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LMAAC 6th grade's concrete skatepark project took flight

By DAVE THOMAS

For those with a love of skateboarding and building things in general, an exciting new concrete skatepark concept took flight this past school year involving sixth grade students at La Mesa Arts Academy (LMAAC).

The project involved LMAAC students, the local Skate4Concrete initiative and The Skatepark Project.

Developed by the non-profit organization Project Cornerstone as part of its Skate4Concrete initiative, this educational unit offers students an opportunity to engage in a hands-on way in design and construction.

Students in Rebecca Orvell's sixth-grade class were the first to test a new educational unit in skatepark construction.

According to Orvell, a math and science teacher, more than 70 students from two classes worked on the project for three months. More than 90% of Orvell's science class stated this initiative was their favorite project to work on during the school year.



Sixth-grade LMAAC teacher Rebecca Orvell works with a student on the concrete skatepark project. (Courtesy photo by Richard Santer)

SEE **SKATEPARK PROJECT**, Page 6

Tiny house but mighty students

By ELAINE ALFARO

For students at La Mesa's The Learning Choice Academy (TLC) located at 4215 Spring Street, the Career and Technical Education (CTE) program looks a bit different than the typical classroom setting of a whiteboard, desks, and quizzes.

The curriculum focuses on problem-solving skills and hands-on experience in sustainable construction. These lessons are applied directly as the students work together to build a tiny house by the end of the school year.

In 2020, even amid COVID-19, CTE students became OSHA 10 certified in construction safety procedures and designed and built their first tiny house (It would not be the last).

Earlier this month, TLC students achieved their goal for the second year in a row and presented the culmination of their work to their community with a "tiny housewarming" and ribbon-cutting ceremony. Recent graduate, Isabelle Hinojosa, did the honors of cutting the ribbon.

Hinojosa joined CTE on a whim three years ago after transferring to TLC halfway through her sophomore year.

"My counselor told me, 'You have two options for your elective. You can do art or a new class, EED (Energy and Environmental Design),' " said Hinojosa. "I can't even draw a stick figure, so I picked EED. As I continued to be involved in this class, I realized there were



La Mesa local and fourth-generation electrical contractor Travis Nixon and recent graduate Isabelle Hinojosa. (Photo credit: Elaine Alfaro)

SEE **TINY HOUSE**, Page 12

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Once a Scottie, Always a Scottie!

Helix Charter High School celebrates its 70th graduating class



Helix Charter High School graduated a school-record 566 students earlier this month. (Courtesy photo)

For 70 years, Helix Charter High School has established a reputation of excellence and high achievement in the arts, athletics, and academics and the Class of 2022 is no exception. This ceremony celebrated the largest graduating class in our history, with a total of 566 Highlanders. Two hundred and eighty eight wore platinum cords which represent that they earned honors with a cumulative grade point average above 3.5. Two hundred and fifty students with platinum caps have earned distinction for outstanding achievement through coursework or assessments indicating college readiness. Fourteen students with platinum tassels have demonstrated academic achievement through lifetime membership in the California Scholarship Federation, 78 graduates have earned designation in the program for bi-literacy, and 106 graduates have completed a career technical education pathway.

And of course, our incredible Helix faculty and staff members have worked tirelessly to ensure the success of each and every student. Our amazing teachers, as well as our student support staff, which includes our wellness center, our college and career center, our grade level teams and every single staff member on campus are an integral part of that success. Here are just a few highlights:

Athletics

Our athletic teams won multiple league championships in football, field hockey, girls tennis, boys basketball, softball and girls beach volleyball. We are proud to announce that Maya Garcia Hale won an individual CIF championship in 500 meter swim (first ever state qualifier) and Tibyasa Matov won an individual CIF championship in

the long jump and 4 x 400 meter relay team. We additionally had a CIF team championship in football.

