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**Editorial**  
(858) 270-3103 x130  
[dave@sdnews.com](mailto:dave@sdnews.com)

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Officers Paul Andreen (driving) and Barry Lander out on patrol. (Photo by Elaine Alfaro)

**By ELAINE ALFARO**

You can spot them in white patrol vehicles donning light blue polo shirts and badges that read “Senior Volunteer Officer.”

As you see them driving in your neighborhood, the exterior of the vehicle offers little insight into what’s really happening within — the low hum of a police dispatcher in the background, a soft

thud as the stack of investigative files shift as the car turns, and the sound of scribbling on a small clipboard. This environment exemplifies a day in the life of these officers.

Barry Lander and Paul Andreen are two retired senior volunteer patrol (RSVP) officers, part of the San Diego Police Department program.

**SEE RSVP OFFICER, Page 11**

**Project Homekey residences in the works for El Cerrito**

**By DAVE THOMAS**

A plan to build 40 apartment homes in El Cerrito for individuals dealing with chronic homelessness recently moved a step closer to fruition.

The plan is for phase 1 to be 40 units of permanent supportive housing and phase 2 140 units of affordable housing.

The PATH Villas El Cerrito as proposed will take shape at 5476 El Cajon Blvd. Excavation on the location is already happening, with underground parking taking shape.

According to PATH Ventures director of media Tyler Renner,

the property under construction is on the site previously occupied by various businesses over time. Renner added the construction of Family Health Centers of San Diego’s (FHCS)’s proposed development is an upgrade to the El Cajon corridor.

Recently, the City of San Diego, the San Diego Housing Commission and the County of San Diego applied to obtain state funding under Project Homekey that will go towards financing the proposed development. While the funding request is expected to be approved, planners will reportedly

**SEE PROJECT HOMEKEY, Page 4**

An image of the PATH Villas El Cerrito once finished. (Photo Courtesy of PATH)

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# Where to park at the College-Rolando Library?

By ELAINE ALFARO

When peering out of the back sliding doors of the College-Rolando Library, the view of the parking lot is marked by a sign that reads, “do not enter” and a chain-link fence rising behind the horizon of parked cars.

This fence was constructed on the adjacent property (previously the College Lutheran Church) when it was sold to a private developer in 2016. Amid local dissent about the land falling into private hands, the city struck a joint-use agreement with the developer, but according to the Friends of the College-Rolando Library, it’s not enough.

In 2017, the fence jutted into the parking lot and blocked the driveway entrance on Montezuma Road into the library, further complicating the tenuous relationship between the developer, 52 Blue Falcoln LLC, and the Friends of the College-Rolando Library.

Previously, the library goers were allowed access to the College Lutheran Church’s parking lot. Under the new joint-use agreement with the developer, the conditions changed.

The City of San Diego offered a statement on the joint-use agreement via email.

“This agreement allows library patrons use of 25 parking spaces



Jan Hintzman, the president of the Friends of the College-Rolando Library, wonders like others what the solution is to a parking problem at the facility. (Photos by Elaine Alfaro)

in the property’s parking lot for access to the library. We are not aware of any current plans to redevelop the site and will continue to work with the property owner under the conditions of the joint use agreement.”

Jan Hintzman, president of the Friends of the College-Rolando Library, attended meetings at the College-area and Rolando-area councils and spoke about the predicament to city council member Sean Elo-Rivera.

“The existing politicians did not cause this problem, but

we’re keeping them on the hook to fix it,” said Hintzman.

As of right now, the library has 28 parking spots on the city-owned property. However, once construction is completed, the driveway entrance from Montezuma Road may be altered and Hintzman is concerned the 25 joint-use parking spots within the private property will not meet the demands of the new residents and library goers.

“We see it as an equity problem,” said Hintzman. “Equity is stated as a major concern of our current politicians. In 2016 despite pleas from the community, they looked the other way, and let the library’s driveway and most of its parking slip into private hands. We’ve been asking the

SEE ROLANDO LIBRARY, Page 4

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# Rolando Library

CONTINUED FROM Page 3

city to regain control of this property ever since.”

The topic was brought up by Misty Jones, the San Diego Public Library director, on May 5 at the City of San Diego budget review committee meeting.

“We did hear from the Friends of the Library at the commission meeting yesterday and we’re paying very close attention to that issue and [we] understand the parking,” said Jones. “We will be looking at how the new plan that he’s [the developer] bringing forward to do multi-family housing will affect that joint-use and potentially go back and renegotiate with that.”

Hintzman advocated that the city can find solutions to the parking issue through a variety of actions imposed on the developer including benefit assessments and prescriptive easements.

The city has not indicated they will include these in their agreement with the developer. Jones said any alternations to the current joint-use agreement will be based on the developer’s final plan which is not solidified yet. The CTC contacted Atlantis, the PR firm representing 52 Blue Falcon LLC, for a statement but they did not respond.

For the immediate future, residents can expect the fence and “do not enter” sign to remain; however, the Montezuma Road entrance and driveway parking are still accessible to the public.

—Elaine Alfaro is a journalism student at Point Loma Nazarene University and a former intern for the La Mesa Courier.

# Project Homekey

CONTINUED FROM Page 1

look to secure other funding to finish the project if needed.

The County Board of Supervisors voted April 26 to allocate some \$11 million to the development. The state application will reportedly result in at minimum \$11.825 million of Project Homekey dollars. That is towards half the money necessary for an approximately \$24-million development.

The positive vote makes way for the County Health and Human Services Agency to move forward with a public-private arrangement involving PATH Ventures, the City of San Diego and the San Diego Housing Commission. The funds applied for are made available via California’s Homekey Program.

That funding would go towards capital and in part to future services and operating expenses. The City of San Diego will chip in more than \$2 million that comes from its portion of funding from California’s permanent local housing allocation program. That came about through a permanent source of funding geared towards affordable housing. Finally, close to \$3 million necessary to complete costs needed would come via loan funding.

According to Mayor Todd Gloria’s office, the City of San Diego will also put forth 40 project-based housing vouchers via the San Diego Housing Commission. This is to assist in paying rent for residents previously homeless.

If the state signs off on the funding application, San Diego County and those partnering with it will construct 41 housing units. They will be situated above a new multicultural family counseling center.

With initial work underway, there is a completion goal of summer 2023 for this first stage of the project. That would be followed by a second phase of building to entail 140 more affordable apartment homes. This entails 127 studios, a dozen one-bedroom apartment homes and a manager’s unit. The phase two construction would look to finish in late 2024.

In a statement, Gloria noted, “Once again, the City and County of San Diego are collaborating to meaningfully address homelessness, this time by placing unsheltered San Diegans into permanent homes with supportive services attached. This is precisely what was envisioned by Governor Gavin Newsom and the state Legislature when they created Project Homekey, and I’m grateful for all the ways the state is supporting local efforts to get unhoused residents into homes of their own.”

City Council President Sean Elo-Rivera, who represents District 9 where the complex will be, said in a statement, “Housing and supportive services are essential to addressing our homelessness crisis. I’m proud that the city and the county are partnering to provide sorely needed homes for people living on the streets, especially those in my district.”

According to Renner, El Cerrito Housing Development will be a refuge for individuals and families struggling to access affordable, safe and supportive housing across San Diego.

“This project combines housing, co-developed with Family Health Centers of San Diego (FHCS) and PATH, so low-income individuals may have access to quality, affordable housing complete with supportive services such as job search support, counseling, social services, case management and many other resources,” Renner commented.

Renner noted the housing community will feature several shared amenities such as a business center to help with job searches and a dog park. Amenities are meant to enhance health and mental wellbeing of residents. Supportive services will help those individuals with life challenges. A mental health professional as well as FHCS enrollment specialists will be

integrated into the housing development.

“Residents will be identified through the Coordinated Entry System, through which the Regional Task Force on Homelessness as the regional Continuum of Care, identifies the most appropriate housing options for people experiencing homelessness based on who is most in need,” Renner added.

## NOT ALL RESIDENTS HAPPY WITH PROJECT

As with any such project, some are happy with the plans and others are not.

When asked what went into alerting the community of the proposed plans, Renner noted, “Numerous community meetings were held prior to commencing construction. This development project received support from the SD Planning Department, City Council and neighborhood community groups and their leaders, as well as, individual residents in the El Cerrito community. FHCS enjoys favorable relationships with homeowners in El Cerrito. The San Diego City Council President’s Office received a wide variety of feedback from El Cerrito residents, ranging from many voicing full support to a few opposed. The chair of the planning group for this area provided a strong letter of support for this project, reflecting

SEE PROJECT HOMEKEY, Page 5

# Quick tips to improve your home internet experience



As more households are working and learning from home these days, here are some easy tips to help improve your internet experience.

