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Small Business Saturday

# MOPA partners with San Diego film fests



The main character in "Heavy Craving" (Courtesy Photo)



"The Tower" promotional photo (Courtesy photo)



Inside the Joan and Irwin Jacobs Theater at MOPA (Photo by Holly B. Rains)

## Arab Film Fest special showing, three Asian Film Fest features at Balboa museum

KENDRA SITTON | UPTOWN NEWS

It has been nearly 20 years since the Museum of Photographic Arts opened a theater inside the museum's halls. Since then, the theater has drawn San Diegans to its silver screen by showcasing films from around the world.

"MOPA's film programs have been going strong since 2001 when we were able to put in our theater here at the museum," said Kevin Linde, manager of adult and digital engagement at MOPA. "That's when our film program began in earnest, but part of our mission is 'dedicated to the preservation, collection, and exhibition' of not only photographs, but also film and video. It's always been baked into our mission, but getting the theater allowed us to do all those things in-house."

When it transitioned to a partnership model with local film fests

a decade ago rather than holding in-house screenings, MOPA became even more integral in bringing acclaimed international films to the heart of San Diego.

"By partnering with them, we were able to reach a broader audience," Linde said. "We don't work with every film festival in town but we'll take a very thoughtful approach to who we want to partner with. We're always looking at making those partnerships a lasting partnership."

MOPA's flagship partnership is with the Human Rights Watch Film Festival. The New York-based advocacy group comes to San Diego each winter to showcase documentaries and feature films that highlight rights abuses from across the globe and efforts to combat them. In addition, the annual San Diego Italian Film Festival screens many of its films at the museum.

"Film is this beautiful medium

materially you can use to communicate an idea, to create a connection with something that might be happening half a world away. Film captivates us and draws us in," Linde said.

Holding a screening at MOPA instead of a typical commercial movie theater does have some advantages.

When the Joan and Irwin Jacobs Theater was built in 2001 during a major renovation of the museum, these events were kept in mind. In front of the screen, there is a stage so filmmakers,

directors, and actors can speak to the audience about a particular film. "There's always an education component to it. We like to think that seeing a film at MOPA, you get much more than just the experience of watching the film. You get a much broader picture," Linde explained.

Sometimes, the audience is allowed into the galleries at the museum ahead of the film, bringing more people through the museum's doors.

see MOPA films, pg 9

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# Retrial set for North Park murder

NEAL PUTNAM | UPTOWN NEWS

A Dec. 30 retrial was set Nov. 4, after jurors deadlocked 9-3 for conviction against a man suspected of killing a 71-year-old man in North Park during a robbery 19 years ago.

The retrial of Edward Jamar Brooks, now 39, may start in early January with a jury panel to resolve the murder case involving the slaying of LeRay "Mac" Parkins, who was clubbed twice in the head with a baseball bat during Parkins' morning walk in an alley around 8:30 a.m. on Aug. 23, 2000.

Jurors discussed the case for roughly 18 hours of deliberations over four days before they announced Oct. 31 they were deadlocked 9-3 for conviction of first-degree murder. San Diego Superior Court Judge Runston Maino asked them at that point if further instructions or just more time would help, but they said they were at an impasse.

Maino then declared a mistrial in the 10-day trial that began Oct. 21 with testimony.

Six jurors remained outside the courtroom afterwards and talked with attorneys and investigators about their deliberations. The main problem was that they could not confirm the testimony of Lester Bell, now 39, and Terrence Brown, now 38,

both of whom said it was Brooks who did it.

"It was too much information and not enough reliable evidence," said the jury foreman afterwards. "There was no way to pin down who [did it]."

Another juror said they questioned why the three people in the case were not treated equally. Bell pleaded guilty to voluntary manslaughter and faces up to 11 years in prison while Brown pleaded guilty to robbery and could get five years in prison.

The eight man, four woman jury re-heard the testimony of a crime lab specialist who said Brooks' DNA was found in 2018 in three places of one pocket of the pants of Parkins. The pants were preserved, and no DNA was traced to Bell or Brown.

Jurors asked for a definition of reckless indifference of human life, and Maino asked them if further arguments would help. They said yes, and attorneys gave a second round of closing arguments on the fourth day of deliberations — a very rare procedure.

Three hours later however, the jurors gave up and said they took three ballots on both first- and second-degree murder and could not reach a verdict.

"At one point, we were 10-2," said the foreman, who added it later moved back to 9-3 in

favor of conviction of first-degree murder.

One juror said afterwards that Bell's testimony was "worthless." Several jurors said the stories of Bell and Brown did not match and "they contradicted each other." They both testified while wearing jail clothes. Brooks wore a suit.

Several jurors said a female juror steadfastly believed Brooks, who testified that it was Brown who killed Parkins. Brooks claimed that after the robbery, Parkins was only shoved to the ground, but it was Brown who went back and then struck Parkins with the bat.

"We're talking 19 years ago," said one juror about the accounts of witnesses.

"They didn't know what to believe," said Brooks' attorney, Robert Ford, to Maino afterwards about the jury. "We did our best. I don't think our best is good enough."

"I'm disappointed. I thought our jurors worked hard," said Deputy District Attorney Christina Arrollado afterwards.

Maino told jurors that they should not feel as if they failed because they could not reach a verdict. He said the trial was an important part of justice.

Parkins was a choir

see NP Murder, pg 5

# An oral history of California according to Abel Silvas

KENDRA SITTON | UPTOWN NEWS

In talks ranging from three minutes at the Founder's Day Festival to two hours over the phone, Abel Silvas owns his role as a storyteller sharing the history of California with a specific focus on the Indigenous peoples who did — and still do — live here.

Storyteller might be the easiest moniker to describe Silvas' role, but it is far from encompassing all he does in the public square as a historian, comedian, dancer, teacher, activist and tribal leader. His educational act, Running Grunion, incorporates his past as a stand-up comedian who works the crowd with songs, a costume, props and even a full mime scene to share the history of his people. His act can be catered to multiple age groups, but currently his audience usually consists of third graders on a field trip to Agua Hedionda Lagoon in Carlsbad. As San Diego celebrates its 250th anniversary, he has performed at many events, including Fiesta Patrias, the Cabrillo Festival, the San Diego Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, and San Diego County Archaeological Society, to name a few.

"Each performance is different. It all depends on the crowd. It all depends on how I feel, but the



Silvas waits for the presentations at Founders Day in Old Town to begin. (Photo by Kendra Sitton)

theme is the same," he explained. He said through it all he is a comedian who shares history. "I never thought I was funny, but when I talk about my history, people thought it was funny because they'd never heard this before."

He initially created the character Running Grunion because elementary schools are required to teach students about Native Americans before and after contact with Europeans. However, when he began researching more history, he became passionate about more than education.

see Abel Silvas, pg 13

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# The future of fashion

DIANA CAVAGNARO | UPTOWN NEWS

The Academy of Our Lady of Peace hosted a STEAM Biodegradable Fashion Show with Julia Daviy on Oct. 31. The event is part of the Architects of Change, a conversation series started by Maria Shriver. The students at the Catholic high school attended one of Shriver's events and decided to adopt the event at OLP beginning in 2016. Since then, the school has seen an increase in the arts and athletics programs along with STEM-related classes, initiatives and programs.

The event began with a welcome from Brigid Hanczor and Katie Cota. The announcer for the show was Valerie Carrillo. Daviy gave a presentation and fashion show sharing her goal of clean

technologies in clothing production, including 3D printing. She is an award-winning, revolutionary, eco-friendly fashion designer and founder of the 3D-Printed Fashion Lab. She showed her first collection last year at NYFW 2018. Her collection was produced on FDM 3D printers and one dress was made on a SLA 3D printer.

After the fashion show, students had a Q&A with Daviy. The facilitators were Wesley Edmonds and Sofia Rojo-Kratochvil. Daviy told everyone that the current business model wouldn't work anymore. In this fast-fashion era, production needs to be turned around with clean technology and sustainable fashion. She creates each garment digitally with 3D technology leaving zero-waste on a large-format printer here in



3D dress (black) and 4D skirt (blue) (Photos by Diana Cavagnaro)



A long dress



Q&A time from the students at OLP.

the U.S. Her 3D-Printed Fashion Lab is the first 3D-printed clothing manufacture model in the U.S.

This inventor and designer has digitally customizable 3D-printed skirts on her website. Customers can go to her website and customize the look they want for the skirt. The Vogue Spring-Summer 2019 Issue put this skirt on the must-have list. In 2019, Daviy was the winner of the 2019 Eluxe Awards as Best Luxury Fashion Brand and also made The Technology Headline's "Top 10 Fastest Growing Fashion and Apparel Solutions Providers to Watch in the Year 2019."

Daviy received a Bachelor in Environmental Science and a master's degree in international economics. She went to the University of Illinois to specialize in 3D printing and the University of Virginia Darden School of Business for specialization in Design Thinking. This education has prepared her to shift the fashion production to a high-tech industry with eco-friendly, cruelty-free, and sustainable-made, fashion that emits almost zero production waste.

The future of fashion is changing rapidly and this cutting-edge fashion show presented garments from

her 3D printers and a royal blue dress that was made on a 4D printer. One blouse was a kaleidoscope of color with sleeves constructed of organic silk. A stunning black dress that looked like delicate lace took 80 hours to construct. Alyse Saucedo finished the closing and thanked everyone for coming. For more information about Julia Daviy, visit juliadaviy.com.