Performing arts

The Helix performing arts department spent the year getting back on the stage. Each program hosted a fall and a spring production: choir, dance, instrumental music, and speech. The instrumental music program was back on the field at halftimes, along with our bagpipes marching at many school events this year. The school musical was Mamma Mia! directed by our very own Gregg Osborn. Choir and dance competed in several competitions where all groups did extremely well. The speech and debate teams had a handful of students qualify for state and national

SEE HELIX GRADUATION, Page 4

27 Quick and Easy Fix Ups to Sell Your Home Fast and for Top Dollar

LA MESA- Because your home may well be your largest asset, selling it is probably one of the most important decisions you will make in your life, and once you have made the decision, you'll want to sell your home for the highest price in the shortest time possible. To assist homesellers, a new industry report has just been released called "27 Valuable Tips That You Should Know to Get Your Home Sold Fast and for Top Dollar." It tackles the important issues you need to know to make your home competitive in today's tough, aggressive marketplace. Through these 27 tips you will discover how to protect and capitalize on your most important investment, reduce stress, be in control of your situation, and make the best profit possible. In this report you'll discover how to avoid financial disappointment or worse, a financial disaster when selling your home. Using a common-sense approach, you will get straight facts about what can make or break the sale of your home. You owe it to yourself to learn how these important tips will give you the competitive edge to get your home sold fast and for the most amount of money. To hear a brief recorded message about how to order your FREE copy of this report, call toll-free 1-800-270-1494 and enter 1023. You can call anytime, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Get your free special report NOW.

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Helix graduation

CONTINUED FROM Page 3

competitions. Overall, the performing arts department had a year full connecting with students and audiences alike.

College credit classes

Helix has grown its dual enrollment program over the years and now offers an impressive 57 college credit classes on campus. Most of our students have taken advantage of that and will graduate with a very helpful edge. In addition to having college credits under their belt, many will also be going to college with the assistance of free financial aid. Helix Charter High School won first place in San Diego County for most students to apply for Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and California Dream Act grant money. Our students will now venture out, attending a multitude of universities around the world, entering the workforce and serving our country proudly in the military and AmeriCorps.

College tour

This year, our C4Me (College For Me) program was able to resume. Ninety seven students participated in a series of three workshops to gain a deeper understanding of the college application process and then went on three days trips during spring break. Each day students visited two southern California campuses. The college campuses

included SDSU, UCSD, Cal State Long Beach, UC Irvine, UCLA and CSU Northridge. At each campus students were able to tour the campus and meet with Helix alumni currently attending the college.

Special education

Our special education department has done an incredible job of building a strong program that includes many of our students as peer mentors. As a husband and wife team, Gabe and Kim Fleming won the East County SELPA's Community Advisory Commission "Above and Beyond" Award in recognition of exemplary service and commitment to improving the educational outcomes for students with disabilities.

Equity training

Helix is proud to have partnered with the San Diego County Office of Education's Equity Department this year. The purpose of this extensive training was to identify and address inequities in our current school systems, programs, policies, and practices to ensure every student has equitable access to educational programs to meet their postsecondary goals. In our first year, 20 staff members spent one day per month focusing on professional learning, student outcomes and student voice. We are looking forward to our continued partnership next year.

Four years ago we welcomed the class of 2022 to campus for

SEE **HELIX GRADUATION**, Page 7



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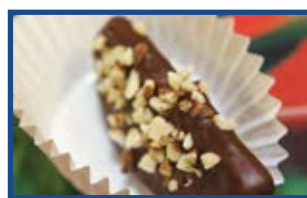
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Grossmont High School graduates 471



Foothiller Footsteps

By CONNIE AND LYNN BAER

This year 471 seniors in the Grossmont High School Class of 2022 became part of an amazing group: 39,000 Foothiller graduates. For 101 years, Grossmont High School's students and staff have taken great pride in the traditions surrounding graduation, many begun in its first decade.

Graduation was held on campus June 3 in the Jack Mashin Stadium.

At the beginning of the ceremony, Principal Dan Barnes reflected on this historic moment.

"Tens of thousands of graduates have crossed our graduation stage before you, and many thousands will follow," Barnes said. "You are part of a remarkable tradition, one that probably includes many

grandparents and parents here in the audience this morning."

During the celebration, five retiring staff members were recognized for their decades of service to Grossmont: Lou Ann Kirby, Jordie Lehr, Jan Mafnas, John Neil, and Jeannine Calabrese.

Since 1936, the graduating seniors have been led into the ceremony by students carrying the Daisy Chain, an 86-year tradition, created from the historic ivy still growing on campus and yellow daisies. Guided by Daisy Chain advisors Matt Flisher and Kristen LoPrell, the teaching staff selected 50 outstanding juniors on the basis of their school activities, scholarship, and citizenship; being selected is the highest honor awarded juniors.