**Use audio instead of video for virtual meetings.** Video calls can be a strain on your service. Consider video for must-

see moments. Or turn the camera on only when you’re speaking.

**Doorbell cameras and pet cams.** When you’re home, lower the resolution on doorbell cams and pet cams. You can still effectively monitor the areas. And turn off pet cams if you’re at home.

**Get a 360 View.** Cox Panoramic Wifi gives you wall to wall coverage, including those dead zones in your home. If you have Cox Panoramic Wifi, use the Cox Panoramic Wifi app to:

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**Location, location, location.** Your internet experience may be slowed down if your wifi router or modem is in a bad location. Remember to:

- Elevate your modem or router on a shelf or tall piece of furniture (wifi signals travel outward and downward);
- Avoid placing your router near a microwave, mirror or fish tank, which can affect the signal.

For more tips, visit [www.cox.com](http://www.cox.com).





# Allied Gardens/Grantville Community Council: Getting ready for election season

By SHAIN HAUG

Several months ago, Represent San Diego gave a demonstration presentation to the AGGCC board of directors.

Their national organization, Represent Us, works on voter registration, mail-in voting, anti-gerrymandering, ranked choice voting, campaign finance and political donation transparency, and ethical accountability; all matters that must be addressed to protect voting access and to ensure our continued representation in our democracy. Represent San Diego brings that work to our community. Their presentation convinced us that in these times of political conflict they have information that must be shared with the voters of our community. They have ideas that take us past discord to common action.

Our May 24 town hall meeting will feature Diane Mosely and Amy Tobia of Represent San Diego who will provide you with the information you need to deal with the urgent matters that you will address in the June and November elections. We assure you that your attendance will be very much worth your while.

During the week of May 16 we will send email notices of the town hall meeting that will feature the Represent San Diego presentation this event with the means to access the Zoom presentation. These notices will go to the folks who have registered on our

mailing list. We invite you to join that list and to receive our regular communications by using the "Contact Us" page at [aggccouncil.org](http://aggccouncil.org) to give us your name and email address.

Not enough is said of the work that the Navajo Community Planners, Inc. (NCPI) does for the communities of Grantville, Allied Gardens, Del Cerro, and San Carlos. The 16 members of the board of directors are charged under Council Policy 600-24 to represent you in matters of land use and planning. The board meets every third Wednesday at 6:30 p.m., presently by Zoom, to evaluate matters of real estate development and permits for proposed projects that are not in conformity with zoning parameters. The recommendations of NCPI on these matters carry significant weight with our elected representatives. Join our mailing list, receive the meeting notices and agendas, attend the meetings, and let your voice be heard.

The Navajo Canyon rehabilitation that will take generations to complete continues. Join Kim Morris and the Friends of Navajo Canyon on Saturday, May 21 and on the third Saturday of every month. Link to [sdcanyonlands.org/friends-of-navajo-canyon](http://sdcanyonlands.org/friends-of-navajo-canyon) to learn more and to sign up for participation.

The Benjamin Library is back in full operation and is looking for you. The gardening season is in full swing and they have a lot

of seeds to get you started with your spring planting. The summer reading program begins on June 1. This important activity ensures that children will not lose essential skills and will be ready for the advances that will come with return to school in the fall. You will find more information on program at [sandiegolibrary.org](http://sandiegolibrary.org). The Friends of Allied Gardens/Benjamin Library are seeking more friends. Join this group and help with quarterly book sales, donations, and all the other things that the friends do to support our library and community. Contact Geri Carmack at [gcarmack@yahoo.com](mailto:gcarmack@yahoo.com). You are needed.

Our website is a little out of date and the 500 Trees project is running behind schedule, but the mission is as vital as ever. We will provide more details on this important ecological work soon, but for the moment take the following link to learn how you can beautify your property and enhance your neighborhood. [www.aggccouncil.org/500-trees-allied-gardens-east-tree-project.html](http://www.aggccouncil.org/500-trees-allied-gardens-east-tree-project.html).

Join our board and bring your neighbors the benefit of your ideas and energy. Join our mailing list to bring us your ideas for community council tasks and nominate yourself to join the board to work on those matters. There is so very much we can do together.

—Shain Haug is president AGGCC.

## Project Homekey

CONTINUED FROM Page 4

the endorsement of the majority members of this neighborhood advisory group."

Among the residents expressing concerns is El Cerrito Community Council (ECCC) president Laura Riebau.

"None of Family Health Centers (FHC), City of San Diego or San Diego County officials have been upfront about the use of the housing being built on El Cajon Boulevard in the El Cerrito community," Riebau commented. "The opposite is true – the handling of this project by FHC, City, County, our representatives and others involved in regards to communication with El Cerrito has been cowardly, deceitful and underhanded."

Riebau claimed El Cerrito was not told of the institutional use of a homeless housing and treatment center by FHC, Mayor Gloria, District 9 City Council-member Elo-Rivera, County Supervisors Joel Anderson or Nathan Fletcher, or any of their representatives, such as PATH.

"The report included for the Board of Supervisors April 26, 2022 hearing and vote had statements about all of the stakeholders being involved, but El Cerrito and its residents were not included, when we are definitely stakeholders. There was no public outreach by officials or their representatives listed above on this building being for homeless housing and treatment in the El

Cerrito community and no one in the community was asked for input," Riebau stated.

According to Riebau, the first El Cerrito residents heard about the homeless housing use was through other San Diego residents who saw the County's posted notice on April 21 for its Tuesday, April 26 meeting.

SEE PROJECT HOMEKEY, Page 13

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A member of the Crusaders Grassroots/Recreational Girls 2010/2011 team, The Doritos, sends the ball towards the opposing team's goal on the last day of the 2022 spring season. (Photo by Marc Mizuta)

# Crusaders Soccer Club to open registration for fall season on May 20

By JAY WILSON

The Crusaders Soccer Club will open registration for the 2022 Grassroots/Recreational Fall Season beginning Friday, May 20th. There is an early bird registration discount through May 31st. The program is open to every boy and girl born between 2019 and 2008.

Two Crusaders Soccer competitive teams are in the semi-finals of the SoCal State Cup; the Girls 2007 team coached by Jim Miller and Girls 2006 team coached by San Carranza. If you know of a child interested in playing soccer at the competitive level, contact us at [info@crusaderssoccer.org](mailto:info@crusaderssoccer.org).

Crusaders Soccer will again hold multiple summer camps at Pershing Middle School for all boy or girls interested learning and improving their soccer skills. Players will have a great experience with the Crusaders Soccer professional coaching staff. The

staff will help players develop their on the field skills. The age group for the camps are 2014 to 2008. The camps will be held July 19-21 and July 26-28. There will also be a camp specifically for all recreational level youth soccer players born between 2010 and 2014. The camp will feature appropriate skill development depending upon the age and ability of the player.

A special thank you to Ken Miller Welding on Alvarado Canyon Road in Grantville. Ken donated his time and materials to weld and repair Crusaders Soccer aluminum soccer goals.

The Crusaders Soccer Club is celebrating its 51st year of serving the soccer youth of San Diego. Crusaders Soccer provides the best soccer experience in San Diego. We are developing leaders one goal at a time. For more information about Crusaders Soccer Club, visit our website at: [Crusaderssoccer.org](http://Crusaderssoccer.org).

# Del Cerro resident honored with SDSU award

Del Cerro resident Roger Ball, chairman of the board and past president of RICK Engineering Company, was honored at the 2022 San Diego State University (SDSU) Alumni Awards of Distinction.

A class of '74 graduate from the College of Engineering and a registered civil engineer in California, Ball has spent his entire career at RICK, working his way up from draftsman to company president by 2006. He is a member of Chi Epsilon, a national civil engineering honor society.

The awards honored 10 distinguished alumni from each of SDSU's seven academic colleges at a ceremony April 23 at the Omni La Costa Resort and Spa. Alumni were honored for their national or international contributions to

SDSU, the San Diego community, and the state of California.

Prior to the alumni award, SDSU honored both the support of RICK Engineering Company and Roger's commitment to his alma mater in 2018 by naming an outdoor terrace in the new Engineering and Interdisciplinary Science Complex the "RICK Engineering and Roger Ball Family Student Terrace."

