward success in a very new world.

The 1932 City Directory was the first to list a restaurant at 2877 University Ave., and the person associated with the address was Kway Chew. His name also appeared as Kway "Chow" in various directories through the years, including as the manager of Pekin Cafe in 1945.

Book (also "Back") Cho and his wife Muriel worked at the restaurant in its early days, and Muriel was listed as working at Pekin Cafe in 1947. In a departure from most directory listings during the 1930s, the 1935 Business Directory listed "Cho Book You" as the restaurant at 2877 University Ave. instead of Kway Chew or Chow.

Even though newspaper advertisements consistently used "Pekin Cafe" from 1931 forward, the name did not appear as a separate listing in the City Directory until 1940. That



This 2019 photograph proves that the Pekin Cafe has retained its distinctive facade and neon sign for more than 80 years. (Photo by Steve Hon)

year, Kway Chow was named with Backyau Chow, So Leung and Leo Ying as being with the restaurant.

So Leung (1899-1955) came to the U.S. from China in 1917. In 1930, he was operating a retail produce business and boarding with Leo Ying, who came to the U.S. from China in 1921 and was also selling produce.

Ying (1905-2004) formally changed his last name to Fong in his 1951 naturalization paperwork. He worked at Pekin Cafe and co-owned the business and the building with his nephew Roy Lowe Fong and friend Frank Chan for many decades. Leo Fong retired with his wife Emily in 1973.

Roy Fong (1921-1999) and his wife Irene were both born in China and became naturalized U.S. citizens in 1964. He was a long-time head chef at Pekin Cafe and retired in 1973.

Frank Chan (1902-1974) witnessed Roy Fong's naturalization

paperwork — on which both were listed as restaurant owners. Chan was born in Walnut Grove, California. He and his wife Mamie worked in retail stores before he began managing the Pekin Cafe in 1946. Mamie (1911-1999) was born in Taft, California. She was a hostess and cashier at the restaurant and translated for others who did not know English as well.

In the early 1970s, Leo Fong's son Kenneth took over Pekin Cafe. Kenneth and his wife Maria have owned and run the restaurant ever since.

The final message to restaurant customers concluded, "Thank you for loving us and thank you for the memories." North Park says the same to all members of the Pekin Cafe family, past and present.

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

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PARTNERS





Look for menu changes at three popular restaurants owned by **The Patio Group**, which runs several dining establishments throughout San Diego.

The company's new corporate executive chef, Jarrod Moiles, is starting with "small impact"



Jarrold Moiles is the new corporate executive for a trio of popular “patio” restaurants. (Photo courtesy of The Patio Group)

revisions to the menus at **The Patio on Goldfinch** in Mission Hills, **The Patio on Lamont** in Pacific Beach, and **Fireside by the Patio** in Liberty Station.

Moiles said about 20% of their menus will change in the coming weeks as the company keeps a close eye on how new dishes are received by the public. Seasonality, he added, will be a main focus.

Moiles revealed a couple of items already in the pipeline for two of the restaurants: Grilled octopus in sambal-honey glaze served with white asparagus veloute, crispy prosciutto, and green asparagus in brown butter at The Patio

on Goldfinch; and Baja-style seared halibut with English pea puree served alongside citrus-mint pea salad at The Patio on Lamont.

An alum of Johnson and Wales University in Rhode Island, the Massachusetts transplant last worked as executive chef for **Rancho Valencia Resort** in Rancho Santa Fe.

"I'm very excited to be involved with The Patio Group and their current sous chefs and executive sous chefs on each property," he said. "The company has a great concept and a strong culinary team." americannational-investments.com/divisions/the-patio-group/



Italian croissants at the new Caffè San Luca *(Photo by Alice Oliveti)*

Not all croissants are created equal. Just ask Alice Olivetti, who owns the recently opened **Caffe San Luca** in Hillcrest with her husband, Stefano Ravaglia.

Both from Bologna, Italy, the couple ships in croissant dough from their homeland and bakes it onsite. According to Oliveti, the difference between these croissants and American or French-made ones is “all in the butter and water.” Known also as “cornetti,” they are noticeably richer and a bit sweeter.

The breakfast-lunch cafe also offers everything from bomboloni (filled donuts) and waffles to fresh pasta dishes, paninis, charcuterie boards and desserts. Beer and Italian wines are available as well. 690 University Ave., 619-501-5557, www.italiancafesandiego.com.



Chicken Bianca deep-dish pizza is among many new items on Cucina Sorella's revised menu. *(Photo courtesy Urban Kitchen Group)*



Healthy eating in a stylish setting is coming to Adams Avenue soon.
(Photo courtesy rendering)

In approaching its three-year anniversary next month, **Cucina Sorella** in Kensington has rolled out an entirely new menu that includes the introduction of pizza — deep-dish to be exact.

Operated under the umbrella of **Urban Kitchen Group**, the company's new executive chef, Tim Kolanko, re-authored the menu in conjunction with sous chef Tara Mae. They came up with a slate of small and large plates that include carrot arancini, Sicilian-style meatballs, and hard-to-find chicken fra Diavolo.

The deep-dish pizzas are available in a few varieties, and the restaurant's use of house-made pasta remains in place. 4055 Adams Ave., 619-281-4014, www.cucinasorella.com.

The upcoming **Pachamama** in Normal Heights promises a “100% organic” menu of healthy drinks and food options using mostly plant-based ingredients. However, a handful of animal proteins will be available. Due to open in June, the indoor-outdoor establishment takes over the 4,000-square-foot space previously occupied by **Cafe Cabaret**.

A sneak peek at the menu shows a range of options with South American influences such as empanadas, spicy grilled sweet potatoes, pitaya bowls, and skirt steak with chimichurri sauce. Beer, wine and sangria are also in the offing.

3737 Adams Ave.



Assorted nigiri at a new, cozy spot in University Heights *(Photo courtesy of Soichi Sushi)*

The intimate **Soichi Sushi** opened April 20 in University Heights, in the space previously occupied by **Circa Restaurant**. Owned by chef Soichi Kadoya and his wife, Raechel, the highly trained Kadoya worked at **Sushi Tadokoro** in Old Town and began cooking Japanese food

when he was a teenager.

Soichi Sushi doesn't serve sushi rolls. It instead specializes in traditional sashimi and "delicacy-type foods," Raechel told us. Such items are listed on the menu, while others are served in two-hour omakase-style sessions at a 10-seat bar. For the latter, reservations are recommended.

Aside from the bar, there is an eight-seat community table, which can be reserved for parties of five or more.

Raechel also noted that although the menu doesn't list vegan or vegetarian options, her husband caters well to non-meat customers upon request. 2121 Adams Ave., 619-677-2220, soichisushi.com.

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

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New vibes at Two Seven Eight

**Come On
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Dr. Ink

It was just over two years ago when I supped on fried chicken skins and caccio e pepe pasta at Two Seven Eight, the residence-turned-restaurant that was previously home to The Tractor Room.