During the graduation ceremony, three outstanding seniors were recognized for their academic achievements: Sara Standlee with a 4.833 GPA plans to attend UCSD in the fall; Raquel Berk has a 4.795 GPA and plans to attend SDSU; and Sarah Oung with a 4.795 GPA plans to attend UCLA School of Nursing. The three valedictorians elected to deliver their speech together.

Berk began, "Our opportunity to come up here today was not just a singular effort, but the accomplishments of our teachers, our friends, and our families.... To the social science department, thank you for showing us the mistakes of the past so we can build a brighter future. To the literature and arts



Grossmont High School graduated 471 students this year. (Courtesy photo)

departments, thank you for giving us the ability to express ourselves on paper and to the world. To the STEM departments, thank you for providing us the skills to keep up with the ever-changing technology of our future and expanding our minds to the world of possibilities."

Oung recalled, "It feels like yesterday that there was the announcement that the world was shutting down into a pandemic. It feels like yesterday that we were logging onto zoom and longing for a brighter future. It feels like yesterday that we were choosing a dress for prom. And it will feel like yesterday in ten years when we look back at this day and at this graduating class."

Standlee ended their speech, "Lastly, we would like to give this message. Each and every one of you has the potential to change the world. When you step off this field today, you will no longer be high schoolers, but independent

adults who will brave the chaos of life. There will be obstacles, there will be hardships, there will be difficulties. But, there is always a rainbow following a rainstorm."

This year, as in years past, three perpetual graduation trophies were awarded to seniors. The most prestigious service award given is the Norman Freeman Award, first awarded in 1953 as a memorial to Norman Freeman, ASB President, Class of 1947. The trophy is engraved "For the Grossmont student who has most strengthened democracy through participation". This year's 69th honoree is Ava Findahl, senior class president.

Since 1927, two identical silver loving cup trophies have acknowledged one outstanding young woman and one outstanding young man. Each trophy is engraved with the names of the 95 previous recipients. Joining them this year are Molly Schell and Garrett Kinnard.

In 1925, outstanding seniors were first recognized with a Circle G, which was the highest award then given to graduating seniors. In 2022, for the 97th year, six seniors were honored for their all-around excellence in academics, leadership, citizenship, and service: Laila Aleman, Christopher Falcon, Tayler Grant, Mariah McCaskill, David Ordaz, and Sara Standlee. Each student received a gold pin, a G enclosed in a circle, a reminder of the legacy binding GHS graduating seniors.

Since 1965, the Principal's Letters of Commendations have been awarded to students who have demonstrated leadership in a variety of areas. This year, Barnes recognized 18 students: Alazain Angotti, Noah Barnes, Raquel Berk, Samuel Chiu, Briauanna Cooney, Mason Dirkes, Adrianna Dubiel, Ariy'Ana Duke,

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Skatepark project

CONTINUED FROM Page 1

This type of construction project is set to expand to various schools across the nation. The Skatepark Project allowed different organizations to come together organically. The end result connects the community together via the science of concrete and its unique relationship to skating.

The project was conceived by San Diego resident and Project Cornerstone Executive Director Crystal Howard. She was charged with spearheading a collaborative effort to overcome a notable shortage of workers.

The goal is to educate young people to an array of career possibilities involving concrete when they are older. Among the possible projects for some of them down the road would be constructing mini-skateparks.

“Students began by learning the difference between concrete and cement,” Orvell stated. “Next, they learned the ingredients for making concrete and that an exothermic, chemical reaction occurs during the process. They participated in some hands-on learning and relied on their understanding of ratios, percentages, and other mathematical operations to determine the best aggregates for creating concrete. They formed models from their concrete samples and analyzed failure points in order to improve on their designs.”

After learning how to make concrete, they had a Zoom visit from Howard.

“She (Howard) and Roy Cornett with Superior Ready Mix provided all of the supplies and materials for this project. Howard presented a slide show about the plethora of jobs in the concrete industry. Students then learned about skateparks, from design, their benefits as community parks, and the process for creating community skateparks.”