Ball has served as past president of both the San Diego Chapter and the California organization of the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC). He was elected to the national ACEC College of Fellows in 2014. He also serves as a member of the SDSU engineering dean's advisory board and as chairman of the board's development committee.

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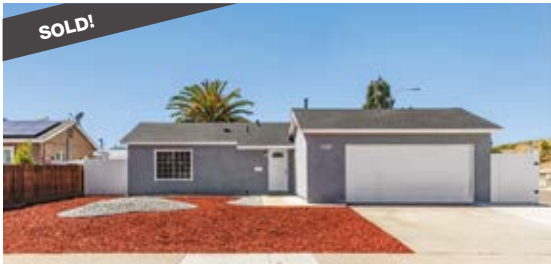
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# Radical, Republican Supreme Court to U. S. women: Sorry, your freedom doesn't matter



By SEAN QUINTAL

“Freedom is a fragile thing and it’s never more than one generation away from extinction. It is not ours by way of inheritance; it must be fought for and defended constantly by each generation.” So wrote a politician once revered by Republicans, Ronald Reagan. But the U.S. no longer is home to Reagan’s GOP.

The party’s present iteration is a radical minority group, leveraging antidemocratic mechanisms in our government to restrict Americans’ freedoms, even when the majority of the nation is opposed. This has been made startlingly clear by the leaked draft opinion in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* case; it is a challenge to a law that bans most abortions after 15 weeks of pregnancy. The Mississippi case was brought to the Court specifically to assail the protections afforded to women since the *Roe v. Wade* decision. The draft opinion reveals that the Supreme Court is poised to ignore legal precedent, and the clear will of most Americans, and remove a constitutionally protected freedom that American women have had guaranteed for half a century.

For the first time in U.S. history, the Supreme Court’s majority is comprised of Justices who were appointed by a President who had lost the popular vote, and who were confirmed by

Senators who represented a minority of the country. In 2016, the Republican Senate refused for 293 days to give President Obama’s Supreme Court nominee a hearing. Then, in 2020, before the election, Republicans rushed through Trump’s appointee, even as early voting for the presidential election had already started.

Consequently, the U.S. Supreme Court is now a partisan institution that can blithely ignore the majority of the country, while it codifies into law radical legislation the deprives Americans of basic freedoms. The reversal of those freedoms, afforded by *Roe*, are the expression of a President and a Senate, elected by a minority of the country, rigging the system to produce a Court that’s staking out positions that defy the will of the majority. If one is looking for more evidence that our freedoms and our democracy are in peril, that’s about as bold an example.

Overturing *Roe* will strip from every American woman one of the most important rights she enjoys — controlling how and when she has a child. It is a right that 1 in 4 American women has exercised by obtaining an abortion, and that virtually all women have relied on to plan their lives, families and careers. The *Dobbs* decision will be the dissolution of the precedent that has saved countless lives and allowed generations of women to pursue lives, careers, and parenthood on their own terms.

As U.S. Solicitor General Elizabeth B. Prelogar told the Supreme Court when it heard oral

arguments in *Dobbs*, reversing *Roe* “would be telling the women of America that ... the ability to control their bodies and perhaps the most important decision they can make about whether to bring a child into this world is not part of their protected liberty.”

Multiple public opinion polls, taken over many years, prove that a majority of Americans (more than 60%) believe abortion should be legal in the first trimester of pregnancy. According to the CDC, 96% of abortions are performed before the 16th week of gestation. And abortion is far less dangerous to women than childbirth; the rate of death in live birth is 14 times higher (8.8 deaths per 100,000 live births vs. 0.6 deaths per 100,000 abortions). Clearly and evidently, the majority of Americans want to protect a woman’s freedom to choose when and how she becomes a mother.

But the radical, right-wing Republican Party today doesn’t care about your freedoms. Your freedoms are disposable, based on their own minority agenda. The same people who were screaming in the streets about requirements to wear a mask or get a shot, are now gleefully crowing over their impending success in removing American women’s freedom to do with their own body as they wish.

Because they understand most Americans oppose them, Republicans don’t want to talk about their assault on individual freedom. A recent GOP memo to lawmakers said they should use the talking point that the party believes “we should care for

and support pregnant women in difficult circumstances.” That’s a lie. Because the majority of new abortion restrictions being passed in Republican-controlled states include no exception for rape, incest or human trafficking.

Republicans must be forced to confront the reality of their radical agenda. So the next time a Republican talks about abortion, don’t ask him, “You would take away reproductive rights?” Instead, frame the question honestly: “You would force a 12-year-old rape victim to bear a child for her rapist?” And when a GOPers talk about ‘care and support’ for pregnant women, ask them, “How much time do you think women should serve in jail for having abortions?”

As Americans, each of us bears the torch of individual freedom, passed to us from our forebears. It is our duty to, in turn, pass that freedom to our children. The Republican Party of 2022, despite Reagan’s admonition, have declared that they are the generation that is choosing to extinguish freedom for half the U.S. population. It is our patriotic duty to see that they don’t succeed.

*The La Mesa Foothills Democratic Club meets the first Wednesday of every month. Join us for our in-person Club meeting on Wednesday, June 1, 7 p. m., at the La Mesa Community Center, 4975 Memorial Drive. For more information, visit: lamesafoothillsdemocraticclub.com*

—Sean Quintal writes on behalf of the La Mesa Foothills Democratic Club.

## GOP voters meet the candidates



By WENDY HAUFFEN

What an amazing turnout at our candidate forum this month. The Republican Women of California - Navajo Canyon were joined by well over 100 voters who came out to meet their Republican candidates. Our forum featured candidates such as Amy Reichert (San Diego County Board of Supervisors, District 4), Laura Lothian (La Mesa City Council), Tony Orlando (La Mesa City Council), Jordan Marks (San Diego Clerk/Recorder/Assessor), Stan Caplan (U.S. House of Representatives, 51st District), Eric Gonzales (California State Assembly 78th District), Corbin Sabol (California State Assembly 79th District), Becca Williams (San Diego Unified School Board Trustee, Area C), Jose Velazquez (San Diego Unified School Board Trustee, Area B), and more.

It is invaluable to learn about the core character and integrity of the

candidates. Attendees were excited to meet and greet with these candidates and make informed decisions about who to vote for.

Don’t forget to get your ballot in by June 7. If you haven’t registered to vote yet, it’s not too late. Register before May 23, or check your existing voter registration at sdvote.com.

We will be resuming our normal monthly luncheon schedule in June. We are excited to welcome Scott Walsh from Judicial Watch. He joined Judicial Watch in May 2019 as the regional development manager/major gift officer for the Western United States. In his eclectic career Walsh has done many things, from sports writing to public relations and corporate communications, including 10 years in the golf industry—he has even had the honor of serving on three White House advance teams.

Join us June 14 at the Legacy Resort Hotel & Spa. For more details, and to sign up for our luncheon, visit: rwcnavajocanyon.org.

—Wendy Hauffen writes on behalf of the Republican Women of California – Navajo Canyon.

## Letters

Dear Editor,  
May is Mental Health Awareness Month. As a volunteer and advocate with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, this month I am asking everyone to join us and demand #MoreForMentalHealth.

I am doing more by calling on my legislators at the federal and state levels to support legislation that will fund the implementation of 988 and the suicide and mental health crisis system across our nation, particularly for those in underserved communities.

Currently, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is available at 1-800-273-8255 and de-escalates the crises of tens of thousands of callers each day. On July 16, those in distress and those that support them will be able to reach the Lifeline through a simple 3-digit number: 988. By

making the Lifeline more accessible through this shorter number, calls, texts, and chats to the Lifeline’s network of crisis call centers are expected to increase. It is vital that the federal government work with states to ensure callers in distress will have: 1) someone to call, 2) someone to come help, and 3) somewhere safe to go. We must act now to secure funding to equip call centers and community crisis response services throughout the country with the staff and resources to respond to everyone in crisis.

Join me this month in urging our federal and state public officials to do #MoreForMentalHealth. You can start by visiting moreformentalhealth.org.

Together, we can help #StopSuicide.