At the time of my visit, shortly after chef-owner Jessica Fisher returned to San Diego from kitchen gigs in San Francisco and New York as both a savory and pastry chef, her new Two Seven Eight resembled something of a Nantucket cottage. The walls were mostly white, which matched elegantly to the structure's paned windows, pillowed banquettes and wooden joinery comprising the tall ceiling.

Though not a fine-dining place, it felt radically more upscale compared to The Tractor Room's dim hunting-lodge atmosphere.

To my surprise, Two Seven Eight now features a more casual élan. The walls are black. Edison bulbs hover over the middle of the dining room. And tunes by Bowie and Morrissey played at semi-high volume made me fall immediately in love with the interior alterations. Our waitress said the changes were made "about a month ago."

I'm not sure if the current happy-hour deals were around in 2017, but if they were, I missed some mighty swell opportunities to stretch out my leisure budget since then.

Nearly all drink and food items are \$5 or less, starting with beer-shot combos and wines by the glass. Prices come down from there with well drinks selling for \$4, and draft beers or blood orange "hard" kombucha going for \$3 apiece.

Most impressive are the \$5 "smash" burgers, a menu staple that sells for \$16 on the regular dinner menu. Granted, it comes with french fries during that time, but what you get for the money during happy hour will thrill most stomachs.

The burger is constructed with two thin beef patties cooked under weighted pressure on a flat grill, plus two slices of American cheese, and a liberal smear of garlic aioli. It's similar to the wildly popular burgers slung at The Friendly in North Park, except here, the kitchen accepts modifications.

I ordered mine with the addition of raw onions, which raised the burger to my gold standard, adding that precious measure of crunch. It washed down swimmingly with a glass of the kombucha, which hails from JuneShine in North Park. Ringing in at 6% alcohol, your probiotics come with a buzz.

My drinking cohort ordered the beer-shot pairing — a pint-size can of Hamm's American lager and a standard shot glass filled with some lower-rack brand of tequila. It's a decent dose of booze for \$5. For the same cost, he ordered a sizable bowl of tater tots that were crispy and perfectly salted.

For those willing to pay full price for other libations, there are staff-created cocktails, numerous tequila and mezcal choices, and more than a dozen locally distilled spirits. The draft beer selection is rather small, confined to only a handful of taps.

Other food choices during happy hour include \$2 street tacos, \$5 skinny fries, a \$5 smash chicken sandwich, and a \$6 pulled pork sandwich, which we also scarfed down while applauding its sweet and smoky overtones.

Two Seven Eight

3687 Fifth Ave. (Hillcrest)
619-278-0080,
concepttwoseveneight.com
Happy hour: 4 to 6 p.m.,
Wednesday through
Saturday

Given the attractive happy-hour prices and diverse patronage at Two Seven Eight, which features a loungy dog-friendly front patio, chances are great you'll want to stay a while.❖



A neighborhood hangout with exceptional happy-hour deals (Photos by Dr. Ink)

RATINGS

Drinks: ⚡⚡⚡⚡

Despite its lengthy list of cocktails and spirits, happy hour offers only selections of brews, well drinks and wines. But their low prices compensate for the lack of choices.

Food: ⚡⚡⚡⚡⚡

Two Seven Eight is a chef-driven establishment, and nearly every dish proves it.

Value: ⚡⚡⚡⚡⚡

You'll be hard-pressed to find drinks and food priced this inexpensively in pricey San Diego.

Service: ⚡⚡⚡⚡

Our waitress was extremely zippy and mildly knowledgeable about the food and drinks.

Atmosphere: ⚡⚡⚡⚡⚡

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A shot of tequila and a pint can of Hamm's American lager

(l to r) The smash burger and a pulled pork sandwich

San Diego Unified program fights food insecurity

By Joyell Nevins

Ever wonder where the left-over lunch items from your kids' school cafeteria goes? In the San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD), those last few hamburger patties from Roosevelt Middle or single breadsticks from McKinley Elementary no longer end up in a trash can. Thanks to the program "Love Food, Not Waste," that extra food is being passed on to organizations fighting food insecurity.

From its pilot start in September 2016, to full district incorporation in 2017, to now, 482,799 pounds of food have been kept out of the landfill. Rather than contributing to methane gas and climate change — that amount of food waste would have produced over 262,000 pounds of carbon emissions — that leftover food instead helped provide more than 402,000 meals to local folks in need.

Staging a food rescue

It started with "Chef Bob" Brody, a SDUSD Food & Nutrition Services program specialist, who was concerned about the large amount of prepared food that was being wasted on a district level. So, he started a "food rescue" initiative with his team.

"We don't always know what the students are going to eat," he said, explaining why it can be hard for food service workers to gauge the amount of food to prepare for a daily meal period. And



if there was only a small amount left, like three peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, the excess food wasn't enough to carry over until the next day.

He also discovered that the amounts of food left over by many of the small schools, such as Dailard Elementary, wasn't enough to warrant a food relief charity making a trip to pick it up. But what happens when food waste is combined from the various school cafeterias?

"Between [that] little school, and this little school, that's a lot of food," Brody said.

The next question was how to get the extra food out of the school and into the kitchens of those who are feeding the needy. Brody and his team realized that there was already

a process of delivery drivers in place bringing food products to the school on a regular basis. Now, those trucks just take the food waste out of the school when they leave, and bring it back to the cluster hubs.

"It doesn't cost us anything extra," Brody said. "We've taken the process and increased its usability."

Actually, the process is saving the district money, Brody notes. Seeing how much is left over from certain meals is helping individual schools' food services budget their food amounts. Brody said he has seen a reduction in overall food costs and purchases since the institution of Love Food, Not Waste.

"We produce less, we buy less, and we see more revenue," he said.

From a cluster to a charity

Now, once the food is at these cluster kitchens, how can it logistically get to charities that are feeding the hungry? Enter Feeding San Diego and its CEO Vince Hall.

"This [program] wouldn't happen if we didn't have a partner like Vince," SDUSD Food & Nutrition Services Director Gary Petill declared.

The massive hunger relief organization provides food and resources to a network of more than 260 neighborhood partners, serving approximately 63,000 people each week. Hall works with Food & Nutrition Services and the Feeding San Diego staff to take SDUSD's compiled extra food and distribute it in that existing network.

"They make the process feasible," Hall said of SDUSD's cluster concept.

Hall and Brody aren't the only ones appreciating this new way of sustainability. Brody notes that the individual school cafeteria employees have jumped on board as well.

"They bought right into the system. They know we're doing the right thing for the right reasons," Brody said. He laughed about the most common response he received, which was "well, it's about time!"

—Freelance writer Joyell Nevins can be reached at joyelle@gmail.com. You can also follow her blog *Small World, Big God* at swbgblog.wordpress.com.