— Diana Cavagnaro is an internationally renowned couture milliner based in the historic Gaslamp Quarter. Learn more about our hat designer, teacher and blogger at DianaCavagnaro.com.❖

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# Review: ‘Mamma Mia!’

JEAN LOWERISON | UPTOWN NEWS

If you're in the mood for a mini-vacation on a small, sunny Greek isle, brush up on your favorite ABBA tunes and grab a ticket to Coronado Playhouse's joyous, tuneful version of "Mamma Mia!"

Playing through Dec. 15 and wonderfully cast (often against type) by director Jennie Gray Connard, this show will have you humming along and wanting to dance as you watch the wedding preparations for 20-year-old Sophie (Olivia Lucci), daughter of Donna (Chrissy Burns), and groom-to-be Sky (Connor Boyd).

Donna, who seems to have had a colorful past, owns a successful hotel/taverna on the island. The place was designed by one brief lover named Sam, an architect who in fact designed Donna's island digs. He's also the one she wanted to marry, but he had the effrontery to go off and marry someone else instead.

At more or less the same time, Donna was playing around with a British banker named Harry and a writer named Bill.

Sophie wants her dad to walk her down the aisle. The problem is that no one,

## The details

"Mamma Mia!" plays through Dec. 15, 2019 at the Coronado Playhouse, 1835 Strand Way, Coronado. Thursday through Saturday at 8 p.m.; Sunday at 2 p.m. Tickets: 619-435-4856 or coronadoplayhouse.com

including Donna, knows which of the above-mentioned trio is Sophie's father. So the bride-to-be invited all three (in Donna's name) — without telling her. Sam is played by Barron Henzel; Harry by Thomas Fitzpatrick; and Bill by Steven Jensen. All are pitch-perfect.

Also along for the ride are Donna's old band buddies Tanya (Dawn Marie Zuniga-Williams) and Rosie (Heather Deerfield). Back in those distant high school days, they were known as Donna and the Dynamos. Tanya has since married rich and dresses accordingly. Rosie has stayed single, but she's getting to the point where hooking up sounds like a good idea.

Hooking up is part of what

this show is about. There are lots of possibilities here, but the unexpected one (and my favorite) is Pepper (Tyler Kirk), who works at the taverna. He's young, tall and ripped, knows it, and decides to throw himself at middle-aged redhead Tanya, who sings a great song called "Does Your Mother Know?" He's a stitch.

And oh yes, the Dynamos get together again for a few well-chosen songs. Mostly, in fact, this show is about those toe-tapping ABBA ditties, which require at least eight good singers. Coronado's got 'em, along with a boffo six-man band led by Kirk Valles, and three extra "pit singers."

Bravo to director Connard for against-type casting here. These folks don't all look like Meryl Streep or Pierce Brosnan, but that only makes their characters more real and much more relatable.

Connard also tosses in amusing blocking touches. The serviceable, easily reconfigurable dual-level set (by Shaun Tuazon-Martin) has one large upstairs door and one smaller, closet door used to good effect when chorus chime-ins are required. I'll leave you to find out what I'm talking about.

Bravo to Marcene Drysdale

for the terrific costumes, especially those flashy skin-tight numbers for Donna and the Dynamos. And to lighting designers Josh Olmstead and Anthony Zelig and sound designer Jack Connard.

Love, lost and found on a Greek island. What a great idea for a musical. Maybe

that's why "Mamma Mia!" ran 14 years on Broadway. Here's your chance to see a particularly fine production of this delightful show.

—Jean Lowerison is a long-standing member of the San Diego Theatre Critics Circle and can be reached at [infodame@gmail.com](mailto:infodame@gmail.com).✧

## FROM PAGE 3 NP MURDER

member at the Metropolitan Community Church when it was located on 30th Street in North Park. Rev. Dan Koeshall, who was music director at the time, recalled Parkins having "the most beautiful Irish tenor voice."

Koeshall, who is now senior pastor of the church currently in Clairemont, said, "I'm still awaiting justice," upon learning of the mistrial and new trial date.

Jurors appeared to be moved when they heard the testimony of Cordell Hill, Parkins' partner of 20 years. Hill testified Parkins never regained consciousness before he died two days later in a hospital.

Arrollado asked jurors to convict Brooks of first-degree murder with the special circumstance of murder during a robbery. If convicted of those

charges, he would face a term of life in prison without the possibility of parole.

Ford asked jurors to acquit Brooks outright, and referred to Bell and Brown as "the actual murderers." Ford conceded that Brooks took the wallet since his DNA was left in the victim's pants pocket. But he said the DNA didn't show who swung the bat. Several bats were examined, but no DNA was found on them.

Maino suggested the possibility of a plea agreement with Brooks, and Ford said his "standing offer" is for a guilty plea to robbery with the dismissal of a murder charge. That is the same plea agreement that Brown has.

Brooks, Bell, and Brown remain in jail.

"It's so sad when the most vulnerable of us are senselessly brutalized," said Koeshall. "May we be ever vigilant in looking out for each other."

— Neal Putnam is a local court reporter.✧

## SENIOR BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

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# It's time to rein in the high cost of prescription drugs

## District 53 Dispatch

Susan A. Davis



Across America, seniors and families are struggling to afford the prescription drugs they need to stay healthy. Three in 10 adults reported not taking their medicines as prescribed at some point in the past year due to cost.

Prices for more than 3,400 drugs jumped 17 percent in the first six months of 2019. Between 2011 and 2016, prescription drug spending in the United States grew more than 2.5 times inflation.

The soaring cost of insulin provides one of the starkest examples of broken drug pricing.

More than 100 million Americans are diabetic or pre-diabetic and more than \$300 billion per year is spent on treating diabetes, making it the disease category with the highest spending.

Even though insulin was discovered in 1922, its inflation-adjusted per-unit price has almost tripled between the 1990s and 2014. In the United States, insulin costs per patient have nearly doubled from 2012 to 2016.

These price spikes are driving up health insurance premiums and creating unaffordable costs for taxpayers who finance Medicare and Medicaid.

My constituents share their stories with me every single day about the struggles they face to get the life-saving medications they need.

A 68-year-old man with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), a condition that makes breathing very difficult, wrote me about his experience with trying to pay for his medication. He requires an inhaler to open up his

airways and pays more than \$400 for a month's supply of the drug to treat his condition.

A father told me about his trouble in affording his daughter's cystic fibrosis medication. He wants Congress to look at ways to bring down prices. He is also very aware of the need for innovation and research to discover new drugs.

I agree that lowering drug prices cannot come at the expense of innovation. We can do both. One thing is for sure: the current system is simply unsustainable and Congress needs to take action.

The Lower Drug Costs Now Act (HR 3) was introduced and would rein in out-of-control drug prices and reinvest those savings back into research and development.

The main provision of HR 3 would give the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) broad power to negotiate lower drug prices for all Americans. The HHS secretary would be empowered to negotiate up to 250 drugs per year, drawn from a refilling list of the most costly drugs in the U.S.

Drugs representing more than half of all Medicare Part D spending, covering tens of millions of patients, would be subject to the negotiation process – including insulin.

These reduced drug prices would also be available to people with private insurance, which is critical to the more than 150 million Americans who get their health insurance through their employer.

The Lower Drug Costs Now Act strengthens and improves Medicare. Seniors will see a new \$2,000 out-of-pocket limit on prescription drug costs. It also reverses years of unfair price hikes for thousands of drugs in Medicare.

Currently there is no cap on out-of-pocket expenses for Medicare Part D enrollees. In 2017, 1 million Part D enrollees had average annual out-of-pocket costs exceeding \$3,200.

The Congressional Budget Office and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services both report that HR 3 would save \$345 billion for Medicare Part D over the 10 years. Over the same time period, it would also save \$46 billion in health care costs for private employers and \$55 billion for the American people.

It's these savings that will continue to fuel innovation, particularly in San Diego. Each year, our region gets about \$800 million in federal dollars from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and San Diego is a leader in innovative research.

In fact, much of the research and development driving the search for new breakthroughs isn't paid for by drug companies, it's paid for by American taxpayers through federal funding for the NIH and other grants.

Action to lower prescription drugs is long overdue. Maintaining the status quo is simply not an option. The House of Representatives is working hard to bring relief to the American people. The Lower Drug Costs Now Act has the potential to provide that relief while directing resources toward innovation to discover the latest treatments and cures.

— 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.❖

# Atkins: Addressing the housing crisis

## Notes from Toni

Toni G. Atkins



California's housing crisis is plunging families and individuals into poverty, threatening our children's futures, splitting up families, making it difficult for businesses to attract and retain talent, and burdening our economy. Housing instability sends ripples throughout all facets of our society, affecting education, physical and mental health, transportation, and climate action.

I recognized this growing problem more than 20 years ago while working as a policy aide at the city level and began working to strengthen San Diego's affordable-housing efforts after being elected to the City Council.

The governor and the Legislature gave the issue the sense of urgency it demanded in 2017, when we passed a package of 15 bills that addressed the crisis with a mix of regulatory reform and revenue measures, including my Senate Bill 2, which created a permanent source of funding for affordable housing.

In 2018, we followed up with additional measures to remove barriers in the way of housing construction, as well as significant budget funding for communities throughout the state to combat homelessness. That funding has begun making its way to projects and programs in the San Diego region aimed at connecting homeless residents with housing and preventing those at risk from falling into homelessness.