Sincerely,  
Danielle McGonigle  
San Diego

sdnews.com

1621 Grand Ave. Suite C  
San Diego, CA 92109  
(858) 270-3103  
Fax (858) 713-0095  
MissionTimesCourier.com  
Twitter: @MssnTimesCourier

**EDITOR**  
Dave Thomas x130  
dave@sdnews.com

**CONTRIBUTING EDITORS**  
Kendra Sitton x136  
Tom Melville x131  
Dave Schwab x132

**CONTRIBUTORS**  
Elaine Alfaro  
Karen Austin  
Robin Dohrn-Simpson  
Wendy Hauffen  
Shain Haug  
Patricia Mooney  
Jennifer Morrissey  
Sean Quintal  
Sarah Ward  
Jay Wilson

**WEB & SOCIAL MEDIA**  
Dave Thomas  
dave@sdnews.com

**PRODUCTION MANAGER**  
Chris Baker x107  
chris@sdnews.com

**ADVERTISING CONSULTANT**  
Heather Fine x118  
(951) 296-7794  
hfine@sdnews.com

**ACCOUNTING**  
Heather Humble x120  
accounting@sdnews.com

**BUSINESS CONSULTANT**  
David Mannis

**PUBLISHER**  
Julie Main  
(858) 270-3103 x106  
julie@sdnews.com



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# Patrick Henry High robotics team continues building success

By DAVE THOMAS

While some people may tire of bots, a group of Patrick Henry High School students are quite focused on them. That is because they make up the team known as the Patribots (Team 4738).

The Patribots, established in the fall of 2012, has taken part in competitions both locally and outside the region.

According to a statement from the school, this year's game, Rapid React, challenged teams to work together in groups of three. The goal was to shoot cargo into a lower or upper hub, as well as climb to one of four bars on a hanger. The teams are able to play as many as 12 qualifying matches while rotating with the potential of playing with and against all the other competing teams.

Back in March, team #4738, the Patribots, made it to the quarterfinals at the Del Mar regional competition.

In getting to the quarterfinals against several dozen teams from across the globe, the team spent countless hours in designing, programming, and building their robot.

Following the Del Mar competition, the team traveled to Las Vegas for another competition (Las Vegas Regional 2022), again reaching the quarterfinals.

While not winning the championship, the Patribots came home with the imagery award.

The school's robotics faculty sponsor is Adria Van Loan-Polselli. Among the team's mentors and sponsors include DoDSTEM, Qualcomm, Natural Networks, CTE, Brain Corp, and Solar Turbines.

Van Loan-Polselli noted among the "big picture" goals for the Patribots includes:

- To grow an appreciation for science, technology, engineering and math in the students and the outside community.
- Support other robotics teams and organizations that aim to excite people about STEM and STEM education.
- Create and grow an awareness with local, state, and national policy makers to help support STEM education in schools.
- Support other FRC teams in a way that helps make sustainable, long-lasting programs.
- To prepare students for the real world.
- Foster and grow intangible skills such as teamwork, project/time management and strategic thinking that they will need to be successful beyond high school.
- Give students opportunities to work with processes and techniques that are used in industry.
- To field a competitive robot that can compete for a world championship.
- An engineer cannot be created in a single FRC season.



The Patrick Henry High Patribots. (Courtesy photo)

However, fielding a competitive robot creates an excitement about STEM in the students. In addition, it helps give students the confidence that they can be successful in a STEM field.

• Fielding a competitive robot can inspire other teams and their students to continue improving their own teams.

For a number of participants, being a part of this group has been a positive thing.

"I love how the club is able to bring a group together to accomplish a goal," student Adam Webb commented. "I also love how the competition resembles real deadlines that we will experience when we enter the workforce."

Student Benjamin Broudy noted, "When I first came to Patrick Henry I didn't know anyone, since I came from outside of the Henry cluster. I joined robotics and was immediately accepted by everyone, including the upperclassmen who had leadership roles. Over the last three years I've learned how to do everything from program to rivet. I've gained so much experience, and really have really enjoyed my time on the Patribots."

For student Timothy Royal, the program opened him up to a diverse group of fun-loving people who also like to build and design solutions to issues. "It introduced me into a working environment and the usage of large equipment that has inspired my new career path. It has also taught me time management for a larger goal and working with teams to manage the building of a final product."

In looking at his robotics opportunities, student Thadeus Bates said he was excited at the chance to be a part of the team.

"When I joined the team, I knew only the basics of wood-working and nothing of the large machines like the lathe," Bates stated. "As a result of the welcoming community, I became the main operator of the lathe. As a result of being on this team, I was given the chance to participate in two regional events where my teammates and I were able to help other teams and interact with other students our age."

SEE PATRIBOTS, Page 12

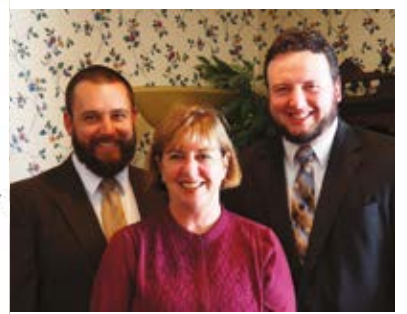
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# April was busy month for District 7, Navajo communities

**District 7 Dispatch**

By **RAUL A. CAMPILLO**

April was busy for District 7 and the Navajo communities. So let's jump in with what me and my team have been working on.

**ALLIED GARDENS**

Last month, my office worked with the SDPD Eastern Division and the County of San Diego to address disturbances related to a homeless encampment on the vacant County property at 6255 Mission Gorge Road. Outreach services were provided and the accumulated trash was cleaned up in early April thanks to this interagency coordination. I also worked with MTS to ensure the elevator that had been kicked off

its track at the Grantville trolley station was repaired.

**GRANTVILLE**

Recently, I joined the Grantville community for the groundbreaking of constructing the 100% affordable development ShoreLINE Apartments, that will be located right next to the Grantville trolley station. To sign up for the interest list for a rental unit, and be notified once the application period opens, visit: [shorelineapartmenthomes.com/](http://shorelineapartmenthomes.com/)

**DEL CERRO**

For the past year and a half, Jared Miller-Sclar has represented me in the Del Cerro community. It is bittersweet that we say farewell as he takes on his next challenge with his own company. He leaves not only Del Cerro, but District 7. I would like to thank Jared for his

service and wish him nothing but the best in his new endeavor.

As we say goodbye to Jared, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce Anthony Hackett as the new representative for the Del Cerro community. Anthony is an experienced and talented community representative who I know will represent Del Cerro admirably. If you have any questions related to Del Cerro that need my office's attention, you can reach Anthony at [HackettA@sandiego.gov](mailto:HackettA@sandiego.gov) and (619) 236-5909.

**SAN CARLOS**

My number one priority for District 7 is the construction of a new San Carlos library. I'm sure many of you are aware that this project is 30 years in the making and we are beginning to see light at the end of the tunnel. The San Diego Regional Water Quality

Control Board recently issued a "No Further Action" letter for the proposed site. What does that mean? It means the City is now able to purchase the land and move forward with construction. This is a huge step forward and I'm excited to share this information.

**DISTRICT 7 BUDGET TOWN HALL**

I will be hosting a virtual budget town hall specially for District 7 to discuss what you want to see prioritized in this year's budget. To register, use this link: [sandiego.zoomgov.com/join/join?secret=5000938](https://sandiego.zoomgov.com/join/join?secret=5000938)

To register for the budget town hall: [sandiego.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vjltcOGuqjMqExqa7d-WMUTqIUkIw5Y5wzC8](https://sandiego.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vjltcOGuqjMqExqa7d-WMUTqIUkIw5Y5wzC8)

The link for the budget town hall survey is: [bit.ly/3F9lqUy](https://bit.ly/3F9lqUy)

If you are unable to attend, take the District 7 budget survey to provide your input.

**COMMUNITY OFFICE HOURS**


Finally, it was great seeing some of you at our first in-person office hours last month. Community office hours are opportunities for D7 residents to meet directly with me and ask questions or share your concerns. They take place the fourth Thursday of each month with times and locations that may vary. Information for May Office Hours are below and I look forward to meeting with more of you.

Thursday, May 26  
10 a.m. – 12 p.m.  
San Carlos Library  
Schedule time by sending email to Cheryl Willis at: [CherylW@sandiego.gov](mailto:CherylW@sandiego.gov)

—Raul Campillo represents District 7 on the San Diego City Council.

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## RSVP officer

CONTINUED FROM Page 1

Both are locals in San Diego and joined the program looking to make an impact in their community during their retired years.

"I worked in judiciary for the federal government for 40 years. Going cold turkey from doing things that are meaningful, it was hard," said Lander. "I was looking to give back to the community."

Andreen and his wife became volunteers after their son joined the SDPD. Andreen is now a second-generation RSVP officer (his father was also an officer in his hometown).