FROM PAGE 5 EVERQUEST

said. "Servers were melting — literally. They had to move them to cooled areas. There were guys in parkas in a cold room just monitoring them and making sure they had air space. They didn't know what they were doing."

The game kept its fan base past the initial rush and was even nicknamed "EverCrack" for its addictive qualities.

"The game had crazy momentum," Longdale said. "People were getting married. Some of them unmarried. Some of us got jobs in the industry as a result. Some of us lost our jobs."

She claimed "EverQuest" is credited with giving some of the major players at other gaming companies like Blizzard Entertainment (developers of the "Warcraft," "Diablo" and "StarCraft" series of video games, among others) their start as well as revolutionizing what an MMORPG could contain.

The next major event at the future museum is scheduled to be held during Comic-Con itself (July 18-21). The Batman-themed event will include batmobiles and a bat cave experience. Smith said he is looking for a way to open it up to everyone attending Comic-Con so they can get a taste of the museum to come.

— Kendra Sitton can be reached at kendra@sdnews.com.

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JOE'S CLIENT SUCCESS STORY

What I like about Fitness Together is the one-on-one workout with a trainer. Although I've never worked out like this before, I look forward to going to the gym and seeing what has been planned out for me. Each trainer has their own unique method that makes every session different. I like the fact that they're able to make changes for my physical needs and limitations so that I still get a great workout. I feel that each time I work out, it's a great challenge for me and I really feel accomplished when I'm done. I have set specific goals and they are helping me achieve them. I would highly recommend this group of trainers to anyone looking to improve their health and life.

I had tremendous sciatic pain I had suffered with for many years when starting this journey. Debilitating at times, it was always there, impacting my sleep, time in the car traveling in sales, and in general, my outlook on life. With work outs focused on improving; my core strength, my hip and leg strength, my rotational ability and flexibility, I can now report that this part of my life is behind me. No more radiating pain hip to ankle. No more numbness. AWESOME!!

I turn 50 in May of 2019. My son was away at college when I began this journey. When he returned home, he asked "where's my dad", while looking at me. My wife can wrap her arms around me now, as I have dropped about 35 pounds.

Additionally and most importantly, is what has happened to my blood pressure. When I began this journey with Fitness Together Mission Hills, initial blood pressure readings were 157/111 and I was being treated medically with drugs to manage my high blood pressure. Though still a tad high at my last retest on 9 20 18 at 138/90, my Doctor has begun to lower the dosage of drugs to manage my blood pressure, as I continue to get lighter, leaner and fitter with the ultimate benefit being how my heart operates.

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Uptown resident to be honored as 2019 Chicano Federation Visionary Award recipient

By: B.J. Coleman

Bankers Hill resident Delia H. Talamantez is slated to be honored on Saturday, May 11, at the 50th Anniversary Ball of the Chicano Federation of San Diego County. Talamantez will be named the recipient of the 2019 Chicano Federation Visionary Award at the gala celebration, which will be held at the Downtown U.S. Grant Hotel.

"I have been involved with civil rights most of my life," Talamantez said. "I was always getting involved in helping other people — through church, and through advising politicians. I have always been passionate about civil rights."

Talamantez worked with the Metropolitan Area Advisory Committee (MAAC) on their Anti-Poverty project from 1966-68, ending up as director. "That was a wonderful experience," Talamantez said, despite the 16-hour work days.

She experienced the stinging bias of racism but decided to overcome fear and speak up.

Talamantez participated in a recent round-table interview anticipating the 50th anniversary celebration, together with Nancy Maldonado, new CEO of the Chicano Federation of San Diego County; and Mario X. Sierra, Chicano Federation board chairman.

The interview commenced with background and review of the federation's half-century of community advocacy and service. Maldonado, who was named CEO in January, offered a quick synopsis of the organization's changing arc of community service over the past five decades. Maldonado noted that the federation was born of advocacy first, to unite more than 40 small groups to support Latino rights and civil rights. Chicano Park was at risk, Barrio Logan was split by freeways, and many former residents were left without homes.

Talamantez added her perspective on the days of the 1969 assembly of the federation.

"The 1960s were a time of protest," Talamantez said. "As immigrants, we were conservative, and taking this step, like we did, was bold. We took over the park, which gave the community power."

Maldonado gave more of the historical background, observing that the Chicano Federation has evolved into a direct community service organization these days, responding to critical community needs, focusing mainly on low-income community members but serving anyone who qualifies for federation programs.

"The struggle is still on," Maldonado said.

Maldonado is looking toward new visions of the second half-century of Chicano Federation community service.

"My vision is leading in social services that are so desperately needed," Maldonado said. "We were once great; we will be again."

Mario Sierra was born in Tijuana and is an engineer with the city of San Diego's Environmental Services Department. Talamantez met Sierra through the Civil Service Commission and she invited him to join the Chicano Federation board.

When he was 15 and 16, Sierra worked summertime jobs in conjunction with The Chicano Federation. He assisted non-English-speaking persons with acquiring child care and filling out tax preparation papers.

"I could see the difference this was making for the community, in what was then known as Shelltown," Sierra said. "I realized I loved nonprofit work." He mentioned in particular the collaborative services on behalf of child development, nutritional support and senior housing. Within a year of being named to the federation board, Sierra was promoted to

chairing the board.

Sierra happens to be the person who first thought of and nominated Talamantez for the award. When the Chicano Federation Visionary Award nominations were opened, Sierra said, "Delia came to mind."

"Delia is a strong leader," Sierra said. "Delia does that."

Maldonado agreed. "That's true leadership," Maldonado said. "And she brings an important historical perspective."

Also slated to receive honorary recognition at the Chicano Federation 50th Anniversary Ball is Irma Castro, the federation's longtime executive director, who left her role in 1991. Castro will receive the Chicano Federation Legacy Award.

Organizers of the gala hope to raise \$250,000 to support programs for child development, affordable housing and other services for San Diego County families. The ball is sold out, but the federation seeks continuing monetary donations and donated items and services for auction. Additionally, volunteers are always eagerly welcomed. More information is available online at chicanofederation.org or by phone at 619-285-5600.

—B. J. Coleman is a local freelance journalist and editor/staff reporter with 22nd District Legionnaire. B.J. can be reached at bjcjournalist@gmail.com.

FROM PAGE 3

BUZZFEED

were turned upside down by the 2010 earthquake, and they have been trying to survive and create good lives for their children ever since, but every country they turn to — Brazil, Guatemala, Venezuela, Honduras, among others — exploited them and underpaid them, and even targeted them with racism and violence, they said. Once those countries started experiencing their own economic and political troubles, the immigrants there were some of the first to suffer.

[The island of] Haiti is [located] across the entire continent from San Diego. These families have traveled for so long, across so many borders, and tried so hard to get to San Diego, following messages scrawled in bathrooms and betting on guides with money from their families. Now that they are here, they are being targeted by people they call "the haters" — anti-immigrant protesters that film them in their rooms in the shelter and threaten them with violence online. This story is true for so many people, and it's one I knew nothing about.