The students were visited via Zoom by Andre Taylor, a designer with the Skatepark Project (formerly the Tony Hawk Foundation). Following the presentation, students could ask questions of Taylor. This was to help them build knowledge before designing their own parks. From there, students had a chance to go on a field trip to the site of a planned renovated community park at the corner of Waite Drive and Murray Hill Road.

“There they learned the long, involved process for a community park design,” Orvell remarked. “They then sketched individual park designs. Students then negotiated in teams of three to four to create their final team design. The project ended with students building concrete skateparks and sharing their products with the class.”

PARTICIPANTS WERE EAGER TO WORK ON PROJECT

Another LMAAC employee with a big hand in the project was instruction and data support teacher Richard Santer.

According to Santer, this project got off the ground when he approached Orvell about working together on a unit.

“Ms. Orvell is really in to teaching science in a hands-on way, where students experience the science rather than reading about it, which I wholeheartedly support,” Santer commented. “In our first meeting, she asked if I could help find a cool activity we could use to introduce concrete.” While attending a touch-a-truck event, Santer connected with Howard and the rest, as they say, is history.

It was Howard who lent the LMAAC teachers and students involved in the project the equipment necessary to get the job done.

“The resources Ms. Howard sent us included a really cool culminating activity where students built a skatepark out of concrete,” Santer added. “We (Orvell) both understood that building an actual skatepark was unrealistic, especially in our time frame, but if we could show our students as much of the process as possible, that would be amazing.”

Rachel Williams is director of communications and marketing for The Skatepark Project.

“The Skatepark Project (TSP) was approached by one of the teachers to participate by providing useful information to students and staff about skateparks and community advocacy,” Williams commented. “TSP’s skatepark best practices is a useful resource for students, community members and municipalities that can be used as a tool and information hub to learn more about getting a skatepark built within your town.”

Williams added the project supports students to learn civic engagement and how to get involved and/or advocate for something to serve not only their immediate community, but many more generations down the road.

“This project gives students a chance to be part of something bigger that will benefit youth, community members and encourage healthy outdoor recreation,” Williams remarked. added.

To date, The Skatepark Project’s grant programs have awarded more than \$10 million to help fund close to 700 public skateparks nationwide, enjoyed by some six million people annually.

One LMAAC student influenced by the project is sixth-grader Claire Peters.

According to Peters, she most liked the interactive nature involved.

“It wasn’t just typing on a chrome book or writing on paper,” Peters commented. “We got



Students tour the future park planned at the corner of Waite Drive and Murray Hill Road with Sue Richardson, City of La Mesa’s director of community services. The field trip was to show students what goes into programming a park (or skatepark), and some of the features and challenges, of this particular site. (Courtesy photo by Richard Santer)

to create models and designs and meet people. It’s not as easy as you think building a skatepark would be. There are rules you have to follow and design aspects you have to consider.”

Peters, who said she would like to be a defense attorney one day, said she enjoys skateboarding as a hobby.

“I like the freeness of it – how there’s really no rules about how to do it,” Peters remarked.

With Peters but one of many students learning about skatepark construction, many students could be building exciting careers down the road.

“Project Cornerstone is a local non-profit and our mission is to educate students about how construction materials like concrete play a role in our communities as well as inform them of the amazing job opportunities that are available,” Howard commented. “We want to bust the myth that you have to get a four-year degree to have a high-paying career. The construction and concrete industry has a wide variety of career opportunities available that do not require a college degree and pay a competitive wage.”

Howard noted that in support of the company’s mission, “We help and attend the Touch-a-Truck event. This is an amazing opportunity for families to interact with the construction industry,” Howard continued. “Project Cornerstone has a booth each year where kids can make their own concrete projects for free. It was this event that I met Mr. Richard Santer (teacher in the La Mesa-Spring Valley School District and project coordinator). After he saw the concrete project, he asked if it would be okay to incorporate it into his class at LMAAC. Project Cornerstone had recently completed creating a concrete certification course as part of our Skate4Concrete initiative and we were looking for schools to beta test the course. Mr. Santer was excited to give it a try.”

According to Howard, Project Cornerstone’s concrete certification course uses the application of constructing concrete skateparks as a way to help students learn about the science of concrete.

“Tying the education to skating has proven to make it more exciting for students to learn because it makes it relevant,” Howard stated. “They can learn more easily because it gives them a fun application and students can learn about the different jobs that are available that are required to build a skatepark. Connecting skating with concrete makes learning fun and exciting for the students.”