Andreen and Lander make up a duo that covered the Thursday shift on April 21. However, prior to COVID-19 they wouldn't be the only ones on the road.

The program patrols from State Route 163 to Santee and Interstate 8 to State Route 52. On Andreen and Lander's shift, they can drive anywhere from Allied Gardens to La Mesa, to Tierrasanta, to Grantville, to Clairemont depending on the schedule for the day.

The program is hoping to return to their routes prior to COVID-19,

according to co-administrator Bryon Hodge.

"We are very limited in our people who can do patrols because of the COVID-19 issues. You have to remember we're all seniors," said Hodge.

The force was inactive for a year-and-a-half during 2020 and 2021 because of the risk of exposure. Prior to COVID-19, there would be four patrols a day, meaning eight officers out in the field taking a section of the wide area.

But now, according to Andreen, one to two shifts are doing it all.

"We're doing three areas and going Downtown in the same six-hour shift," said Andreen.

The typical tasks they complete on the road — in addition to driving around neighborhoods — are helping at community events like the Tierrasanta Kiwanis parade (May 21), delivering legal cases to the district attorney's office before 8 a.m., helping with traffic control, writing parking tickets, and, of greatest significance, the You Are Not Alone (YANA) program.

YANA is a service provided to San Diego senior citizens who live alone.

Officers make weekly visits to individuals as part of the program to make sure they are safe and

well. When the force was inactive due to COVID-19, the YANA individuals would receive phone calls during their scheduled visit, but now the officers are back in person.

The impact of this program is significant, according to Andreen.

"I had one [YANA participant] mention to me she hadn't eaten in two days. I asked her if I could have a look in her kitchen and there was no food," said Andreen. "We contacted the person on her contact [and she received help]."

On their Thursday patrol, Andreen and Lander visited Lura, a YANA participant.

"It's nice to have somebody to come by and talk to," said Lura. "I don't have anybody to talk to all day or every day. It's nice to be able to see a live person."

Although they get to interact and visit with these residents, RSVP officers are a non-confrontational force.

As Hodge explained in an example, "In the event that someone were to come to us as we're writing a ticket, we won't give them a ticket."

Although they are part of law enforcement, this job is not synonymous to the duties of the police department. Their main goal is to

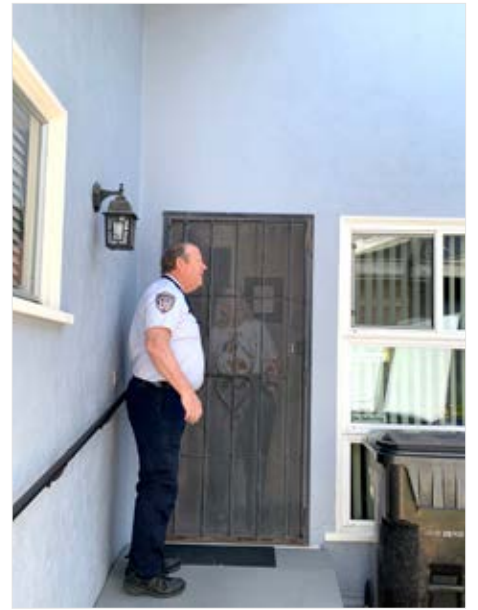
be stewards of helping the community, according to Lander.

In Lander's previous shift, he helped with traffic control at Hearst Elementary School. The school was having trouble with cars speeding in the main thorough-way that students would cross to get to class.

"We saw the cars slow down [due to their presence] and what we got was thank you from parents and the teacher at the back gate," said Lander. "As crazy as it may have seemed when we headed over there, we walked away thinking that was worth doing."

Although the officer numbers are starting to rise again as the force returns to the field, Hodge said he's hoping to get multiple patrols on the road and their academy training back to its original state.

"I'm going on my 13th year [as an officer]," said Hodge. "We've had members that have been there for 20 years. Once they sign up, they find it's very gratifying. It's not the most exciting thing to do, but it's the gratification for a



Officer Paul Andreen checks on a resident during a patrol. (Photo by Elaine Alfaro)

senior to get out in the community and contribute to the safety of our communities."

To learn more about the RSVP program or apply today, contact the officer in charge at (619) 446-1016/(619)446-1014 or visit: sandiego.gov/police/recruiting/volunteer#rsvp.

—Elaine Alfaro is a journalism student at Point Loma Nazarene University and a former intern for the La Mesa Courier.

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# Friends of Del Cerro welcomes pair of new employees

**By JAY WILSON**

Friends of Del Cerro (FODC) welcomes two key City of San Diego employees to Del Cerro.

Robert Raynor is our new police community relations officer. Officer Raynor replaces Officer Steffen who was an outstanding CRO for us for six years. If you need to contact Officer Raynor, his email address is rraynorv@pd.sandiego.gov.

Anthony Hackett, from Councilmember Raul Campillo's office is our new district representative.

Hackett is replacing Jared Miller-Sclar who is opening his

own consulting business. Hackett brings a lot of experience as he has been the district representative for Allied Gardens and lives in Mission Valley, which is also part of our council district.

If you live in Princess Del Cerro or have driven through the area in the past couple of weeks, you may have been required to detour around a stormwater drain replacement project underway on Wenrich Drive between Lance and Eldegardens. City staff is replacing 36-inch diameter cement stormwater drainage pipes. The posted signage indicates the stormwater drainage pipe replacement project may last through the middle of July.

The next upgrade to the basketball court at the Princess Del Cerro Park are the six-foot padded safety bumpers which will be fastened to the poles securing the new backboards and hoops.

Whether you are interested in being hands-on, volunteering your time to help support our organization, or would prefer to make a monetary donation in support of our goals, we welcome you to become involved with the FODC today.

For more information about the FODC, visit [friendsofdelcerro.org](http://friendsofdelcerro.org).

—Jay Wilson is a board member with Friends of Del Cerro.



Stormwater replacement pipes stacked up on Wenrich Drive as part of the two-month project to be completed by mid-July. (Courtesy photo)

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## Patribots

CONTINUED FROM Page 9

from around the world. Robotics has really helped me learn what I want to do in life and find my passion for computer science, programming, and robotics in general.”

For student Jacob Hotz, the program has become more than a club to prepare him for college but a place to explore his passions. It also has helped him to learn useful skills outside of a normal extracurricular activity.

It is not just students seeing the positive that comes out of this activity.

PHHS parent Kelly Hamilton stated, “Robotics has given my son a positive experience in teamwork, critical thinking, and creative problem-solving that I know will propel him into a bright future with strong skills to take into his career.”

Fellow parent Pam Broudy added, “This program brought not just the experience of using knowledge to build a robot, but also the need for communication and collaboration. Its incredible to see how much time and effort is put in and the end results are amazing. The program has turned my son into a Mr. Fix-It.”

Mentor Michael Reed pointed out, “The program has vastly changed over the 15 years I have been a mentor. The students haven’t. They are always ready for a challenge, always willing to learn, and always hungry to compete.”

As student Noelle Barragan concluded, “This program has helped me find a group of equally technically inclined people within my school, and allowed me to learn many hands-on skills.” Those include designing with CAD software, practice in the use and handling of power tools, and to get up-close and personal with heavy machinery.

Meeting students with fellow interests and talents is but one of the many positives the PHHS robotics program has built.


—Reach editor Dave Thomas:  
[dave@sdnews.com](mailto:dave@sdnews.com).


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The PHHS boys' tennis team has had much reason to smile this season. (Courtesy photo)

# Patrick Henry boys' tennis completes historic successful regular season

When it came to accomplishments on the tennis courts this season, the Patrick Henry High School boys' team aced one test after another.

The squad recently completed a historically successful regular season, winning its first San Diego Eastern League championship since 1992.

After a pair of early-season losses, the Patriots ended on a 13-match winning streak for an 11-1 league record and a mark of 21-2 overall. The team also took home the championship at the 2022 Annual Pete Brown First serve Tournament in February.

Freshman Oliver Kober has been a dominant force in singles, accumulating a 29-6 record on the year.

The doubles teams of Lincoln Branam and Dalton Bui (22-4) and Jordan Clifford and Ryan Kaplan (17-5) have won numerous close competitive sets that have determined the outcomes of many matches.

Since moving up from doubles to singles, sophomore Colin Miller has gone 22-6 and raised the team to a new level.

The squad has been carried by solid leadership from co-captains Paul Uong and Nathaniel Santana, as well as seniors William Grisafi, Cooper Delemus and Jose Cruz.