This year, we continued our progress with additional regulatory reform, protections against unreasonable evictions and exorbitant rent increases, and another \$2.5 billion to address homelessness and housing instability, the largest such direct investment in state history.

But even before 2017, the state was increasing its investments in targeted housing programs that have resulted in thousands of new affordable homes.

Since 2015, the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities program that I was proud to champion as Assembly speaker has used proceeds from our innovative cap and trade system to create more than 9,000 affordable homes near transit, including more than 1,000 in San Diego. The latest project in San Diego to receive such funding is one at 13th and Broadway

in East Village that will provide 273 apartments with supportive services for people experiencing homelessness.

And thanks to the voters who passed Proposition 41 in 2014, the Veterans Housing and Homelessness Program (VHHP) has funded nearly 2,600 new homes for struggling veterans, including 323 in San Diego County. A great VHHP-funded project is Zephyr Apartments in Grantville, which opened earlier this year, providing 84 homes with supportive services and close access to the trolley.

Going forward, these are the kinds of results I'll be looking for as our more recently passed measures are implemented, and I'll be monitoring them closely to ensure that they are effective.

At the same time, I will be intimately involved in efforts to stimulate the production of the new middle- and lower-income housing that is so desperately needed along our transit corridors and near job centers, making sure that residents in potentially affected communities are key participants in the conversation.

— Toni G. Atkins represents District 39 in the California Senate. Follow her on Twitter @SenToniAtkins.❖



# Smart choices for your employee benefits

**Uptown Money**  
Steve Doster



Open enrollment for employee benefits is happening right now at most companies. Before tossing aside the large package of materials, take the time to understand and choose your employee benefits wisely. Many employers offer nice benefits that can save money and help protect your future. However, understanding all those options can be very confusing!

## Health insurance

This benefit is hopefully something you get automatically at work. If not, go to [www.CoveredCA.com](http://www.CoveredCA.com) to sign up for health insurance. Even perfectly healthy people can get sick, break an arm, or smash a finger. It's a personal choice between selecting a PPO or a less expensive HMO plan. Regardless of which you choose, we generally recommend that you consider a high-deductible plan for employees. This will allow you to open a health savings account (HSA) where you can contribute pre-tax money to pay for medical expenses. For self-employed people, however, a low-deductible plan might be more beneficial because

the premiums are 50% deductible above-the-line, which means you are not required to itemize deductions to get this health insurance premium deduction.

## Retirement savings

Most larger companies will match part or all your contribution to a retirement savings account like a 401(k), 403(b), or TSP. The most common employer match is a 50% match on the first 6% of wages you contribute. That is a 3% bonus every year — don't pass up free money! Always contribute enough to get the full match.

## Short-term disability insurance

Short-term disabilities are typically covered by sick pay or state disability programs. There is no need to buy additional coverage. It's expensive and you should already have emergency cash set aside to cover three to six months of pay. Instead of getting this insurance, we recommend saving into an emergency fund.

## Long-term disability insurance

You need this coverage! It protects future earnings if you become disabled for more than six months. A policy through work is usually cheaper than getting

an individual policy. If you are self-employed, look for a large professional organization that offers long-term disability coverage as a membership benefit. For example, a financial planner can join the National Association of Personal Financial Advisors and get long-term disability insurance through the organization. Almost every occupation has a national association and many of these organizations offer long-term disability insurance at affordable rates.

## Life insurance

Many large employers offer some free life insurance as a benefit. Typically, the benefit is one or two times your salary. In general, you don't need life insurance if you don't have dependents, but if it's free through your employer, take it. There might also be an option to get additional coverage for a monthly cost. This can be a great option if you need the insurance. However, you might want to consider an individual term life policy to ensure you have coverage if you change jobs.

## Group legal

Legal insurance isn't offered everywhere. If your employer offers it, consider signing up if you don't have your estate documents. You'll save several hundred dollars on estate documents by using

a group legal benefit.

## Dependent care flex spending account

Use this account to pay for child care costs (or any dependent) using pre-tax money. It will save you money if you understand the rules. Be careful of the "use-it-or-lose-it" provisions. The account needs to be fully spent each year — otherwise you forfeit any unused balance.

These are the primary employee benefits offered by most companies. You can download our employee benefits guide on our blog (website is below) to get

more detailed information on your employee benefits. Set aside a couple of hours to really understand your employee benefits to take full advantage of what your employer offers.

— Steve Doster, CFP is the financial planning manager at Rowling & Associates — a fee-only wealth management and CPA firm helping individuals create a worry-free financial life. Rowling & Associates works to a fiduciary standard of care helping people with their taxes, investments, and financial planning. Read more articles at [www.rowling.com/blog](http://www.rowling.com/blog).

# Granddaughter recalls San Diego Zoo's first female director who lived in the area

JILL DIAMOND | UPTOWN NEWS

Among the many memorable strong women in San Diego over the decades was Belle Benchley, a former bookkeeper for the San Diego Zoo from 1927 to 1953 and who later became the zoo's first female director.

According to her paternal granddaughter Laurel Benchley Costello who resides in San Diego: "After the turnover of several male directors or secretaries, Dr. Harry Wegeforth, the founder of the zoo, gave up looking for the right man because he knew who he wanted, even though there had never been a woman head of a zoo, he chose my grandmother.

"You might as well run the place," Costello said he told her grandmother, "You're already doing it anyway."

And she did.

Benchley was the only female zoo director for all her tenure, which included "guiding the zoo through the Great Depression and the Second World War," Costello said.

## Who was Belle?

In 1925, Belle J. Benchley was a divorced homemaker with a son to raise. She returned from Fullerton to her parents in Ocean Beach and decided to find work



Former zoo director Belle Benchley with her family (Photo courtesy Laurel Costello)

with the city of San Diego. She was later hired as a temporary bookkeeper by Wegeforth, who at the time had a home in Bankers Hill, and "never let her leave."

During her time at with the zoo, she was the executive secretary (basically director) where she became immensely proud of her work, the San Diego Zoo and of the staff. In this role, she ran the operations of the zoo, did the public relations and public speaking, which Dr. Harry hated, and wrote and edited ZooNooZ for many years, her granddaughter said.

Benchley also toured the entire grounds of the zoo daily by car looking for any problems. She nurtured a staff dedicated to the

zoo and most importantly in her mind, the animals.

"As the only woman zoo director during her entire career, she became world-famous. She guested on many radio shows and traveled to meetings of zoo directors," Costello said.

Benchley also had a great sense of humor unless she thought the zoo was being short-changed in some way. She was a great businesswoman, and according to Costello, Benchley kept the zoo afloat through the Great Depression and World War II by sharp trading and watching the budget like a hawk.

see zoo, pg 8

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LA JOLLA PLAYHOUSE



FROM PAGE 7

## ZOO

When she retired, the city of San Diego gave her a retirement party with 800 people and a trip around the world where she got the gift that meant so much to her — “a watch from the zoo staff with the inscription ‘From your fellow employees.’”

“She believed she was the coordinator and coach of a team, not a dictator. Although she was not shy about making the hard decisions, her door was always open,” Costello said.

## Staying in the area

In the 1940s, her grandma moved to a house in Mission Hills at 4127 Palmetto Way, which is still standing among its four neighbors, at least one of which qualifies for Mills Act status.

A strong woman who Benchley Costello always looked up to, she saw her grandma often when she was growing up in the San Diego area.

“We saw her several times a month. When I was a child in Julian, we drove down to Mission Hills to see her. When we moved to Ocean Beach, it was probably about the same amount, but the drive was less memorable,” Costello, now 72, recalled.

Costello said she would describe her grandmother as “intelligent, articulate, spine of steel, no-nonsense, had tons of



Benchley with koalas (Photos courtesy Laurel Costello)

friends both in the industry and socially.”

“She loved and understood animals and they loved her, especially the primates. When I was a kid, she would take me around the zoo. At the old chain link monkey cages, they would get excited at her approach. She would get close to the cage and talk to them in baby talk. They would get close to her and then they would start showing off and doing all their tricks. Visitors would be looking from the monkeys to her in amazement,” Costello said.

When asked what made her grandmother so independent and strong, Costello said it was perhaps being the next oldest in a family of eight children with a strong mother.

“... And I think San Diego

was not as closed-minded about women's roles as more civilized areas. She was born on a farm and when my grandmother was a child on Point Loma, most of it was open land with only a dirt road connecting it to the rest of San Diego [the historic Jennings House on Rosecrans and Talbot was owned by her uncle and her family may have lived in it at some point].

“She must have been a great multitasker because she never knew what the day would bring,” Costello said.

Benchley died on Dec. 17, 1973, after about five-six years of dementia but did leave a wonderful legacy, Costello added.

“Her legacy at the zoo would be that the animals are more important and valuable than

the visitors. She worked to get rid of the circus atmosphere and attitude of early zoos, to treat the animals with dignity and as individuals, except for the sea lion shows, which she instigated in 1928.

“The zoo was one of the first to be successful in breeding many types of animals. In the early 1950s, she tried to get some pairs of the California condors, which were already in trouble. They had successfully bred Peruvian condors. Opposition from certain groups prevented the zoo from rebuilding the species.

“Under her watch, the zoo became the biggest and one of the best in the world and was world-famous,” she said.

Costello added her

grandmother was well known in San Diego and remains so.

“Even in the '60s, people would ask me if I was related to her when they heard the name ‘Benchley.’ She was the original Joan Embry. She would talk to any group that asked her and often took Bong the cheetah or another animal with her by herself,” Costello recalled.