KS: The abrupt end of the Safe Release Program has forced San Diego County to support asylum-seekers now forced to stay in the area while

their claims are processed. CMC was already overcrowded and had to shut down even as 13,000 families were released in the city just this year. Based on what you saw in San Diego, how do you think the city should or could respond as those numbers continue to grow?

EO: Because of the end of the Safe Release Program, shelters like CMC and San Diego Rapid Response have been forced to bear the weight that ICE and CBP did before. The San Diego County Board of Supervisors has sued the Trump administration for ending that policy, to help them out with funds, which hopefully will result in San Diego getting federal help to fill in the gaps their agencies left. I also know San Diego is working with CMC to potentially rent them new properties that are better equipped to act as long-term shelters for even more asylum-seekers. I think continuing to work with shelters and NGOs, and hopefully pulling through on these projects and starting more of them, would help make sure that asylum-seekers can get to where they need to go and not end up on the streets.

—Ema O'Connor is a political reporter for BuzzFeed News and is based in Washington, D.C. She can be reached at ema.oconnor@buzzfeed.com. Her full report on Christ Ministry Center can be read at bit.ly/2Dun9VJ.

—Kendra Sitton can be reached at kendra@sdnews.com.

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‘Sister Act’ offers up a break from the real world

Theater Review

Jean Lowerison



What is it about nuns in the theater? Remember Debbie Reynolds, “The Singing Nun,” in the 1962 film? Then there’s “The Flying Nun” and the nuns in “The Sound of Music.”

Now we have San Diego Musical Theatre’s production of “Sister Act,” the 2006 musical based on the 1992 film about religion, criminals, love and finding your place in the world.

In Philadelphia, pop singer Deloris Van Cartier (Miriam Dance) and two other female singers do “Take Me to Heaven” for Deloris’ gangster boyfriend Curtis Jackson (Berto Fernandez), who has been stringing her along with promises of fame and fortune. But he tells her (again) that she’s “not ready.”

She decides to take her career into her own hands, but unfortunately, she gets to Curtis just at the time he’s plug-



(Photos courtesy San Diego Musical Theatre)

The Mother Superior (Sandy Campbell) is not thrilled when this obviously inappropriate creature walks into the sacred convent in shorts and sparkly boots and a most unholy swagger. But Eddie is adamant about hiding her in this unlikely place.

You can imagine the chaos Deloris causes. Putting on that habit doesn’t change her. Will she adapt? Will Curtis somehow find her? Will the sisters influ-

many newcomers to SDMT. Miriam Dance plays the star of the show Deloris Van Cartier, singer extraordinaire and wearer of clothes utterly inappropriate for a convent. She has a voice as big as all outdoors, knows how to use it, and is utterly believable as the fish-out-of-water star.

Sandy Campbell, no stranger to local stages, continues her unbroken string of great performances in her SDMT debut as the put-upon Mother Superior.

Berto Fernandez is impressive (and scary) as head gangster Curtis; his henchmen Joey (Donny Gersonde), TJ (E.Y. Washington) and Pablo (Gerardo Flores Tonella) are amusing and a little scary too.

Sarah Errington is impressive as Sister Mary Robert, who takes to this pop style of singing enough to make her wonder (in the poignant song “The Life I Never Led”) whether she has truly found her life’s work.

And another local favorite, Bethany Slomka, is a riot as Sister Mary Patrick, up for anything and amusing in everything she does.

This large cast of 24 gives it their all, which is considerable.

But enough of this talk. If you’re looking to escape the news for a while — or just for an entertaining musical to watch — “Sister Act” fills the bill.

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



ging someone he believes has “squealed” on him. Deloris skeedaddles out of there to the local cops, where she tells her story to cop Eddie (Jeremy Whatley), who turns out to be an old high school friend she used to call “Sweaty Eddie.”

Meanwhile, Curtis has put out a hit on her, so she’s got to hide. Eddie takes Deloris to the local convent, where he thinks Curtis will never find her.

ence her or will it be the other way around?

You probably know the answers, but that doesn’t matter. What does is that SDMT has another genuine hit on its hands, thanks to fine direction by Larry Raben, a terrific cast, a great orchestra of 11 wonderfully conducted by Don LeMaster, and delightful disco-look choreography by Luke Harvey Jacobs.

This terrific cast includes



Critic’s Choice
“Pulses with a sense of the theatrical!”
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“Imaginative, fun & adventurous!”
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A fascinating true story.”
San Diego Magazine



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Mask Off

City Heights documentary screening leads to productive dialogue on suppressive effects of hyper-masculinity.

By Jorden P. Hales

A panel faced the audience in City Heights' You Belong Here creative space. With a mic in hand, four experts looked upon raised hands and eager men after a Tuesday, April 23 screening of "The Mask You Live In." The group seemed to resemble a classroom more than an audience. The film chronicles the experiences of young boys and men dealing with societal expectations of masculinity. Its title references the proverbial disguise young men feel the need to put on as an alternative to public vulnerability. The 2015 documentary had just finished screening in the creative space and the entire audience had joined the opportunity for group discussion. Among a mostly female audience, the session's first four questions and statements came from men. "The film gave us permission to speak about how we relate to it," said panel member Francis Donald. "A lot of the time when men are feeling a certain kind of way, we don't know how to name it because we haven't just watched a film about it." The documentary features commentary from boys and men who had resorted to violence, suppression of emotion and other coping mechanisms in cases where they felt vulnerability would work to their detriment — an experience nearly every man present at the screening said they could personally relate to.



(Left to right: Sarah Shire, Francis Donald, Doctor Jen Gonzalez) A panel of local experts prepares to host a forum on gender roles and commentary on the documentary beside the You Belong Here host. (Photo by Stacy Keck)



Community activist Brandon Steppe raises his hand to speak at the April 23 screening of "The Mask You Live In." (Photo by Stacy Keck)

The tone of the forum provided a stark contrast to that of the film, as the viewers took advantage of an immediate opportunity to engage in healthier tactics of communicating emotion. "A lot of different cans opened up," said Brandon Steppe, founder of The David's Harp Foundation, which seeks to provide environments wherein San Diego's at-risk youth can be expressive in productive ways. Steppe contributed from the audience, sharing a case in which he had a breakthrough with the young men he serves after being vulnerable to them in a group setting. "It's no different from [what a] coach would [do] in sports," Steppe explained. Despite this analogy, Steppe and Donald noted the value of mentors like him and Donald in spaces where roles like those of a coach or disciplinarian are not the primary voices. Men often socialize in environments that are inherently competitive or sexual in nature, whether it be in sports, at the gym, drinking at bars, etc. The film notes young men who partake in theater, and other extracurricular activities not known as conventional male spaces, are often maligned or discouraged by peers and mentors alike. "My dad was really uncomfortable with [me] changing into this very 'un-man-like person,'" a subject in the film recalls, chronicling his experience turning from sports to theater