Project Cornerstone’s online concrete certification course is available to schools and there is also a homeschooling version.

“We are in the process of beta testing until the end of 2022,” Howard added. “We would encourage other schools to reach out if they want to incorporate, give it a try and help us improve it.”

As Santer sees it, the students involved in the skatepark project benefitted greatly from this opportunity.

“Our students were afforded a lot of opportunities to make learning real, and give it purpose in this project,” Santer stated. “They also experienced things I don’t think they would have in a traditional unit on the Earth’s surface. They learned about jobs in the field of concrete, as well as in our local city. They had the opportunity to voice opinions, and learned ways to take an active role in their local government. They also got to be scientists. These are the kinds of things students remember, and really make an impact on students.”

Santer added that he hopes more projects like this are in the pipeline for LMAAC students and teachers.

“I hope to be able to do more projects like this, where we make the learning real, and show students that they can do important work, it is not just for adults. I hope to spread project-based learning as an instructional strategy here at LMAAC, but also throughout the entire La Mesa Spring Valley School District,” Santer remarked.

For more information, visit: Skate4Concrete.com.

—Reach editor Dave Thomas at: dave@sdnews.com.

Grossmont graduation

CONTINUED FROM Page 5

Natalie Emery, Carissa Freeman, Jessie Kim, Joshua Kelly, Sara Lopez, Sasha Luhnaw, Katie O’Laughlin, Sarah Oung, Jasenya Shanks, and Joseph Steinbock.

As Barnes shared with the graduates, “All of you are, and will continue to be, the finest ambassadors for Grossmont goodwill. The diploma you are about to receive tells the world that you have met extremely high standards and are ready for the next stage in your life.”

Ending the ceremony, Findahl told her classmates, “After the last three unprecedented years, one thing I am confident in is we all learned how to persevere. I have no doubt that each of us will create the lives that we desire, always remembering who we are...forever young and a Foothiller.” Then with a turn of their tassels, the Class of 2022 left GHS with unforgettable memories and the knowledge that they were a unique part of history, the 101th class to graduate from Grossmont High School.

—Connie and Lynn Baer write on behalf of the Grossmont High School Museum.

Helix graduation

CONTINUED FROM Page 4

Scottie Pride Day. On this day the students were led through the school’s Tartans to officially become Helix Highlander and on graduation night, as tradition dictates, they walked through these same Tartans for the last time. This tradition signifies the conclusion of their journey as a Highlanders and transitions them to proud alumni of Helix High School.

Once a Scottie, always a Scottie.

Editor’s note: Kevin Osborn is executive director at Helix Charter High School.



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La Mesa Chamber’s 13th annual ‘foodie’ event set for July 18

People with an appetite and a desire to meet and mingle with others should head to the newly renovated Town & Country Hotel in Mission Valley (500 Hotel Circle North) on Monday, July 18.

Formerly held at the La Mesa Community Center the first 10 years, the event had to move to a larger venue to accommodate the crowds.

“Taste, Savor and Mingle” in a single ballroom, with plenty of room to visit throughout the food and business vendor tables. Attendees can partake in great food samplings, free prizes from

business sponsors/vendors, a silent auction and raffles and more.

From 5 p.m. to 8 p.m., the La Mesa Chamber of Commerce will treat attendees to the 13th annual “Taste of San Diego – East” event. There will be VIP tasting from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. and general admission tasting from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. VIP tasting is \$60 and general admission is \$40. No tickets will be sold at the door and the event is for ages 21 and up. Ticket pricing does not include beverages. A no-host, full-service bar will be available in the ballroom.

Among the food and beverage lineup will be samples from Dream Dinners, Duke’s Old Fashioned Onion Burgers, Edible Arrangements, Extraordinair, Golden Spoon, Hooleys Public House, I-Que BBQ, Little Roman, Los Pinos Taco Shop, Marie Callender’s, Outback Steakhouse, Pick Up Stix, Ultimate Catering Concepts.

For details or questions, call (619) 465-7700 or email: chamber@lamesachamber.com.

Full event details can be found at: www.taste.lamesachamber.com.



The 13th annual ‘foodie’ event is happening July 18 at Town & Country Hotel in Mission Valley. (Courtesy photo)

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The Best of La Mesa will publish Oct. 28.