In addition to her zoo role, her grandmother wrote three adult books about the zoo and one children's book: “My Life in a Man-Made Jungle,” “My Friends the Apes,” “My Animal Babies,” and “Shirley Visits the Zoo.”

— Jill Diamond is a local freelance writer with a penchant for history.❖



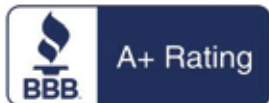
Benchley with a tapir named Mickey in either 1934 or 1935.



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# Rosie O'Grady's changes hands

DAVE SCHWAB | UPTOWN NEWS

Everybody's favorite Irish pub in Normal Heights, Rosie O'Grady's, has changed ownership.

But not to worry. The pope is still Catholic — and Rosie's will remain Irish.

Since Nov. 4, the ever-popular watering hole at 3402 Adams Ave., which always keeps a running tally of days left until St. Patrick's Day, has belonged to the Social Syndicate restaurant development group.

Since its founding in 2014, Ocean Beach-based Social Syndicate has established itself as a leader in revitalizing and/or creating casual neighborhood concepts.

With more than 45 years of collective experience among its governing board, Rosie's is the most recent acquisition in Social Syndicate's growing stable of nine other eateries. Those venues include: Bootlegger on Market Street; Wonderland Ocean Pub and OB Surf Lodge in Ocean Beach; The Local Pacific Beach and The Local Eatery & Drinking Hole in the Gaslamp Quarter; Blue Water Seafood on India Street Downtown; Grand Ole BBQ in Flinn Springs in East County; and The Rabbit Hole in Normal Heights.

Jon Conklin, new general manager at Rosie's, said its acquisition

was a "no-brainer."

"Rosie O'Grady's has a wonderful identity, from its dive bar appeal and live-music culture to its Chicago vibes and neighborhood legacy, that we would be silly to touch," noted Conklin. "Rosie O'Grady's is staying Rosie O'Grady's: Chicago-style Irish dive, through and through. Any changes that we do will only enhance what is already amazing."

Will there still be live music?

"Absolutely," answered Conklin. "The music culture at Rosie O'Grady's is so eclectic. You can go from jazz, to old school hip-hop, to folk music on any given night. Tuesdays are truly awesome as we have funk night which features our in-house Hammond organ."

Pointing out Normal Heights "has a very balanced collection of bars and restaurants," Conklin added, "Our niche aims to cater to everyone, but especially those who are local to 92116. Many people within the neighborhood have chosen to call Rosie's theirs, and we want to make sure it stays that way."

Social Syndicate CEO Brendan Huffman said the idea is not to make wholesale changes, but to burnish the image of venues acquired by his restaurant group.

"We're always very sensitive to all the heart and soul that was

given to the previous concept," said Huffman. "The legacy is paramount when intentionality is authentic. Our intention is to grow roots in the community and continue the hard work from our predecessor. Rosie's is no different, as we've retained the name and a few employees as well. This place was/is a classic."

"It was time for us to retire, my husband is 77 and I'm 83," said Barbara Betz, who, along with Michael Rammelsberg, had owned a furniture store in Chicago before coming out to San Diego and purchasing Rosie's in 2002. "Our customers, they all thought of us as mom and pop. They all loved Rosie's."

Betz said Rosie's has been an Irish place since Ron Stout, an attorney and big Notre Dame fan, purchased it in 1984. Prior to Stout's ownership, Betz described Rosie's as being "not a very nice place, a dive bar, but Stout changed that."

One of many improvements made by Betz/Rimmelsberg was to turn the small annex bar in the rear of Rosie's into a full-blown wine bar.

"We did a lot of things to keep the history and the Irish tradition alive," said Betz. "Being from Chicago, we turned it into a place for Cubs and Bears fans. We were eclectic. But at the same time, we tried not to take away the



(Photo by Kendra Sitton)

personality of the bar. It's a landmark. It's a legend."

A farewell party was held recently for Rosie's outgoing owners on a Sunday night. Betz said it reminded her of "a lot of good times and a lot of good friends over the years."

On goodbye night, Betz said Rosie's "was taken over by our customers, who, after a few drinks, made off with a lot of our memorabilia, took a chunk of it home with them." But she added good-naturedly, "We've retrieved quite a bit of it."

Betz pointed out Rosie's has a great deal of "friendly" competition with numerous other bars

and restaurants lining Adams Avenue.

Mick Ward, co-owner of the Ould Sod Irish pub across the street and who started out bartending at Rosie's in the '80s, agreed.

"It's all good," noted Ward, an Irish native. "Mike and Barbara are great people. We complement each other for sure. We've had a great relationship. All the bars get on. It's a great neighborhood."

Huffman noted Rosie's customer base "resides primarily either north or south of Adams Avenue and takes a lot of pride in

see Rosie's stays, pg 16

FROM PAGE 1

## MOPA FILMS

The theater itself is also beautiful: the ceiling is covered in tiny LED lights that give the impression of starlight. It can seat nearly 230 people. "It also has state-of-the-art facilities, projection booth, sound system," Linde said.

While Human Rights Watch and the Italian Film Fest are the museum's biggest events of the year, its other partnerships include screening movies for International Rescue Mission, the GI Film Festival SD, the Coming of Age Film Festival, and San Diego Film Week. In November alone, MOPA partnered with the Arab Film Festival for a special screening of an animated feature vying for an Oscar and is hosting three films for the San Diego Asian Film Festival on Nov. 16.

Uptown News was at the screening of "The Tower" at MOPA and saw "Heavy Craving" at UCSD before it came to Balboa Park.

### 'The Tower'

"The Tower" is an animated debut feature from Norwegian director Mats Grorud depicting a Palestinian refugee in Lebanon learning about her family history from three previous generations of refugees.

The film took eight years to

complete and is based off the year Grorud spent living in a refugee camp in Lebanon. Before the film began, he explained that during his year there teaching animation to kids, he felt like he was constantly given gifts by friends he'd made. He sees the film as his gift back to them.

The majority of the film is in clay-mation, but it dabbles in other mediums: flashbacks are done in classic hand-drawn animation and a few times, real film is used. At one point, the main character — a young girl named Wardi — flips through family photos. Grorud explained those photos were actually taken by his mother in the 1980s when she visited the refugee camps each year to provide medical care. It was her stories from that time that inspired him to go to the camps himself when he had the opportunity.

Watching claymation requires patience — movements are slow and frames are less frequent than what audience members are used to. The excellent sound mixing made the experience enthralling and hard to look away from. In addition, the detailed settings for the clay dolls had impressive lighting. The shadows and rays of light communicated emotion and imparted a sense of verisimilitude.

While beautiful and containing a deep emotional core, the film's primary purpose seems to be education. As Wardi goes up each level of her family's tower, and to a new generation of her family, audiences from outside

Palestine are walked through Nakba Day (which means "Day of the Catastrophe" — when Israeli forces kicked out two-thirds of Palestinians from their ancestral homes), the poverty in refugee camps, rebellions to take back Israel, and Lebanese militias attacking the camps.

Despite its accessibility to Western audiences, Palestinians in attendance praised Grorud's depiction of the refugee camp. One man said he was amazed by the tiny details included that made the film so accurate. Some details would be obvious to people who only briefly visited — the gardens on upper stories of houses, the men who compete for the best hoard of pigeons on the roof — but others are more intricate and might be missed by a Western audience.

Attendees got emotional as they thanked the filmmaker for capturing the most minute details of what their childhood had been like growing up in the camps. The last question of the night came from a man who worried that, like Wardi, there were children who did not know the history of their people. Do they know, he asked, are they being taught? Grorud explained that the most fictional conceit of the plot was that a child around 9 or 10 years old would not know the story of the Day of the Catastrophe. Oral histories are a part of daily life in the camps according to Grorud, so each child, even ones younger

than Wardi, would already know the story.

Grorud was surprisingly candid in the Q&A: he explained what he would change about this film and that his next project will be about climate change since it is up to a Palestinian director to make the next film focusing on the plight of refugees.

One of his regrets is giving the majority of the animated flashbacks to men in Wardi's family. He said women are the backbone keeping the family together. In some ways, the film also shows why men would have more time to share their experiences with a child.. The men in the household are free to be depressed and go mad because the women are both the economic providers and household managers of the family. Meanwhile, the women take more jobs to ensure Wardi can stay in school and feed her pigeon-raising uncle who refuses to leave the roof. Reminiscing is a privilege.

In another place, he explained a line of dialogue that had been unclear. Wardi's aunt talks about killing on both sides but what she is referring to is violence between Lebanese militias and Palestinian refugees. It could be misconstrued to mean there is an equal amount of violence between Israelis and Palestinians though, to which Grorud clarified no Palestinian would accept as true or accurate.

One audience member said Grorud deserved a Nobel Prize.

Grorud laughed and said the only major award competition the film has been entered in is for the Academy Awards, where he is seeking a nomination in a race against more than 30 other foreign films.

### 'Heavy Craving'

"Heavy Craving" will have its second showing of the Asian Film Festival at MOPA on Saturday, Nov. 16. The Taiwanese film is a comedy about a fat lunch lady facing pressure to change her body so she can better fit in with society and finally pursue her dream of being a chef. The debut film was deeply personal for director Pei-Ju Hsieh, who grew up chubby and shamed by her family.