★★★★★
'The Mask You Live In'
Film Rating 4.5

in his youth. "Even in the context of theater, where it [the character] wasn't really me... it became a point of friction between me and my father." Similar reinforcement of hyper-masculine behavior was a theme throughout the film and a shared experience of those who spoke during the forum afterwards. Encounters with such reinforcement were cited as memorable negative experiences on par with physical trauma in terms of influencing behavior. "It's performative... If it was natural, we would already just be doing it," said Dr. Jenn Gonzalez, a local sociologist and sexologist who counsels people on navigating gender roles and communicating with the opposite sex, and who was one of two women on the panel. "People feel very threatened if you step out of that box. If people think a baby is a boy, they'll be more rough and tumble with them... You could have the same baby and dress them up differently, people will treat the baby differently and have different expectations. There's blunt versions where someone is beat up or called 'faggot,' but the smaller [versions] can be a trauma to the spirit." Viewers at the screening gave the project high praise and recommended that those planning to see it do so in a group, with the hope that it will bring about similar discussion among other men. "The Mask You Live In" can be found on Hulu, iTunes, YouTube and other popular streaming platforms. You Belong Here is located at 3619 El Cajon Blvd. and provides space for creatives to collaborate and work on their respective projects.

— Jorden P. Hales is a multimedia journalist based in Southern California. Follow him on twitter: @JayPGatsby. ❖

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UPTOWN CALENDAR

Friday, May 3

Secret Society of Adultologists: Garden Party
The Nat's 21-plus event springs again with an after-hours garden party. Hands-on activities include potting succulents to take home, ethnobotany bookmarks (using cuttings and pressed samples), honey tastings, croquet and bocce ball lessons, live music, and, of course, lots of captivating and weird plant science. For additional purchase, food and beverages will be provided by Great Maple, Red Sambusas, Dakines Hawaiian and Modern Times. 7-10 p.m. at the San Diego Natural History Museum. Sdnat.org/SSA



Pajama night at 'Seussical'
The Cat in the Hat is your host and Horton the Elephant is your guide on a journey from the Jungle of Nool to the Circus McGurkus to the World of the Whos, as a little boy with a big imagination proves that a person is a person, no matter how small in this junior theater production. Adults and children are encouraged to get cozy and enjoy the May 3 performance in the comfort of their pajamas. Children attending in pajamas will leave with a special gift, and the whole family will be back home by bedtime! May 4 performance will include ASL interpretation. Casa Del Prado Theatre, Balboa Park. Friday at 7 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays at 2 p.m. through May 12. juniorthetheatre.com

Saturday, May 4

Clean Up South Park
South Park business owners, residents and community leaders will gather on Saturday, May 4, from 8:30 a.m.-noon for the biannual neighborhood clean-up effort. The event is held at the Target Express parking lot at 30th and G streets in South Park. The Clean Up South Park volunteers pick up trash, paint over graffiti, clean up the sidewalks and streets, pull weeds and sweep street curbs. Volunteers receive a light breakfast, volunteer discount card for neighborhood businesses and a free lunch at the Station Tavern. The Clean Up South Park committee is currently looking for more volunteers to help with the initiative. For questions or to volunteer for the event, please contact Tanya McAnear from Bad Madge & Co. at tanyamcaneat@gmail.com or call 619-203-4944.

SciTech Challenge
SciTech is an after-school program for girls in grades four through six at San Diego-area elementary schools. Each participating school selects 30 students and hosts the weekly two-hour SciTech program on school campus from October to May. On Saturday, May 4, the students from six SciTech schools will showcase their final projects and compete to see who designed the most successful lander and rover. The event is open to the public with general admission. 10 a.m. to noon. Fleet Science Center, Theater Lobby.

Wednesday, May 8

International Rescue Committee's International Documentary Film Series
"We Are Not Princesses" examines the incredible strength and spirit of four Syrian women living as refugees in Beirut as they come together to tell their stories of love, loss, pain and hope through the ancient Greek play, "Antigone." Told with humor and heart, "We Are Not Princesses" elicits intimacy and honesty from its unlikely group of thespians. Q&A following with producer/editor Sara Maamouri. Doors open at 6 p.m. with the screening starting at 6:30 p.m. at Balboa Park's Museum of Photographic Arts. Proceeds benefit the IRC. Tickets are \$15 at rescue.org/films.

Saturday, May 11

Epic on 5th
Grand opening of Next Space Development's latest residential community. See 25 single-level residences, two live/work residences with street access and one penthouse. The newly remodeled designer residences have new interior finishes. 10 a.m. epicon5th.com.

Festival of Arts in North Park
Celebrating creativity through music, art, dance and crafted goods, this free event includes five music stages and a gallery in the street. There will also be a craft beer block, karaoke, live art, and over 150 visual artists. Don't miss a fun-filled day and night of entertainment in San Diego's hippest neighborhood. 11 a.m.-10 p.m. on 30th Street and University Avenue.

The Magic of Wine
The Fleet Science Center's annual fundraiser while be held from 6-10 p.m. at the Fleet Science Center. The wine-themed event includes games, music, a silent auction, dinner and, of course, wine. fleetscience.org/events/magic-wine

Spreckels Organ Insider Brunch & Tour 2019
A brunch, a private concert, and a tour inside of the majestic Spreckels Organ in Balboa Park. Brunch will be catered by the renowned Prado restaurant in the Loggia Room above the historic House of Hospitality in the heart of Balboa Park. Then guests are invited to the Spreckels Organ Pavilion stage for

an organ concert performed by San Diego's new civic organist, Raúl Prieto Ramirez. Organ curator Dale Sorenson will then take guests on a tour of the inner workings of the organ where they can see the pipes and walk into the organ's wind chest to learn how Raul is making the organ play sounds!

Balboa Park Pow Wow
The free Pow Wow is a traditional and cultural event that showcases the heritage of American Indians. The cultural event features traditional drum groups and inter-tribal dancing. Participants of all ages will be present from various American Indian tribes, bands and communities proudly wearing beautiful regalia. The San Diego American Indian Health Center's (SDAIHC) annual Balboa Park Pow Wow will take place on Saturday, May 11, and Sunday, May 12, from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. in Balboa Park, on the southwest corner of Park Boulevard and Presidents Way.

Sunday, May 12



Mother's Day Cocktails with Copper & Kings
Using professional, locally designed bar tools from Standard Spoon and gorgeous vintage glassware from Collins & Coupe, visitors will craft three cocktails during each two-hour course. Also, get some shopping done after with 15% off your total purchase made in store that day! Each class is limited to 10 participants, all skill levels welcome. 21 and over. Noon-2 p.m. and 3-5 p.m. at Collins & Coupe at 2876 El Cajon Blvd. #100.