Substitutes Zander Kobold, Ben Kaplan and Drew Miller have all contributed big wins when called on to jump into the lineup.

Coaches Jason Kaplan, Jack Einbinder and Kenn Baniqued are extremely proud of the accomplishments of this relatively young team.

Editor's note: Article and photo supplied by head coach Jason Kaplan.

# PHHS golfers sink fantastic season

The Patrick Henry High School boys' golf team under head coach Gary McMinn completed their match play season recently and what a season it has been.

The team finished with an outstanding overall record of 16-3 and a league record of 9-1. The boys won the Eastern League title, finishing with their best team record in seven years. Patriot golf was led by seniors Zubeyr Mohamed, Jeremy Gulley, Andrew Levikow; juniors Julian

Gay and Zach Downs; and freshmen Ethan Roe, Taylor Tweet, Owen Carson, Chris Anguelov and Wyatt Zeiger.

PHHS competed recently in the conference championship. Gay finished in the top 15 and advanced to the match play part of the tournament. Next week the boys have a CIF "Play in match" with San Pasqual. With a win, the Patriots will advance to the CIF Tournament at La Costa May 16. Based on their overall season

play, Mohamed, Gay, Downs, Roe and Tweet have already qualified to participate in the individual CIF Tournament.

"Congratulations to the boys for a great 2022 season," McMinn remarked. "The next few years should also be good as the freshman golfers are the best at the school in years."

Editor's note: Article and photo supplied by head coach Gary McMinn.

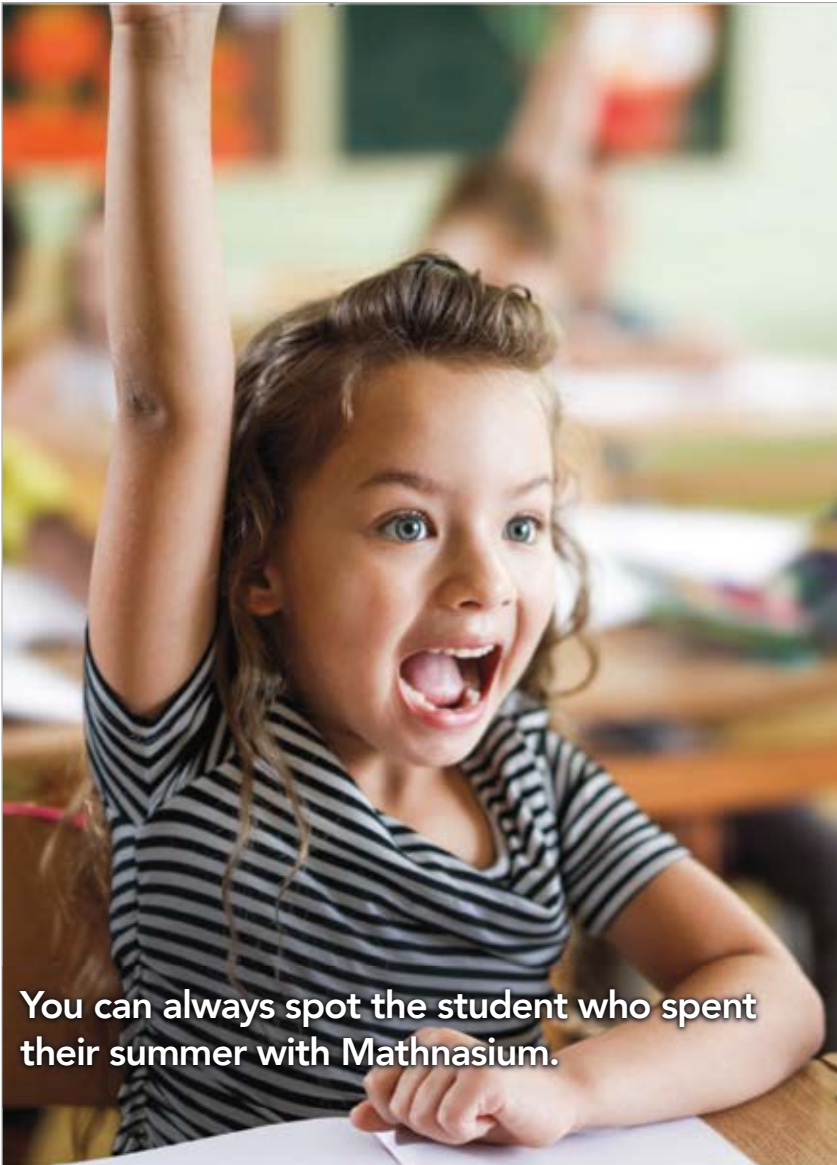


The PHHS boys' golf team sunk the competition this season. (Courtesy photo)

# Project Homekey

CONTINUED FROM Page 5

"Then the project was placed on the County's consent agenda, which is supposed to be for routine County business, when this matter is far from routine and included a waiver of the required 15-day notice for grant funding," Riebau went on to say. "There is no way this matter should have been on the County's consent agenda. During public comment on the County's consent agenda items a PATH representative stated that this project had community support, which is untrue. The community is blindsided due to being completely left out of all discussions on the matter and knew nothing about the homeless housing and treatment use."



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# Cheers Delicatessen and Liquor: Serving up delicious sandwiches for 33 years

By **ROBIN DOHRN-SIMPSON**

What started as a five-year project is now going on 33 years - with many more to come.

Delicatessens come and go, but Cheers Deli in San Carlos, next



door to Keil's Fresh Food Store, has weathered many storms and still survives. What is the secret?

The secret is serving a great sandwich. High-quality ingredients. Fresh, delicious bread. Special sauces that add just that little punch.

"We want to give the customers good value for their money. People just want a good deli sandwich," said owner Manny Keriakos.

"Last weekend we sold 400 sandwiches in one day. It can get hectic behind the counter. We typically have five people working in a small galley kitchen. It takes fancy footwork to maneuver in a tight area. Many of my employees have been here for many years. Even my 90-year-old dad works every day helping stock the shelves," added Keriakos.

Some favorite specialty sandwiches are: The godfather which boasts all Italian meats including capocollo, cotto salami, Italian salami and provolone cheese with Italian dressing served on a French roll. The chain-saw sandwich is roast beef with melted provolone cheese served on a crispy French roll

topped with whipped cream cheese and bacon. T.B.A.C., a delicious combination of fresh turkey breast, bacon, avocado slices and cheddar cheese served on a French roll.

If chicken is your preference try the Santa Fe Chicken sandwich of marinated chicken breast, roasted red bell peppers with melted jalapeno jack cheese and avocado served on a French roll with sweet hot honey mustard. The Cheers combo club is also a very popular jumbo sandwich with turkey, ham, crisp bacon and cheddar cheese.

Cheers also has a broad wine selection with well-known wines that are of good value. You can find many wines under \$20, both red and white wines. If you're a beer drinker, you're in luck. "I try to have a mixture of national favorites and local craft brews. This is an IPA area, we stock a variety of these but we also have many famous national brands. New Belgium Brewery from Colorado is well-represented as is Stone Brewery from Escondido," said Keriakos. This is not to forget the entire wall of spirits; Gin, Rum, Vodka, Scotch and many more.

If you have a party you want catered, Keriakos provides party platters filled with meats, cheeses and salads of your choice.

Cheer's Deli is located at 6983 Navajo Road. Call (619) 463-9991 for information. You can visit the deli online at [cheersdeli.com](http://cheersdeli.com).

—Robin Dohrn-Simpson is a local food and travel writer. Reach her at [robindohrnsimpson.com](http://robindohrnsimpson.com).



Owner Manny Keriakos has many fine foods waiting to cheer you up at Cheers Deli. (Photos by Robin Dohrn-Simpson)



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These Patrick Henry High School student-athletes are ready for their next challenge. (Courtesy photo)

# PHHS student-athletes look forward to next challenge

Nearly two-dozen student-athletes at Patrick Henry High School are set for their next big step in life after announcing college commitments.

The group of student-athletes were recognized recently.