It took the 2019 Taipei Film Festival by storm and won the Audience Choice Award. It has since been making rounds at other film festivals.

As noted by a presenter before the film showed at UCSD on Nov. 9, Taiwanese comedies rarely make it to an international audience. That renown is generally reserved for Taiwan's acclaimed LGBTQ films like "Blue Gate Crossing," "Girlfriend Boyfriend" and "The Wedding Banquet" — made by the filmmaker behind "Brokeback Mountain." Further cementing its place as a leader of queer filmmaking, Taiwan hosts the annual Taiwan International Queer Film Festival and streaming

see MOPA films, pg 13





The long-awaited **Dunkin' Donuts** in Hillcrest has opened in the form of a mini outlet with a 24-hour drive-thru window. The chain took over the former **Los Panchos Taco Shop**, which reopened a couple weeks ago one address away as a sit-down eatery



The new location of Dunkin' Donuts in Hillcrest offers about 20 varieties of donuts. (Photo by Frank Sabatini Jr.)

with a full bar. On opening day, Nov. 9, the new Dunkin' awarded the first 100 customers free coffee for a year. As expected, lines were long and donuts were flying. 405 Washington St., dunkindonuts.com.



Oaxaca-inspired tacos at Tahona (Contour PR)

**Tahona Bar** in Old Town celebrates its one-year anniversary through Nov. 17 with a pop-up menu focusing on Oaxaca mole used in a trio of tacos, as well as mezcal pairings for each of the tacos. On the 17th, a special "Sunday-funday" style brunch will be held from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. The establishment also recently opened a hidden speakeasy within its confines called Oculito 477. Entry into it requires reservations. 2414 San Diego Ave., 619-255-2090, tahonabar.com.

## RESTAURANT SPOTLIGHT

### Sushi Deli

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Visit us at either of our two locations: Sushi Deli 1, 228 W. Washington St. in Mission Hills or Sushi Deli 3, 7986 Armour St. in Kearny Mesa.

Fast food alert: **Popeye's Louisiana Kitchen** will open its first-ever Uptown location in the coming month, at 2810 El Cajon Blvd. in North Park. According to a rep, the company is racing to finish construction of the space as the mania persists over its recently relaunched fried chicken sandwich, which features a breaded breast filet, two pickles and a smear of mayo.

At present, the closest Popeye's is located several miles away at 6095 El Cajon Blvd. in East San Diego. There, and at other outlying locations, lines have



Demand is running high for this chicken sandwich. (Photo by Frank Sabatini Jr.)

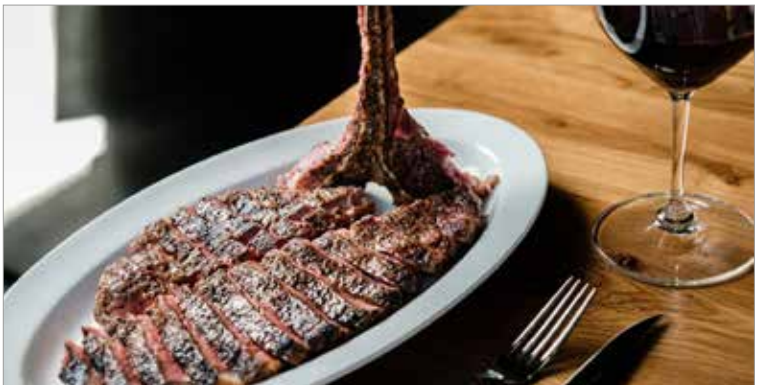
been out the door for the hyped chicken sandwich, which this writer found underwhelming. popeyes.com.

**Cohn Restaurant Group** celebrates the 22nd anniversary of a local nonprofit it helped establish: The Garfield High School Foundation's culinary arts program.

The effort gives at-risk youth opportunities to obtain skills in the restaurant/hospitality industries. This year's fundraising Thanksgiving luncheon will be held from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Nov. 14, at **The Prado**

in Balboa Park. It begins with tray-passed appetizers before executive chef Jonathan Hale leads students in serving a banquet-style meal.

The cost is \$60 per person or \$500 for tables of 10. All proceeds from the event go to the foundation. Tickets can be purchased through garfieldhshsfoundation-sandiego@gmail.com. 1549 El Prado, 619-557-9441, cohnrestaurants.com.



A steakhouse sizzles into Uptown. (Chemistry PR)

Get your steak-and-martini fix at the newly opened **Rare Society** in University Heights. The venture marks a rebranding of **Hundred Proof** by Trust Restaurant Group.

Chef Brad Wise's menu spotlights several cuts of steak along with Scottish salmon, Pacific swordfish and dry-aged pork chops. He also offers classic and modern side dishes such as whipped potatoes, roasted asparagus and cheesy broccoli. Guests

will also find appetizers such as steamed clams, shrimp cocktail and roasted bone marrow.

Classic cocktails, beer and select wines are available as well.

The cozy atmosphere incorporates swanky midcentury elements while maintaining a neighborhood feel. Dinner is served from 5 to 10 p.m. Wednesday through Monday. 4130 Park Blvd., 619-501-6404, raresocietysd.com.



Chef Accursio Lota is preparing to launch a restaurant in North Park. (Courtesy photo)

Look for artisanal pastas made with ancient grains imported from Sicily, plus oxtail-parship "raviolini" in orange confit, lasagna draped in Bolognese and bechamel sauce, and more at the upcoming **Cori Pastificio Trattoria** in North Park.

Acclaimed chef Accursio Lota plans to open the restaurant in early December, with the aim of "recreating the feeling on my homeland, Sicily." His seasonally driven menu will be complemented by a wine list featuring labels from small Italian wineries. An open kitchen will allow guests to interact with Lota and his team as they roll out small batches of pasta and prepare other foods.

The restaurant takes over the space previously occupied by **Cardamom Cafe & Bakery**. 2977 Upas St., coripasta.com.

Entrepreneur Louie Chau, of **Lotus Garden Restaurant** in City Heights, has opened **Ska Bar & Restaurant** in a mixed-use structure in Normal Heights. The kitchen cranks out modern Asian fare such as firecracker shrimp and bulgogi french fries while the bar slings creative cocktails with tropical twists. The ground-floor establishment also features a rooftop lounge. 2350 Adams Ave.

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



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# Pizza dilemma

## Restaurant Review

Frank Sabatini Jr.



Farewell Project Pie. Hello Patxi's.

The replacement pizzeria is just getting off the ground since opening a Hillcrest location, which marks the San Diego debut of what is pronounced "Pah-cheez." But articulating the eatery's brand name is only the first head-scratching puzzle you might encounter when dropping in for a meal.

The company has nearly 20 locations along the West Coast, with a few in Colorado. It was founded 15 years ago in the Bay Area by Francisco "Patxi" Azpiroz and his friend, Bill Freeman, both passionate pizza guys.

Some years later, the slow-growing chain came under the ownership of KarpReilly LLC until it was purchased last year by Los Angeles-based Elite Restaurant Group. That company also owns Slater's 50/50 and Daphne's Greek restaurants.

Elite soon absorbed the three remaining locations of Project Pie — in Hillcrest, East Lake and Chula Vista with the intention of converting them into Patxi's. The latter two are still in transition.

On this exploratory visit, I found Patxi's service concept and pizza options to be as confusing as its evolution. For starters, it doesn't aspire to be Project Pie, where customers queued up along an assembly-line counter of pizza makers while pointing to the toppings they wanted.

And that's just fine, except the counter displaying various ingredients is still in place. It's just no longer approachable as staffers politely ask you to grab a table and order from a server — provided they're not plating food, fulfilling takeout orders, processing payments, etc.

Then there's the issue of pizza

styles, which might seem unclear to some.

The deep-dish options are obvious. They're built like old-fashion fruit pies, with high-sided bottom crusts and sheaths of dough on top, thus capturing a host of savory ingredients in the middle, including cheese. We ordered a couple of slices with pepperoni, mushrooms and black olives.

In keeping with tradition, the red sauce goes on top, although Chicago transplants might take issue with the breadiness of the dough, which lacked that coveted flaky texture essential to classic deep-dish pizzas. For this New York State native, I didn't care so much.

The dine-in menus list "pan pizzas" without description. On the to-go and website menus, the pan-crust option isn't even mentioned.

We were told those pizzas employ the same dough as the deep-dish pies, but that the dough is used only on the bottom and given a cornmeal dusting for added texture.

Then, depending again what menu you read, one shows an intermingled category for "thin crust" and "Neapolitan" pizzas. Technically speaking, Patxi's makes neither — at least not at this location.

We ordered a 10-inch "thin-crust/Neapolitan" pie flaunting excellent fennel-garlic sausage, herbed ricotta, mozzarella and bright-tasting red sauce made supposedly in-house.

We loved the crust, but it wasn't classically thin. Nor was the overall pizza Neapolitan-style, which requires specific criteria such as sauce made from hand-crushed tomatoes (preferably the San Marzano variety); the use of fresh buffalo mozzarella; and a bake time of 90 seconds or less in ovens kept at a minimum of 800 degrees.

We were informed the ovens used expressly for the thin/Neapolitan pizzas at Patxi's operate at 600 degrees. As for the

## Patxi's

3888 Fourth Ave.  
(Hillcrest)

619-501-8000,  
patxispizza.com

Prices: Soups, salads and starters, \$5 to \$12; sandwiches, \$10; deep-dish pizzas, \$22 to \$35; standard-crust pizzas, \$15 to \$29

ingredient rules, my taste buds told me they're not fully followed.