Monday, May 13

Art of the Northern Renaissance
Free guest lecture at the Timken Museum of Art in Balboa Park from 10-11 a.m. Educated at Dartmouth College and New York University's Institute of Fine Arts, Eric Frank is a Fellow of the American Academy in Rome and an expert in Italian Renaissance art with a special interest in the history of the classical tradition in Western art, from Greece to the early Renaissance. A noted scholar, Dr. Frank serves as chair of the Department of Art and Art History at Occidental College.

Tuesday, May 14

Nat Talk: 'The Untold Story of the Honey Bee in the Wild'
Author and Cornell University professor Tom Seeley will present the captivating story of what scientists are learning about the behavior, social life, and survival strategies of honey bees living outside beekeepers' hives. After the talk, Tom will sign copies of his book "The Lives of Bees: The Untold Story of the Honey

Bee in the Wild," available for purchase in the Museum store. 7 p.m. at the San Diego Natural History Museum. sdnat.org/nattalks

Wednesday, May 15

FilmOut San Diego LGBTQ ShortFest
Twenty new international and domestic short films will be screened during the event at Landmark's Hillcrest Cinemas in San Diego. World, U.S., West Coast and California premieres are featured, including a few local San Diego filmmakers. The event will be separated into two different selections of short films. Tickets can be purchased per tract or combined. Q&A's will follow Tract 1 and 2 as time permits. 7 p.m. and 9 p.m.

International Rescue Committee's International Documentary Film Series
An epic, yet intimate, portrait of lives in transit and the human consequences of the refugee crisis spanning the Mediterranean, "It Will Be Chaos," unfolds between Italy and the Balkan corridor, focusing on two unforgettable refugee stories of human strength and resilience in search of a better and safer future. Q&A following with directors/producers Lorena Luciano and Filippo Piscop. Doors open at 6 p.m. with the screening starting at 6:30 p.m. at Balboa Park's Museum of Photographic Arts. Proceeds benefit the IRC. Tickets are \$15 at rescue.org/films.

Thursday, May 16



Bike to Work Day
The 29th annual SANDAG Bike to Work Day, celebrated throughout the San Diego region, will fall on Thursday, May 16 from 6-9 a.m. The regional event has been hosted by SANDAG for decades to promote commuting to work by bike as a fun, environmentally friendly, and cost-saving alternative to driving. There will be 100 pit stop locations throughout San Diego County where bike riders can pick up a free Bike to Work Day T-shirt (sponsored by JUMP by Uber), grab refreshments and snacks, and get cheered on by pit-stop volunteers from health care organizations, local businesses, municipalities, government agencies, colleges and schools, bike companies, and event sponsors. To register, visit the SANDAG iCommuter website.

Saturday, May 18

Raise Your Glasses
The free Mega Vendor Trunk show presented by Urban Optiks. Vendors show off luxury eyewear and frame collections. Noon to 4 p.m. at 3788 Park Blvd. Reserve your spot at uoosd.com.

Thursday, June 20



Red Shoe Day fundraiser
Volunteers are needed from across the county for Ronald McDonald House Charities of San Diego's largest volunteer driven fundraiser to collect generous cash donations from morning commuters from 6:30-9:30 a.m. at more than 200 major intersections throughout the San Diego Community. Visit RedShoeDaySD.com to register as a volunteer or create a personal fundraising page to help support Ronald McDonald House Charities.

Sunday, June 23



Scoop San Diego
Summer is coming, and so is San Diego's first ice cream festival! Scoop San Diego will bring the tastiest ice cream and gelato from shops all over San Diego to the heart of North Park on Sunday, June 23. Proceeds from the festival will benefit Monarch School, supporting homeless children in San Diego with educational needs. The Scoop San Diego festival will be open 11 a.m.-4 p.m., June 23, at North Park Way and 30th Street. Tickets are now on sale at scoopsandiego.org. Single tickets, which entitle guests to 10 delicious samples, are \$20. "Shareable" tickets, which entitle guests to a sample from each participating vendor, are \$35.

Recurring events

Mondays

Lestat's West Open Mic
Weekly open mic event hosted by Robby Robertson every Monday, 6:30-11 p.m. at Lestat's, 3343 Adams Ave. bit.ly/LestatWest

Tuesdays

Introduction to Buddhism & Meditation
Join an all-ages introductory class to learn the basic Buddhist concepts as well as participate in a discussion and silent meditation. Weekly event led by Jeff Zlotnik. Free. 7-8 p.m. at Dharma Bum Temple 4144 Campus Ave. Also held on Saturdays at 11 a.m.-noon bit.ly/dharmabum

Thursdays

North Park Thursday Market
Shop at more than 90 tents for locally-grown produce, seasonal grocery items, fresh food and hand-crafted arts and crafts. 3-7:30 p.m. at 3000 North Park Way, stretching from 31st to Utah streets in North Park. bit.ly/ThursMarket

Thursdays at the Ken

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

Fridays

Free Friend Friday
Looking for a co-working space with value-aligned social entrepreneurs, artists, nonprofit professionals and local startups? Collective Impact Center offers a complimentary day pass to use shared desks and office space. Bring your laptop and check in on social media with #cicfreefriendfriday for free Wi-Fi. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at Collective Impact Center, 3295 Meade Ave. bit.ly/free-Fridays Reel Science

Four Fridays in May

Presented by The Nat and Digital Gym Cinema, two events will be at The Nat and two events will be hosted at Digital Gym. Attendees will enjoy a science-fiction movie, followed by commentary from a local scientist, who will provide contextualized and corrective feedback about the film's scientific themes. This year's films include "The Fly" (May 3), "The Martian" (May 10), "World War Z" (May 17), and "Damnation Alley" (May 24). Events start at 7 p.m. sdnat.org/reelscience

Coming of Age Film Fest

Coming of Age is the only film festival in San Diego dedicated to promoting, reinforcing and celebrating the process and power of aging. The Museum of Photographic Arts creates dialogue and new perspectives on aging through discussion and films that challenge cultural perceptions of life at different ages. Each Friday in May at 7 p.m. at 1649 El Prado. Mopa.org

Saturdays

Old Town Saturday Market
This street market features original works from local artists including paintings, jewelry, photography and more. Every Saturday and Sunday. 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. at Harney Street and San Diego Avenue in Old Town. bit.ly/OTMarket

Sundays

Hillcrest Farmers Market
About 175 vendors offer a variety of locally-grown produce, hand-made arts and crafts and fresh-cut florals at one of the city's largest open-air markets. 9 a.m.-2 p.m. on Normal Street between University and Lincoln avenues. bit.ly/HillcrestMarket

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

Sudoku Puzzle

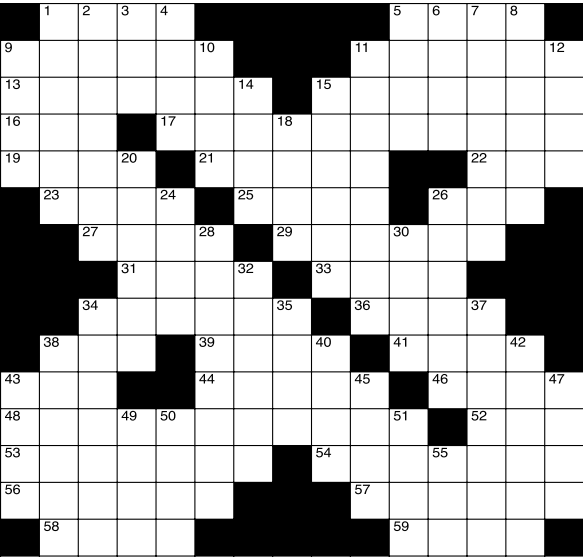
Enter digits from 1 to 9 into the blank spaces. Every row must contain one of each digit. So must every column, as must every 3x3 square.