They include:

- Ryan Ellis - baseball (Santa Clara University)
- Ava Lewison-German beach volleyball (Arizona State University)
- Elijah Lux - football (Portland State University)
- Omar Hammond - football (Portland State University)
- Jordan Roesch - lacrosse (Vassar College)

- Skylar Hilmer - lacrosse (Eastern Michigan)
- Jackson Miller - soccer (Cal Poly San Luis Obispo)
- Olivia Gigante - softball (University of Florida)
- Kaiah Altmeyer - softball (Texas A&M)
- Malia Savage - softball (Molloy College)
- Harrison Eaton - water polo (Whittier University)
- Tanner Furtak - water polo (Harvard)
- Andrew Gerboth - water polo (Cal Lutheran)
- Tommy Kenney - lacrosse (Colorado State University-Pueblo)

- Laura Burger - tennis (Bemidji State University)
- Chloe Wilson - softball (San Diego Christian College)
- Grayce Miller - lacrosse (Linfield University)
- Lani McCombs - lacrosse (Colorado State University-Pueblo)
- Savannah Sutton - softball (Ottawa University OUAZ)
- Elianna Castillo - softball (Clarke University)
- James Brumley - cross country/track (St. Mary's College)
- Preston Bowlds - cross country/track (University of California-Santa Barbara)

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May 2022

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SUDOKU PUZZLE

Fill in the blank cells using number 1 to 9. Each number can appear only once in each row/column and 3x3 block. Use logic and process elimination to solve the puzzle.

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

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10
11				12		13			14		
15						16			17		
	18				19	20			21		
					22	23			24		
25	26	27	28	29							
30						31					
32								33	34	35	36
					38	39	40		41	42	
					43			44			
		45	46								
47	48				49			50	51	52	53
55					56			57			58
59					60			61			
62					63			64			

- CLUES ACROSS**

1. Scream loudly

5. Antidepressant (abbr.)

8. The bill in a restaurant

11. Oblong pulpits

13. Adult female chicken

14. Abnormal breathing

15. Financial obligations

16. Belonging to a thing

17. Winged

18. Peoples

20. College hoops tournament
21. An informal body of friends

22. Region of the world

25. In an early way

30. Connected by kinship

31. Type of tree

32. Official order

33. Foundation for an idea

38. Small, faint constellation

41. Book lovers

43. Vegetable

45. Cabbage variety

47. A way to heal
49. Illuminated

50. Dish that features a stick

55. Insurance-related costs (abbr.)

56. Solid water

57. Soldier's gear

59. "Uncle Buck" actress Hoffmann

60. Former measure of length

61. Arabic name meaning "spring"

62. Doctors' group

63. Actress Susan

64. Appropriate

- CLUES DOWN**

1. Cool!

2. Hebrew unit of measure

3. Swedish rock group

4. College army

5. Black eye

6. One who stopped working

7. Teach a value

8. Rhythmic patterns

9. "MASH" actor Alda

10. "Friday Night Lights" director

12. Midway between S and SE

14. Indian musical pattern
19. Fulfill a desire

23. Water soaked soil

24. Brass instrument

25. Before

26. Popular color

27. Peyton's little brother

28. Partner to cheese

29. Put onto

34. "Much \_\_\_ about nothing"

35. A way to mend

36. Anger

37. Soviet Socialist Republic

39. Mobilized
40. Resembles an earlobe

41. Cut of meat

42. Nigerian people

44. Recently

45. Square stone building at Mecca

46. Adhere to orders

47. Adventure story

48. Marine bivalve mollusk

51. Retrospective analysis (abbr.)

52. Actor Pitt

53. Tibetan village

54. A way to change by heating

58. A beam of sunshine

A	T	O	D		A	E	D		V	W	V
V	I	B	V		T	T	E		A	B	V
H	O	W	R	V		E	O	I	E	V	T
	B	O	B	V	K		I	T		B	V
						I	B	V	H	O	K
H	E	M	O	T		I	T	N	V	O	
S	H	E	D	V		H	E		V	V	
S	I	S	A						T	O	I
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					A	T	E		L	V	E
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G	N	V	G		T	I	N		S	E	C
H	V	T	V		S	J	I		S	J	B
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B	A				T	I	S		H	V	O

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

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# Project Homekey

CONTINUED FROM Page 13

Riebau believes that since she and others feel there has been no community outreach to date, the public officials who worked on this project should make their presence known.

“They should make it a priority to be present at upcoming El Cerrito meetings and College Area Planning Board meetings so they can hear from the neighborhood residents, churches and schools on this matter and find out what the community sentiment is and report it factually,” Riebau contended. She went on to say that El Cerrito was aware of the huge building, but not the homeless housing use. She claimed FHC representatives denied concerns that the structure would be for homeless housing.

Riebau added that in November of 2020, FHC told El Cerrito they were going to construct a 10-story building, eight stories above ground, on its parking lot site, which would consist of about 250 parking spaces, more of their medical offices, some commercial opportunities, housing for their doctors and affordable housing for a variety of low-income levels.

On Jan. 21, 2021, ECCC held a meeting to talk about and vote on the building plans and the impact on the neighborhood. “The vote resulted in 57 of 72 attendees voting against the over-large project and its impacts,” Riebau noted.

“El Cerrito was told the 142 units, some one-and-two-bedroom units and about 100 studio units are a very desirable product citing the affordable housing would include a variety of low-income levels, including workforce housing income levels, for a variety of low-income renters, including SDSU students and graduates and other young professionals,” Riebau remarked.

Riebau noted that was the last time El Cerrito heard any details on the building plans from FHC, Elo-Rivera or any other agency reps until the April 21, 2022 County agenda notification.

As Riebau sees it, “Housing and treating the homeless should not be paramount to neighborhood safety and quiet enjoyment of property by its residents. Homeless housing with drug and alcohol addiction and mental health treatment center does not belong in the El Cerrito residential neighborhood or any other residential neighborhood. The FHC building site is directly across the street from a K-8 school, one and one-half blocks from a church which has an elementary school, and two and one-half blocks from a middle school.”

According to Riebau the planned use of the location will destroy community character and the neighborhood.

“There is no transition between existing land uses and this rehabilitation institutional use,” Riebau commented. “The

over-large building operating as a treatment center will have significant traffic and parking impacts on the surrounding streets, much more significant than a true residential use would have. The building use FHC described in its 2020 and 2021 meetings with El Cerrito and the College Area Planning Board could fit in with residents’ visions. Homeless housing and treatment does not fit.”

At the end of the day, Riebau believes, “The City has done nothing to address our concerns because they have not told us of the use so they can hear our concerns – they simply orchestrated this use surreptitiously.”

Alex and Lorna Zukas have been El Cerrito residents for some 20 years and both serve on the ECCC Board. They are but two people with some concerns of the building plans.

“The current project being built is gigantic and will stick out like a sore thumb,” Alex Zukas said. “It will be among the largest buildings built on El Cajon Boulevard from Park Boulevard to the I-8. There is no consideration for blending the building into the neighborhood’s landscape.”

Zukas said he and others in the community feel the building will lead to more traffic on surrounding roads among other issues.

“The increased traffic from both residential density and expanded clinic space will create traffic flow problems on one of the busiest state routes in eastern San Diego,” Alex Zukas stated. “The community asked the city for a traffic study to measure the potential impact, and deal with cars turning off of and onto the boulevard, but the request was ignored.”

As Zukas sees it, the FHC building would be better placed on University Avenue, but due to recent changes in city policies, the FHC building was approved “by right” by city staff without input from community residents or the local planning committee. According to Zukas, resident’s concerns over the building have been ignored.

“The ‘by right’ process is extremely undemocratic for the community,” Zukas remarked. “It destroys local homeowners’ rights to live in the type of neighborhood they purchased homes in. It also forces local renters to accept the new living arrangement – next to homeless housing and a massive eight-story building – or seek new accommodation in an unfavorable rental market. We are not a community that rejects helping and doing our share to support those in need. This feels different. It is a massive medical facility and a homeless and drug and alcohol rehabilitation center. It will be right next to people’s homes and in very close proximity to elementary and middle schools and churches. We’ve been given no say in it and no real information about the project.”

Asked what concerns her most about the project and its impact on the neighborhood, Lorna Zukas noted, “This is a difficult question because there are so many unknowns, and we cannot get answers to questions. Because we cannot get any information, we are skeptical at best. We do not believe that FHCS or San Diego city government has El Cerrito residents’ best interests in mind or at heart.

“What they’ve not done is seriously sought out development of affordable or low-income housing in exchange for the right to build higher-end housing,” Zukas continued. The city chooses to support developers, who build for their own profit, and it accepts low numbers of units for government supportive housing. If the city were serious about having adequate affordable housing units, it might ensure that workers were paid a living wage that afforded them opportunities or it could institute rent control or outlaw all short-term rentals (STRs).”

For Alex Zukas, a big concern is that adding homeless housing in the neighborhood will mean another layer of social stress on the community. A community that is already fighting to maintain its middle-and-working-class roots.