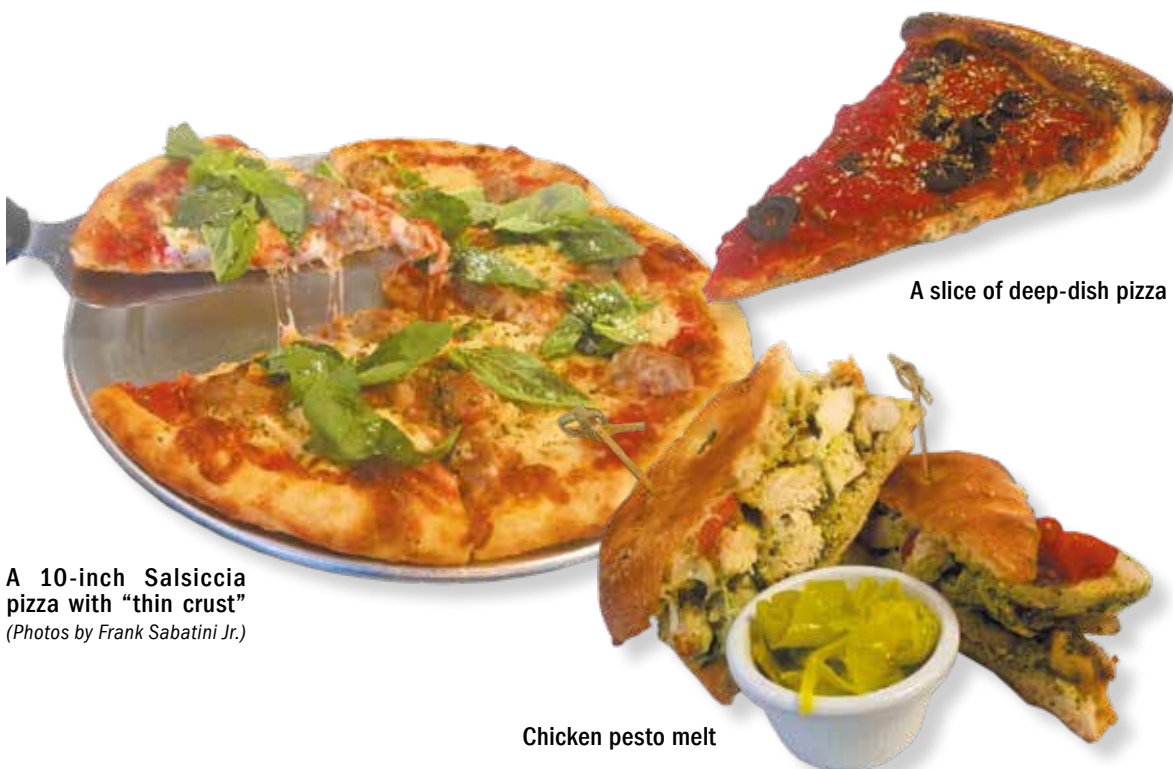
But a fine pizza it was, much like I remember how standard-crust pizzas tasted before they got hoity-toity and wildly creative. The pie took about 12 minutes to cook, whereby a whole deep-dish pizza bakes for nearly 40 minutes inside a slightly lower-temperature oven.

Appetizers, salads and sandwiches are also available. A butter lettuce salad with cherished Point Reyes bleu cheese, bacon crumbles, and scant buttermilk-ranch dressing was delightful. Ditto for the well-endowed chicken pesto melt with its show-stealing light and herby focaccia bread.

Service was friendly, but clumsy and disjointed. At this early stage in the game since opening last month, a concrete system is lacking. Servers wandered across all sections of the bright, spacious dining room and into the open kitchen unsure at times of who was doing what. And incoming customers sensed that confusion when figuring out how and where to place their orders.

But if you can muster up an extra dose of patience until such improvements are made, your reward will be flavorful Italian-inspired food that sticks to your ribs and offers a decent bang for the buck.

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



A 10-inch Salsiccia pizza with "thin crust"  
(Photos by Frank Sabatini Jr.)

A slice of deep-dish pizza

Chicken pesto melt

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Edward Watts and Tommy Martinez. Photo by Jim Cox.  
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# UPTOWN CALENDAR

## Friday, Nov. 15

### Shakespeare's 'Hamlet'

Gather in OLP's outdoor amphitheater for an evening of Shakespeare in the Park! Please join us this November as The Academy of Our Lady of Peace presents William Shakespeare's "Hamlet." Due to construction, this performance will be held outdoors in our amphitheater. In an effort to provide more comfortable seating, stadium chairs and cushions will be sold at the event. Supplies are limited, so they will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis. We encourage you to bring blankets and sweaters to stay warm and comfortable during the show. Tickets are \$8-\$12. Academy of Our Lady of Peace, 4860 Oregon St. Nov. 15-16 at 6 p.m.

### Four fabulous female-fronted bands!

Julia Sage & The Bad Hombres at 8 p.m. Sometimes Julie at 9 p.m. Donna Larson & The Messengers at 10 p.m. Alicia Previn Band at 11 p.m. Come out for a night of music at Queen Bee's, 3925 Ohio St. Tickets are \$15.

## Saturday, Nov. 16



### C-Note Pop-Up Art Sale

The event hosted at San Diego Art Institute connects budding art collectors with local artists selling their pieces for just \$100, \$200, or \$300. More than 300 works from nearly 100 artists will be available for sale. General admission to the C-Note is \$5 and free for youth 18 and under, students, and military. Doors open at noon on Nov. 16 and 17, and collectors are encouraged to arrive early to beat the crowd.



### 'Awkward but Graceful'

A one-woman show written and performed by Nataša Warasch and directed by Grant Gelvin. Nataša is from Slovenia. She came to the United States with a one-way ticket, \$200 in traveler's checks and a dream. 8 p.m. at the North Park Vaudeville Theatre, 2031 El Cajon Blvd. Admission is \$18 at the door.



### 'Wake Up, Brother Bear!'

Junior Theatre is debuting its first Theatre for the Very Young

performance this weekend. "Wake up, Brother Bear!" is a "Mommy and Me," experiential format geared specifically toward kids age 3-7. Brother and Sister Bear take your little one on a journey of a glorious year of seasons. They see a waterfall melt, meet a butterfly, chase an elusive fish, and skate on an icy pond. "Wake Up, Brother Bear!" is performed in an intimate and immersive setting designed especially for little kids. The audience is invited to join the action using a small bag of props that help create the magical moments. Tickets are \$14-\$16. For tickets and more information, visit juniortheatre.com, or call the box office at 619-239-8355. Performances will be held on Nov. 16 and 17 at 10 a.m. and noon at the Casa del Prado Theatre.

### Lego Mindstorms!

In collaboration with All Girls STEM Society, Mission Valley Library presents a fun and accessible robotics program featuring Lego Mindstorms! Get ready to build and program autonomous robots while studying the basics of mechanics, electronic design, sensors, and programming! This workshop is recommended for girls in third through eighth grades. Registration is required. Sign up online at allgirlsstem-society.org/san-diego.html or contact Marika Jeffery at 858-573-5007. For more information about the All Girls STEM Society, go to allgirlsstemsociety.org. 1:45-4:30 p.m.

### Walk for Apraxia

The Walk for Apraxia celebrates children with apraxia of speech and recognizes them for their hard work. Families, professionals, students, and other supporters join together to lift up children with apraxia of speech, because they believe every child deserves a voice. The 2019 San Diego Walk for Apraxia event will be held on Nov. 16, at the University of San Diego to benefit children with apraxia of speech. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. with the walk beginning at 9:30 a.m.

### Military Home Buying Forum

A free workshop for military personal to help active duty, reservists, and veterans put their VA home loan benefits to use. Four experts will help attendees understand the benefits of homeownership and to help them navigate the home-buying process. They will receive advice to determine how much they can afford, what special military products and grants are available to them, and expert answers to any home-buying questions. 8:30 a.m.-noon at 2-1-1 San Diego, 3860 Calle Fortunada.

### 'Space Force!'

Live theater at OnStage Playhouse will bring together classic and new science fiction storytelling designed to delight science fiction lovers of all ages. Look to the future of science fiction theater, with an encore performance of San Diego Union-Tribune Critics' Fringe Pick science fiction comedy "Space Force!" The program also features readings of new science fiction plays from the writers of "Space Force!" Starring Julia Gioletti, Omar Ramos, Jeff Hillyman, Michael Shantz, and Floyd Strayer as The Captain. Written and directed by Michael Shantz with Tom Steward. 8 p.m. at OnStage Playhouse, 291 Third Ave., Chula Vista. Tickets are \$10.

## Sunday, Nov. 17

### Uptown Rhythm Makers at Panama 66

Uptown Rhythm Makers has been known in the San Diego music scene for live New Orleans-style jazz and swing performances since 2003. The band will be playing at Balboa Park's Panama 66 from 6-8 p.m. 'XY' Staged Reading Live theater at OnStage Playhouse will bring together classic and new science fiction storytelling designed to delight science fiction lovers of all ages. The Poolhouse Project presents the first-ever staged reading of a brand new science fiction play "XY." The program also features readings of short new science fiction plays from the writers of "Space Force!" Written by Michael Shantz. Directed by Kristen Fogle. 2 p.m. at OnStage Playhouse, 291 Third Ave., Chula Vista. Tickets are \$10.