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Puzzle answers on page 18

Uptown Crossword

Classics



CLUES ACROSS

1. Type of fruit

5. Unit of time

9. Oil company

11. Benson's "partner"

13. Fictional mob boss Tony

15. Visual record

16. Small constellation

17. Popular family TV series

19. Tough outer layer

21. Cut

22. Vietnamese offensive

23. Horizontal mine passage

25. Greek war god

26. Have already done

27. Six (Spanish)

29. Remarks for the audience

31. Relaxing spots
33. Prevent from seeing

34. Disguised

36. Comedian Rogen

38. Afflict in mind or body

39. Sour

41. People native to N. Mexico

43. No seats available

44. Ned __, composer

46. A fit of irritation

48. Ability to move objects mentally

52. Luke's mentor __-Wan

53. Herbal medicine ingredient

54. Oscar-winning director Bigelow

56. Likes

57. In a sound way

58. Part of a staircase

59. Exemptions from play

CLUES DOWN

1. How will it play in __?

2. Grows

3. Swiss river

4. Canadian flyers

5. Affirmative! (slang)

6. Root of taro plant

7. Large, long-legged rodents

8. Recycled

9. Pre-1917 emperor of Russia

10. Sometimes it's on you

11. Contrary beliefs

12. Remain as is

14. Spicy stew __ podrida

15. Play time

18. Italian monetary unit

20. Type of fuel

24. Portable conical tent

26. Yazoo and Mississippi are two
28. What people earn

30. Insect repellent

32. After first

34. Plays the viola

35. Not good

37. Esteemed guest

38. Where rockers ply their trade

40. Office furniture

42. Ancient Greek oracles

43. Quantitative fact

45. Missing soldiers

47. Minute

49. This (Spanish)

50. Maintain possession of

51. Knife

55. What to say on New Year's Day (abbr.)

Puzzle answers on page 18

FROM PAGE 1
ADAMS

nominated for Best Singer-Songwriter at the 2019 San Diego Music Awards.

Francis grew up attending Unplugged's parent, the Adams Avenue Roots Festival, and approached it with wide eyes and wonder as a child. Now a grown-up, she made a special trip down from Los Angeles to continue the tradition from the other side of the stage.

While the Roots Festival may have changed names and removed the street vendors, Unplugged has kept the same diversity of acoustic music. Blues, soul, folk, jazz, country and other genres all showed up on the schedule this year.

"We couldn't have done [the festival] without the amazing contribution of the many performing artists," said Scott Kessler, Unplugged coordinator and executive director of the Adams Avenue Business Association.

The lineup was a hodgepodge of bands, duos and solo artists. Musicians performed in venues as different as they were: bars, restaurants, coffee shops, a church, a water store, and even in front of an auto mechanic shop.

That last privilege went to Dan Dimonte of the Dan Dimonte Trio and his drummer Zac Tatum. Dimonte was tapped



The Liquorsmiths at Sycamore Den
(Photos by Joyell Nevins)

to play when Kessler heard him perform at a local art gallery. The idea emerged to turn a space beside the food court at Smitty's Service into a stage as well.

"It was a blast," Dimonte said, noting that foot traffic didn't just walk by. "People were hanging with us."

Some festivalgoers came out to support a specific artist, while some just strolled up and down the main drag, entering wherever their ears took them. Some of the bars became so full, bouncers had to turn people away because they were at capacity (those pesky fire codes!). Many of the musicians themselves visited other artists or made an appearance at the fest's official after-party at the Air Conditioned Lounge.



San Diego State University students Sam Zorn and Ekaterine Kvaghinidee visited Unplugged to support their friends and performers Nathan & Jesse.

Unplugged also boasted two headliners — multi-instrumentalist David Lindley, and Grammy Award-winning Gaby Moreno — and those ticketed concerts were completely sold out. Even businesses not sporting stages got into the festival spirit, offering specials or staying open late.

If you weren't able to come out on April 27, or just want a continual replay, check out the "Adams Avenue Unplugged" Spotify playlist and enjoy a musical feast for your ears.

—Freelance writer Joyell Nevins can be reached at joyellc@gmail.com. You can also follow her blog Small World, Big God at swbgblog.wordpress.com.✽

FROM PAGE 1
BIKELANE

The project is already gaining significant community input, as nearly 100 people crowded into an upstairs room at North Park Christian Fellowship on Tuesday, April 16, to speak on the proposal. The approval process is on a short timeline because it coincides with the conclusion of the 30th Street pipeline construction when the road will be repaved and repainted. The proposed bike lane and the loss of current parking spaces, as well as other issues, were reasons locals came in to give their input.

Officials presented separate proposals for two different segments of 30th Street: the first from Upas to Juniper streets, where there are currently 162 parking spaces, and the second from El Cajon Boulevard to Upas Street with 258 spaces. In some sections of the corridor, a center turn lane would be eliminated to accommodate the new bike lane, while in others, street parking would be cut to accommodate bike lanes with a physical barrier alongside the vehicle lanes. Still other proposals could add a floating lane of parking next to the road, creating a physical barrier for the bike lane. With the bike lane next to the passenger side, this would also cut down on the common issue of drivers exiting their cars and hitting a cyclist, an issue referred to as "dooring."

With everyone receiving less than two minutes to talk, it took over an hour of going down each row in the auditorium for people on both sides of the issue to have their say about the proposals.

Despite input from both opponents and proponents, and a few in between, the atmosphere remained calm. The only outbursts were of applause when a pro-bike lane advocate said something pithy.

Those activists, with the support of Councilmember Chris Ward, already organized events to push for the new bike lane. On Saturday, April 13, they created a "people-protected" bike lane along 30th Street so cyclists could see what it was like to ride safely there. With a long row of people wearing bright neon vests next to a lane for cars, cyclists, including young children, drove along the road to cheering. Many of those advocates are embracing the proposal that creates a physical barrier between moving cars and the bike lane — but eliminates the most parking spaces of all the proposals.