“The city will not pave our streets, fix our streetlights, or replace old sewer and water lines,” Zukas commented. “The El Cerrito community does not have one park in it, not one, and there are no plans to add one. We have very real economic concerns about this project leading to a decline in environmental quality. Who will choose to live near an eight-story institutional facility made from shipping containers that houses chronically long-term homeless individuals? The fact that the apartments are used, rehabilitated, shipping containers is an indication of the low, cost-cutting quality of the project.”

At the end of the day, Zukas wants officials to meet with the community and tell them what it means, realistically to have 40 new permanent supportive apartments in El Cerrito for San

Diegans experiencing chronic homelessness.

“Everyone deserves opportunities to pull their lives together, but the people who live in this community and those who have invested decades of their lives building community and home here deserve to fully understand how this project will change their community,” Zukas added.

For both Alex and Lorna Zukas, the change coming to their community does leave them and others with concerns.

“We have some concerns about the impact of 142 units of affordable housing in the neighborhood,” Lorna Zukas pointed out. “The studio apartments will not house families with children who can attend our local schools. Will El Cerrito’s young professionals who need affordable housing get first opportunity to rent these units? What services will the city provide to the community that must absorb nearly 200 adults who will be dependent on the government or donor funding for their housing in one way or another? We want to hear how this project is not condemning El Cerrito to rising poverty rates and ill-planned overcrowding. Asked another way, is this a population who can help us build the neighborhood by supporting local businesses, or become entrepreneurs, and engage in community development work? We ask the question again: who is going to live in these units?”

The Zukas’ and others want answers to their questions sooner than later.

—Reach editor Dave Thomas at [Dave@sdnews.com](mailto:Dave@sdnews.com).







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Climbing to new heights is but one of the impressive photos to view. (Photo by Christine Jeng)

# MTRP Foundation to showcase 120 photo contest finalists

By TAYLOR CROWLEY

The Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation's annual photo contest has returned with a bang.

By allowing online entries and waiving the entry fee, the MTRP Foundation achieved its goal of making the contest more accessible and having more participants. This year, we received 295 submissions from as many photographers and our three judges selected 120 photos to be on display at the visitor center.

The exhibition is open to the public and is on view from May 7 – June 17 during the center's regular hours, 9 a.m. -5 p.m. daily. Come by before June 4 to cast your ballot for the people's choice award. People's choice voting can only be done in person and is limited to one vote per person. The photo contest winners, including people's choice and best in show, will be announced at the awards ceremony.

The photo contest awards ceremony will take place on Sunday, June 5

from 2-4 p.m., also at the visitor center. Registration is not required for the event, but seating is limited in our theater so please be aware that you may not get a seat. Please allow time for parking and plan to perhaps walk from the overflow parking lot on Jackson Drive and Mission Gorge Road as parking is impacted on weekends.

We're excited that we're finally staging the 28th MTRP photo contest after a two-year suspension and proud to display the unique perspectives our MTRP community has captured in each and every photo. If you submitted to the contest and your photo was not selected to be shown in the visitor center, note that your photo will be featured in an online gallery on the MTRP website if it followed contest guidelines.

Many thanks to our judges, Julia Dixon-Evans, Dolwain Green, and Rick Wiley, and the MTRP Foundation's student intern, Izzy Capinski, for their contributions to this year's photo contest.

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# Little home inventory available

By SARAH WARD, REALTOR

With the jump in interest rates, people are wondering what the effect on local real estate prices will be.

There is still very little inventory available and when a quality home comes up on the market, there are still multiple offers coming in but perhaps less offers than a year ago. There are several factors why home prices are forecasted to remain steady or even increase this year as some are stating.

Last year home prices nationwide increased nearly 19% and in the first three months of 2022, home prices continued to rise. This reflects an amazing 121 months of consecutive price

increases! But mortgage rates nationwide are now averaging over 5% up from around 3% last year. You would think this has a significant effect on the demand for homes but several factors are in-play keeping home prices firm.

A big driver is that millions of millennials (23 to 42 years old) are surging into the marketplace to buy homes. This demographic had at one time a higher rental rate historically but because of rising rents and because many in this group want to start a family (and settle down!), the demand for homes has increased.

Also, many in this group are now able to work from home and are now able to afford lower priced properties away from the pricey coasts and cities. The rental

price to mortgage ratio is sky high currently as rents continue to increase; and thus it becomes a better value for traditional renters to own a property now and lock-in a fixed monthly payment.

I just closed a property for new buyers where their mortgage payment is now less than they were paying in rent; this phenomenon is occurring more frequently now. Another economic factor is the consumer expectation of rising rents causing renters that can afford to do so, escape the rising rents madness by purchasing a property to lock in a fixed payment for many years to come.

Another factor is that homeowners with a 3% mortgage rate don't want to move into a new property that would have a

mortgage rate over 5%. So expect many homeowners to stay put enjoying their historically low mortgage rate. Also, the underwriting standard for the past 10 years has been strict, meaning that homeowners are more qualified and are less likely to foreclose. A property can be either rented out or sold by the owner instead of foreclosing.

In California, very little new construction is occurring unlike in parts of Texas, Arizona, and Florida where new homes are going up by the thousands. A lack of new construction locally will keep prices higher. The population continues to increase and the housing supply in Southern California is not keeping up. Additionally a mortgage rate in the 5's is actually still a good value for first time buyers. In the late 1970's mortgage rates were over 10%; that level would clearly have

a dramatic effect on affordability and demand but we are nowhere near that currently. So expect San Diego prices to remain steady and likely continue rising.

Prices continue to rise with very little inventory on the market. The following data is for single family homes with the percentage increase in median home price since Jan1, 2022.

**92115 College Area:** median home price \$962,500, up 9% since Jan 1, 2022.

**92119 San Carlos:** median home price \$1,130,500, an increase of 22% over the last 4 months.

**92120 Del Cerro, Allied Gardens:** median home price \$1,050,000, an increase of 14% since beginning of the year.

—Sarah Ward is a relator with Fine & Coastal Real Estate.

# San Carlos Area Council getting back to meeting in person

By PATRICIA MOONEY

Great news. The San Carlos Area Council – your town council – will be meeting once again in person.

After two years of an in-and-out quarantine, we are all looking forward to seeing our friends and neighbors at the San Carlos Library, 7265 Jackson Drive on Wednesday, May 18 at 6:30 p.m.

We are discussing a "Hybrid" meeting; that is, we'll try and rig up Zoom on the projection screen so that people who cannot meet in person can still join us. If this comes to fruition, we'll post the Zoom link on our Facebook page. (facebook.com/sancarlosareacouncil)

This meeting will focus on the election of our president, vice president, secretary and treasurer. If you have attended two meetings,

then you are eligible to participate as an officer on the SCAC board. Get involved in your community.

In other news, spring has sprung, and we are all cautioned to prepare our homes and property for another relentless fire season. Make sure you have at least 100 feet of defensible space around your home, remove any dry brush and protect the attic entries of your homes from potential embers. One small ember can travel six miles, land inside your attic and take down your home. That's exactly how the Witch Fire of 2017 spread so fast, leading to the evacuation of 500,000 San Diegans.

The crime in our community seems to be predominantly thefts of opportunity, so if you aren't able to park your car in your garage, make sure it's locked. And surveillance cameras pointed

around the perimeter of your property make good sense, especially with the slew of porch pirates out and about.

And in Patrick Henry High School news, according to San Diego 7 News: More than 150 parents and district representatives gathered virtually to address Patrick Henry High School's plan to eliminate eight advanced and honors classes from its offerings, including advanced English, history and biology.

On Tuesday, Area Superintendent Erin Richison said that 11th grade honors courses of Honors American Literature and Honors U.S. History were being restored to the 2022-23 curriculum. She also said, "In addition, we will be collaborating with our district curriculum teams to develop honors courses at the 9th and 10th grade levels open to any



The next meeting of the San Carlos Area Council will take place May 18 at the San Carlos Library. (Courtesy photo)

interested student for the 2022-23 school year."

SCAC holds town council meetings every other month. See you on May 18 at the San Carlos Library. The next meeting after that will be Wednesday, July 13.

If you have a San Carlos story to share, or would like to get involved in your Town Council,

please contact San Carlos Area Council VP Patricia Mooney at patty@crystalpyramid.com.

—Patricia "Patty" Mooney is an award-winning San Diego video producer and partner at San Diego's longest-serving video production company, Crystal Pyramid Productions.

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