## Wednesday, Nov. 20

### WITI Tech Talk Series

WITI (Women in Technology International) San Diego Tech Talks is excited to present an evening with Mary Ann McGarry and Linda Scott of Guild Mortgage, one of the largest and most experienced independent mortgage lenders in the country. McGarry will be speaking about her experiences at Guild and how the company was an early adopter of technology to drive business growth and improve productivity. She will provide insights into the strategic plans she initiated with her senior management teams to implement financial, operational and technology changes that have resulted in Guild growing to become a top-10 national mortgage lender. The event is hosted by WITI San Diego and WeWork Aventine. 5:30-8 p.m. WeWork Aventine, 8910 University Center Lane, Suite 400. Crafts for Grown-Ups Learn how to make a macrame wall hanging at the North Park Branch Library. Sign-ups required. 6:30 p.m.



### Transgender Day of Remembrance

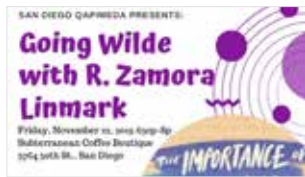
The annual Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR) is a solemn day to honor and remember the lives of people who have died as a result of transphobia and hate. We invite you to take a moment the morning of TDOR to join together at the Hillcrest Pride Flag to raise the Transgender Flag and then lower it to half-mast in honor of the solemn day. Join us as we remember those we lost due to anti-transgender hate and violence. Together we will mourn, honor and celebrate their authentic lives. All are welcome. 6 p.m. vigil march. 7 p.m. program at The Center, 3909 Centre St.

## Thursday, Nov. 21

### Golden Hill Board Meeting

Get involved with your neighborhood organization at a board meeting held at the Golden Hill Recreation Center at 6:30 p.m.

## Friday, Nov. 22



### Going Wilde with R. Zamora Linmark

Join the San Diego Queer API-MEDA Coalition for an artist book talk! Linmark is a queer Honolulu and Baguio-based author who also wrote "Rolling the R's" (1995) and "Leche" (2011). 6:30-8 p.m. at Subterranean Coffee Boutique, 3764 30th St.

### George Lopez at Balboa Theatre

Renowned comedian George Lopez will perform two shows at Balboa Theatre Downtown as part of his current comedy tour. Tickets are available from \$41 on Ticketmaster and most secondary ticket markets. 7 p.m.

## Saturday, Nov. 23



### Bird Park Clean-up

Come join your friends and neighbors, along with the NP-CA and the Friends of Balboa Park, on Saturday, Nov. 23, from 8:30-11 a.m. at Bird Park. We will spend the morning keeping our park beautiful. Light refreshments and supplies will be provided. Space is limited. Email info@northparksd.org to join.

### Dance. Design. Go!

Join the PGK Dance Project on the night of Nov. 23 for unforgettable performances. The event will feature a "Chopped"-style competition between four distinguished choreographers with a \$1,000 dollar prize on the line. On top of that, there will be an amazing fashion show with PGK-inspired choreography! Audience members are welcome to participate and be fully engaged in the night's goings on. Don't miss out on an inspiring display of choreography in competition, a dynamic fashion show, amazing live music, delicious food, drinks, and phenomenal performances! The event will take place in the beautiful San Diego Art Institute Balboa Park. 7-9 p.m. Tickets are \$15.

## Wednesday, Nov. 27

### Standup Comedy

Whistle Stop Bar returns with a night of fantastic standup comedy. Headlining is Ahamed Weinberg from Comedy Central. Featuring Craig Phillip Conant, Monarey Elaine Martinez, Daunté Cordova, Myles Magallanes, Daniel Delgado, and Beau Hufford. Show starts at 8 p.m. and it's only a \$5 cover. 2236 Fern St.

## Thursday, Nov. 28



### Thanksgiving 5K

On Thanksgiving morning, more than 6,500 people will participate in Father Joe's Villages' Thanksgiving Day 5K, one of San Diego's longest-standing holiday traditions. After families and pets in costume make their way through the loop around the iconic Balboa Park, they will cross the finish line to a holiday festival, complete with a pancake breakfast, children's activities, characters like Santa Claus and cartoon favorites, a beer garden and live music. Meet at Balboa Park - Spreckles Organ Pavilion and Plaza de Panama, 1549 El Prado. \$30 to \$50, visit thanksgiving-grun.org to sign up. 6:30-11 a.m.

## Saturday, Nov. 30

### Adams Avenue Spirit Stroll

The fifth annual Adams Avenue Spirit Stroll will take place from 2-5 p.m., as part of the nationwide Small Business Saturday. Attendees will be served holiday-themed cocktail tastes and sweet treats at 20-plus independently owned retail stops along Adams Avenue, from University Heights through Normal Heights and into Kensington. Cocktail tastes will be created and served by 12 of Adams Avenue's most talented bartenders from the area's top bars and restaurants. This extraordinary small business celebration is limited to adults 21 and up (ID required). Adams Avenue Spirit Stroll tickets are \$20.

### North Park Live

We're kicking off the holidays with a free community event in North Park! Join us for North Park Live from noon-4 p.m., where we will be showcasing 50-plus musicians. There will also be a live art demo, with raffled prizes. Celebrate the holidays with the North Park community all day long! We look forward to seeing everyone come out for a fun day of live music and live art! 3000 University Ave.

### Craft Works North Park gallery reception

San Diego City College visual art students, faculty, alumni and friends are creating a crafts holiday shop in the Art Produce Gallery space. Hand-made ceramics, glass, and fiber works, jewelry, and more will be featured as holiday gifts. Works sold support the student entrepreneurs and community projects at Art Produce Gallery, a nonprofit organization. The Arts Entrepreneurship certificate program was recently created at San Diego City College to support students and artists. The exhibit is curated by San Diego City College art professors Terri Hughes-Oelrich and Anna Delgado. The shop will be open from Nov. 29-Jan. 4, 2020. A gallery reception will be held from 5-7 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 30, at 3139 University Ave.

## Sunday, Dec. 8

### Toyland Parade

A tradition unlike any other, the Toyland Parade will be celebrating its 56th year in North Park. Join us Dec. 8, to unwrap some holiday joy as the community comes together to put on a magical display of festive cheer! Come bright and early

to warmly welcome local schools, joyful marching bands, historic vintage cars, creative floats made by groups all within San Diego, and last but not least, Santa in a fire truck! Witness this cheerful parade marching down University Avenue, and making stops between Utah and Iowa Street. Fun for the whole family, this event is absolutely free, rain or shine and for all ages! North Park Main Street is also looking for people to join the parade or volunteer. Sign up at exploreearthpark.com.

## 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 Dharmabum 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 #cic-freefriendfriday for free Wi-Fi. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at Collective Impact Center, 3295 Meade Ave. bit.ly/free-Fridays

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

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 14

**Uptown Crossword**

Classics

		1	2	3		4	5	6		7	8	9	
			10				11				12		
13	14					15				16			17
19					20			21	22				
23								24					
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34											35		
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47	48	49						50				51	52
54								55					
56							57	58		59			
		60					61			62			
		63					64			65			

CLUES ACROSS

1. Small viper

4. Some are covert

7. A waiver of liability (abbr.)

10. Speak out

11. Retirement plan

12. Small dog

13. City in Iraq

15. Car mechanics group

16. Shrimp-like creature

19. Majestic

21. TV detective

23. Central Canadian province

24. Causing to wind around

25. Wise man

26. Knicks legend Willis

27. Muscular weaknesses

30. John Stockton compiled them

34. South American plant

35. To some extent

36. Where manners are displayed
41. Showy

45. Fall down

46. Shoelaces are often this

47. Disease-causing bacterium

50. Egg-shaped wind instrument

54. Sufferings

55. One who noisily enjoys

56. About blood

57. Transaction verification system (abbr.)

59. Related through female family members

60. Low velocity grenade

61. "In Living Color" comedian

62. Veterans battleground

63. Expression of creative skill

64. Midway between northeast and east

65. Patti Hearst's captors

CLUES DOWN

1. Something useful

2. It goes great with peppers and onions

3. Orifice

4. Turned into bone

5. The Princess could detect it

6. Bands of colors

7. Makes use of

8. Central African country

9. Lake in the Kalahari Desert

13. He was a "Chairman"

14. Legally possess

17. One point north of due west

18. Small peg of wood

20. Stretch of swampy ground

22. Is indebted to

27. Where you were born (abbr.)

28. A team's best pitcher

29. Cool!
31. Female sibling

32. This stimulates the thyroid (abbr.)

33. Reserved

37. More prickled

38. Forbidden by law

39. One-time presidential candidate

40. A TV show has more than one

41. A place to stash things

42. Defunct currency in India

43. Causes to ferment

44. A type of gland

47. \_\_\_ Humbug!

48. Everyone has one

49. Punctuation

51. Central American fruit

52. Brooklyn hoopster

53. 100 square meters

58. Local area network

Puzzle answers on page 14

FROM PAGE 3  
ABEL SILVAS

"I started finding injustice in all of this. Then I became an activist," Silvas recounts.

After that, Silvas joined San Diego County Historic Site Board. He was a part of the city of San Diego's Historical Resources Board for 13 years, until he claimed he was kicked off by Mayor Kevin Faulconer.

Silvas works as a Native American monitor on archaeological sites under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, or as he says, he "takes care of dead people." He is able to rattle off the different places in San Diego where graves have literally been paved over — a handicapped parking spot in Hillcrest, a park in Mission Hills, a street in Old Town.