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Tiny house

CONTINUED FROM Page 1

actually some things I liked learning about. That motivated me to keep going and do the next class where we built the tiny house.”

The inspiration for this program came not only at a time when California was facing a housing crisis but also as workshop and technical skills classes have been historically phased out of public education. TLC pioneered this program by collaborating with a La Mesa local and fourth-generation electrical contractor, Travis Nixon.

“[TLC and I] were on the same page of wanting to bring this stuff to students,” said Nixon. “They had the vision and faith for me to build out a sustainable construction program for them.”

For Nixon, this program is much more than an elective class but a program meant to de-stigmatize career routes that are alternatives to college while also helping students grow in teamwork and self-confidence. His own experiences in school and starting to work with his father in the field speak to these goals.

“[Working with my dad] pulled me out of a negative path,” said

Nixon. “What I realized is that I am not an academic but I love to learn. In education now, it’s really become like, ‘Here’s a one size fits all [curriculum],’ when that’s just not how everyone learns. What I love about this program is that they allowed someone who is not in that learning mode and has never been but has a completely successful career to share with students that have a similar makeup. We’re not only serving people who are visual/auditory learners, but we’re serving visual, auditory, and hands-on learners.”

Although Hinojosa is not pursuing a construction-related career, she said that this program taught her much about herself.

“I’m not so afraid to try new things,” said Hinojosa. “We usually want to stay in our comfort zones and not expand out of that, but this class for three years has proved me wrong. You can learn new things and you can like new things. Even if it’s not something you want to pursue for the rest of your life, they’re definitely skills you keep.”

For Nixon, seeing students like Hinojosa embrace their capabilities and remain open-minded both inside and outside the

SEE **TINY HOUSE**, Page 15

Brew Coffee Spot is great way to start the day

By ROBIN-DOHRN SIMPSON

We live in difficult times right now and it is hard to keep a calm heart and mind.

But when you walk into Brew Coffee Spot in La Mesa and the first thing you see is the sign saying, “We Brew Love”, a huge sigh of relief can be heard and a load is immediately lifted from the heaviness of the day. What a great way to start the day.

“I wanted to create a place where people can get a cup of coffee and some food, sit on the patio, relax, visit, rejuvenate and let the world go by,” said Joe Paraiso, co-owner of Brew Coffee Spot. That calmness is reflected in their tag line of “Brew Love” and their logo of a smiling drop of coffee. As their website states, “Be kind and drink good stuff”.

“We want our coffee to be as fresh as possible. We roast our own coffee in small batches. We also roast on demand. You can buy our product off the shelf we have bags of fresh-roasted coffee,” Paraiso said. After many “research trips” to coffee regions in South America, Joe has found responsible growers, from small family-owned farms where he sources his Arabica



Brew Coffee Spot is at 6101 Lake Murray Blvd. (Photo by Robin Dohrn-Simpson)

coffee. Their coffee is also sold at Kiel’s Fresh Food Store and Windmill Farms. Some coffees that are on the shelves are Costa Rican Las Montanas Honey, Kenya Nyeri Rumukia, Indonesian Sumatra Mandheling, and Colombia Tinto.

Another contribution to this peacefulness is good food.

“We serve quiches, Acai bowls, scones, muffins, brownies, and breakfast burritos. We also serve gluten-free muffins and brownies. One of our unique items is the Brie and Butter Ficelle,” Paraiso continued. Ficelle is a French bread loaf similar to a baguette but thinner.

On the first Saturday of every month, the parking lot is filled with local vendors in a community market. This family-friendly

market features fresh produce, seasonal goods, live music, and of course freshly brewed coffee.

Paraiso and his business partner Ralf Wilkowski love East County and wanted a place to go and hang out. La Mesa needed a place to hang out. “We wanted a shop that we’d want to go to and we love going to our shop,” Paraiso said. Give it a try, you might love going there too.

Brew Coffee Spot is located at 6101 Lake Murray Blvd. You can order online at: brewcoffeespot.com/ or by calling (619) 713-6698. They are open daily 7:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.

—Robin Dohrn-Simpson is a local food and travel writer. Reach her at: robindohrnsimpson.com.