The recent push to improve biking infrastructure county is

partially due to an effort to reach the county's climate action plan, which calls for 6% of the road share to be made up of bikes by 2020. With bikes still making up such a small minority of the road use, some of the residents in the audience argued the roads should still be left to cater mostly to cars in search of parking. However, the presenters, led by City of San Diego Mobility Program Manager Everett Hauser, headed off this argument by pointing out the North Park Garage on 29th Street, which was constructed to relieve parking problems in 2005, operates at less than a third of its capacity every day. Since the parking garage charges a fee of \$5 a day, it is cheaper than metered parking along the street, and they said ultimately results in the parking garage losing money.

see Bikelane, pg 19

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PUZZLE ANSWERS

Sudoku
Puzzle from page 13

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

Classics
Crossword from page 13

S	E	A	B				P	E	L	S
S	E	N	V	S			S	E	S	I
N	A	H	L	V	X		O	E	S	I
I	B	O	S	I	S	E	N	I	K	E
L	I	N	S	W	E	H	O	H		S
S	O	V	L	D	I	O	V		L	I
	H	L	E	S		O	E	T	I	E
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	S	E	D	I	S	V		S	I	E
O	I	O	S	E	H	V		L	I	O
L	E	L		E	O	I	T	S	O	N
E	S	O	H	H	E	T	L	N		V
L	N	O	V	E	H		O	N	V	H
S	E	O	D	E	H		O	O	V	X
H	V	E					H	V	E	D

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FROM PAGE 17
BIKELANE

Patrick Santana, an avid cyclist, said riding along 30th Street currently is challenging. He also said the argument that a bike lane should not be added because there are not many cyclists on the road is akin to people looking at a river and saying a bridge should not be built because there are no swimmers using it at that moment.

30th Street is currently painted with “sharrows” — the combination of painted bicycles and arrows marking the lane as shared between bikes and vehicles. This system can lead to dangerous road conditions as cars swerve into oncoming traffic to get around a bike, and bikers feel they must

ride closer to parked cars, which increases their risk of getting doored. It also means only the most confident and aggressive cyclists use it. Surveys have found only 1-2% of people are willing to cycle under dangerous conditions, while half of respondents say they would try biking if there was a protected lane.

“I don’t feel safe in this area,” Phil Ballew said, a business consultant who often rides his bike to meet clients in Uptown. He said he has been doored twice in the past year and urged the committee to close the infrastructure gap.

Business owners on both sides of the issue spoke out at the meeting. In addition to some elderly residents worried about having to walk farther to access the businesses on 30th Street, some of those business owners

worried clientele from other parts of San Diego would be less likely to make the trip out to North Park if they knew they had to struggle to find parking.

A business owner from a with a consulting firm on University Avenue where bike lanes have been implemented came to show his support of the plan. Ari Isaak claimed that of his 13 employees, many have chosen to give up their cars and cycle to work.

“If you care about parking, you should care about getting the cars off the street,” he said.

Bankers Hill resident Ben Baltic said business actually went up and there were more parking spaces available when bike lanes were implemented near property he owns on Fourth Avenue. He said for people to ride more, there cannot be gaps in the infrastructure where bike lanes end. Instead, many in the audience argued the entire system needs to be connected the same way roads are for cars.

Justine Epstein, owner of independent bookstore Verbatim Books in North Park, said there is more to consider than just parking. She argued that biking cuts down on air pollution and with more people walking around the area, the ambience of the area would improve.

“Parking is not getting better by not removing parking,” Epstein said.

With a growing population, the current levels of car use and with the parking structure being underutilized, parking in Uptown could still get worse. Two women at the planning meeting said they moved from inclement places where they



Multiple options for bike lane presented at North Park Planning Committee. (Photo by Kendra Sitton)



Dozens gathered at North Park Planning Committee meeting to hear about the proposed bike lane and give their input. (Photo by Kendra Sitton)

were able to bike more because of cycling infrastructure.

Marissa Tucker said she biked 50% of the time while living in San Francisco but that amount has dropped to 5% in San Diego.

“I would bike 100% if that was an option. I’m taking up that parking space,” Tucker said.


Another woman said that after years of going without one in other cities, she is considering buying a car because there are not enough transportation options in the city.

In their concluding remarks, the majority of the planning board voiced support for adding a bike lane, while only a few announced which of the proposals they will back in next week’s vote.



Bike advocates cycle down 30th Street using a ‘people-protected bike lane’ ahead of vote. (Photo by Brian Hoffman)

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6 SMART HOME ESSENTIALS

With so many devices and home automation available these days, turning your house into a smart home is easier than you might think. But, there are some things to keep in mind when deciding which devices are essential – and what kind of internet service you’ll need to maximize your smart home experience.



- **Smart Search entertainment.** There are many options to watch TV and stream content online, and Cox’s Contour TV service brings smart search options, Netflix integration, a voice-controlled remote, and cool apps together into one service that is easy to navigate. Speak into the remote to find the programming you want to watch – use a famous movie quote, the title of a show, a genre, or the name of an actor. You can even say “free movies,” and available titles in the On Demand library will pop up.

Just as important as the devices you select is the internet service you choose.

In San Diego, Cox Communications recently doubled internet download speeds automatically for the majority of its customers at no additional charge. Preferred, the company’s most popular tier of service, is now up to 100 Mbps, while Essential and Starter, which are ideal for lighter users with one to five devices connected to the home network, doubled to 30 Mbps and 10 Mbps, respectively.

For households with multiple family members who want to connect dozens of devices simultaneously, are heavy gamers or have the need for the fastest speeds around, Cox’s Gigablast service offers download speeds of 1 gigabit (1,000 Mbps).

Take a short quiz on the speed advisor at www.cox.com to determine which speed is right for your household.

Cox is also improving the in-home internet experience with Panoramic WiFi, which provides “wall-to-wall” WiFi coverage so you have a connection wherever you may roam in your smart home.



- **A home speaker that doubles as a virtual assistant.** Current models can answer questions, turn on lights, play video, access virtual assistants like Siri or Alexa, share weather and news updates, act as a timer, and play music on demand. Some models even help you shop online.
- **Home cameras.** The latest in home monitoring such as Cox Homelife allows for remote live video viewing from your smartphone, video recording and customizable notifications.
- **Smart lights.** Replace existing light bulbs with energy efficient bulbs that can be controlled remotely with a few taps on your smartphone or tablet. Cox Homelife has an automation feature to control indoor and outdoor lights, bringing you (and your pet) peace of mind while you’re away from home, as well as saving energy and money.
- **Smart locks.** Remotely control doors in your home. Features can include voice commands, customized chimes, activity logs, integration with other smart devices, and special codes for friends, dog walkers, and deliveries.
- **Smart thermostats.** Programmable thermostats allow you to remotely turn the air and heat in your home up and down, and on and off. Save money and energy, and arrive to a warm or cool home.



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Downtown, 2.5BR/2BA | \$965,000



East Village, 1BR/2BA | \$795,000



Downtown, 2BR+Den/2BA | \$1,099,000



Cortez Hill, 1BR/1BA | \$395,000-\$415,000



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