While his performances are always directed toward the public, the information he shares is deeply personal. Silvas explains he is a Juaneño, the name given by Father

Junipero Serra to the Acjachemen Indigenous peoples of California who helped build the Mission of San Juan Capistrano. He recounts his childhood growing up in Old Town, cracks a joke about his grandfather, then talks about the founding of San Diego — a history inseparable from the history of his own family.

"First we were Native Americans, then we became Spaniards, then we became Mexicans, then we became United States of Americans — and we never moved from our house," Silvas said in a phone interview.

His family has documented roots in many parts of California, including Old Town when it was the Kumeyaay village of Kosa'aay, as well as in San Francisco and Los Angeles. Abel's great-great-great-great-great grandfather Miguel Silvas left an outpost in Sinaloa with other settlers from around the world and helped found San Francisco. In Rancho Santa Fe, the Silvas family was given a provisional grant for a piece of land there from the Mexican governor in 1831. Five years later, when a

new governor came to power, the land was handed off to Juan Maria Osuna, who built an adobe that is still standing today, under the name Osuna 1. His grandmother Clara's grandfather Librado Silvas built an adobe in Del Mar, just north of where his own grandfather, Manuel Silvas, built an adobe in Old Town. These pre-United States ancestors make up the California side of Silvas' family.

Between his performances, Silvas has continued his advocacy. Silvas attended an Old Town Planners meeting where the group voted in favor of a plan to add a memorial to Presidio Park in honor of all the people buried in unmarked graves at the site. Silvas had already been tracing the history of those buried on the hill and has collected a list of hundreds of those buried there. He hopes to add those names to a memorial when funding is found. In an email, he described this work as "my baby for 25 years (literally, look at all the babies buried there)."

He was also integral in a now-stalled effort to get federal recognition for the Juaneño Band of Mission Indians (judges have repeatedly ruled against recognizing the tribe, which is based in Orange County). While federal recognition has failed to materialize, and with it tribal sovereignty, Silvas has continued to help govern the tribe and keep it together. More recently, he became the chair of the Old Town Band of Mission Indians to help preserve and protect the graves at the Presidio.

Silvas' advocacy has grown from his family's history and his own identity as an artist. "We observe society, and as artists, we reflect society," he said.

— Kendra Sitton can be reached at [kendra@sdnews.com](mailto:kendra@sdnews.com).



Silvas works the crowd ahead of his keynote address at the Cabrillo Festival. (Photo by Kendra Sitton)

FROM PAGE 9  
MOPA FILMS

service GagaOOLala exists exclusively for LGBT-related films.

"Heavy Craving" made it to this international stage by transgressing genre: although it revels in the highly local humor of Taiwan, it also has elements of coming-of-age movies, family dramas, and rom-coms. It even follows the plot of many sports films — if you count all the scenes at the gym with a screaming coach and one of the final scenes that depicts an epic beatdown between Ying-Juan and her better (read: skinny) self.

While much of the humor did not translate, there were still light moments. However, most of the raw film was spent empathizing with aspiring chef Ying-Juan as she faces the struggles of living in a society not built for her body and how she eventually gives in to those pressures. The audience bears witness to the tiny embarrassments of taking up space on public transit to greater injustices like society's general disbelief regarding violence against

fat bodies. When a man attempts to rape Ying-Juan, the attacker's wife accuses her of lying because her husband would never desire such an ugly woman.

Ying-Juan is buoyed by two friends she makes throughout the course of the film: a local delivery man and a cross-dressing student. The driver reveals he was once heavier, but lost weight after facing the same discrimination she faced. It is his words, "It is easier to change yourself than for the world to change," that eventually convince Ying-Juan to try to lose weight — with disastrous results as she learns the consequences of changing herself to fit someone else's ideals.

Meanwhile, the disapproval of the cross-dressing student's mother mirrors Ying-Juan's relationship with her own. The cook, delivery driver, and student all showcase the pain of not fitting into society and the personal cost of trying to conform.

Ying-Juan is a more complex character than is often allowed physically large characters. Her nuanced portrayal by newcomer Tsai Jia-yin pushes against the constant assumptions by other characters in the film that she is

worthless if she remains the way she is.

"Heavy Craving" deals with forms of discrimination that are often ignored and rarely make it into film. Its detailed documentation of the slights and violence against a woman inhabiting a body deemed ugly by society lets an audience immerse themselves in an experience that may not be their own. While it is pitched as a comedy, moviegoers may cringe as often as they laugh. Still, the empathy and care extended to each character make it well worth seeing.

"Heavy Craving" will be shown at MOPA at 12:30 p.m. on Nov. 16. Two other films that are part of the Asian Film Festival will be shown at MOPA later in the day. "Geographies of Kinship," at 2:30 p.m., is a documentary depicting the industry that peaked in the 1980s of selling Korean babies to American families looking to adopt. At 4:30 p.m., the classic lesbian drama "Saving Face" will be shown 15 years after it first debuted and became an unlikely success.

— Kendra Sitton can be reached at [kendra@sdnews.com](mailto:kendra@sdnews.com).



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PUZZLE ANSWERS

**Sudoku**  
Puzzle from page 13

8	7	8	2	9	9	7	6	1
1	2	9	6	8	4	7	9	8
9	7	6	1	7	8	2	9	8
9	8	7	7	6	2	8	1	9
6	8	2	9	1	7	9	8	7
7	9	1	9	8	8	6	7	2
2	6	9	8	9	1	8	7	7
8	9	7	7	2	9	1	8	6
7	1	8	7	6	9	2	9	

**Classics**  
Crossword from page 13

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



# North Park pulls out all the stops for Small Business Saturday

North Park is known for its hip and unique small businesses that offer one-of-a-kind gifts that you can't find in traditional shopping malls. There's the popular gift shop Pigment right around the corner from the vintage clothing and accessory shop The Girl Can't Help It. And if there's a dog lover on your list, Home and Hound has a tail-wagging selection. "People tell us they love shopping in North Park because our local businesses curate an eclectic selection of gifts that can't be found in other places in the city," said Angela

Landsberg, executive director of North Park Main Street (NPMS). "They also understand that there are very real economic and environmental benefits to shopping at businesses owned by San Diego residents with locally made products." There's great community support for these ideals — one shop is even named Simply Local and specializes in products only made by San Diego artists and craftspeople. One way to support these locally owned retail establishments is to start your holiday shopping on

Small Business Saturday, Nov. 30. This year, North Park offers a one-stop event complete with food, drinks, shopping, entertainment and even free transportation. The first-ever North Park Live, a special all-day music event sponsored by My Point Credit Union, elevates the holiday shopping experience. Not only will stores offer sale prices on popular items, but 50 local artists will perform at 16 local restaurants and breweries. Local favorites like North Park Beer Co. and Tamarindo will offer free live entertainment from

noon to 4 p.m. "You can get all of your holiday shopping done and take breaks for meals and drinks throughout the day," said Landsberg. "Stop by the Small Business Saturday booth and show a shopping receipt and you'll receive a gift from American Express." Landsberg said that NPMS and its Small Business Saturday partner, American Express, are providing a free trolley for the day so people can shuttle about safely. "North Park is very walkable, but often people appreciate a ride

when they're carrying shopping bags or just want to relax on their way to the next shop," she said. Additionally, NPMS and American Express have joined forces to unveil a new mural by local artist Bandit entitled "Love Thy Neighborhood." "We told Bandit we wanted something that featured the individuality of North Park and we're thrilled with what he's creating," said Landsberg. "The mural will be on the old Woolworth's building on University Avenue and Illinois."❖



A local store open for businesses



A happy shopper in North Park (Photos courtesy North Park Main Street)



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## In memoriam: Enrique Gama

A gentle and kind Hillcrest fixture, Enrique Gama, passed away suddenly this past week. For decades, he was a constant presence at the Union 76 service station on Sixth and Robinson. He seems to have always been there. Passing away at age 54, he started work at that service station 28 years ago.

A gentle man with a kind word for all, he was scrupulously honest in all of his work but, more importantly, he always had a twinkly smile that said that everything would be OK.

If you looked around the lot,

it was always filled with more than a dozen cars, often "beaters" where those who are just scraping by knew that their car would be properly taken care of at the most reasonable price.

A number of his clients gathered for a spontaneous memorial on Tuesday, Nov. 12. Their feelings were best expressed by one person who said: "While he was like a doctor for my car, he was a friend who had a caring relationship with me."

A father whose daughter was recently engaged, he was the sole supporter of his

Tijuana family. In a real sense, he was part of our Hillcrest family and we are poorer because we will no longer have him in our lives.

The family established a Go Fund Me account so that anyone who knew him, was touched by him, might make a donation to help defray his funeral expenses and to help them since he was their sole support.

<http://gf.me/u/wpmj5y>

— Written by Rene Smith, Hillcrest



FROM PAGE 9

## ROSIE'S STAYS

the surrounding community." He recalled, "When we added Rabbit Hole [3377 Adams Ave.], there were crowds of people outside watching our artist [Sean Dietrich] paint a mural on our brick wall. Everyone seems emotionally invested in Normal Heights and that prideful energy is very contagious. ... Rabbit Hole and Rosie O'Grady's are timeless fixtures uptown and plan on being around for several years to serve their regulars."

— Reach Dave Schwab at [reporter@sdnews.com](mailto:reporter@sdnews.com).

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