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Local residents get their college degrees, honors

By DAVE THOMAS

A number of San Diego area people with ties to *La Mesa Courier*, *Mission Times Courier* and *College Times Courier* circulation areas received their college degrees and/or received honors over the last number of months.

Among them:

Kathryn Bowie received a bachelor of science in human environmental sciences from the University of Alabama in May.

Jenna Kotyk was named to the University of Alabama president's list for the spring semester.

A total of 11,224 students enrolled during spring semester at the school were named to the dean's list with an academic record of 3.5 (or above) or the president's list with an academic record of 4.0 (all A's).

Kinte Horton was named to the president's honor roll for the spring 2022 semester at Bismarck State College (North Dakota).

Students must maintain at least a 3.50 GPA on a 4.00 scale while enrolled in at least 12 semester hours of classes to qualify for the BSC president's honor roll.

Soren Savard was named to the Milwaukee School of Engineering dean's list for the 2022 spring quarter. Savard is pursuing a bachelor of science in electrical engineering.

Undergraduate students who have earned at least 30 credits and have a cumulative gpa of 3.20 or higher (out of 4.0) are on the dean's list. Students who have maintained a 3.70 or higher receive "high honors."

Andres Rico has been named to the provost's list at Troy University (Alabama) for the spring semester/term 4 of the 2021-22 academic year.

The provost's list honors full-time undergraduate students who are registered for at least 12 semester hours and who have a GPA of at least 3.65.

Landon Schirer earned a bachelor science in exercise science cum laude from Angelo State University (Texas).

Schirer also received dean's list designation for the 2022 spring semester at the school.

To be eligible for the ASU dean's list, full-time undergraduate students must maintain at least a 3.25 GPA on a 4.0 scale.

Katie Barden graduated with a MS in counseling psychology from Avila University's (Missouri) Class of 2022.

Lydia Razick, Aaron Ortego and Prudencia Henderson were named to the winter 2022 president's list at Southern New Hampshire University.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum GPA of 3.70 and above are named to the president's list.



Kathryn Bowie

Tenya Mai Thurston graduated from Campbellsville University (Kentucky).

Thurston was one of 1,593 students receiving degrees.

Christopher Gordon was among 3,523 graduates who received degrees from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Gordon earned an MBA from the office of graduate studies.

Abigail Filson was named to the spring 2022 dean's list at DePauw University (Indiana).

The dean's list recognizes students who achieve a semester GPA of 3.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale.

Jessica Dewitt and Sydney Newton, students at Fairleigh Dickinson University's metropolitan campus in Teaneck, N.J., were named to the dean's list for the fall 2021 semester.

To qualify for the dean's list, a student must carry a 3.2 or better GPA out of a possible 4.0 and be enrolled in a minimum of 12 letter-graded hours (four courses).

Heather Tyge graduated with a BSN majoring in baccalaureate nursing from Ohio University's College of Health Sciences and Professions in fall 2021.

Alexandria Dyer was among more than 4,000 undergraduate students at the University of Iowa named to the dean's list for the 2022 spring semester.

Dyer is a fourth-year student and majoring in bachelor of liberal studies.

Anne Buckley graduated from the University of Hartford in May.

She earned her bachelor of fine arts in music theatre.

Jillmarie Halama graduated with a BSN baccalaureate nursing from Ohio University's College of Health Sciences and Professions in spring 2022.

Diane Marx graduated with a degree in criminal justice from Stanislaus State (Calif.).

For the 2021-22 academic year, the school recognized 3,130 graduates and 306 credential recipients.

Editor's note: If you know of a local college student who has graduated this school year, received honors etc. email: dave@sd-news.com.

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The dreaded home inspection

By LAURA LOTHIAN

Imagine a throat swab, accompanied by a nasal endoscope, followed by a colonoscopy and you will get a good idea of what your poor house goes through during today's home inspection phase of escrow.

When I first started my real estate career 20 years ago, physical inspections were much simpler. The inspector arrived with his ladder, pencil, pad, and flashlight; spent about an hour determining if the house was sound (they usually were), and called it a day. Most reports were black and white, had no photos, and maxed out at 20 or 30 pages.

Today's inspection reports could be used for step classes at 24-Hour Fitness.

They're forensic, often topping 100+ pages, and feature more color-saturated photos than the September issue of Vogue Magazine. Home sellers would be wise to be sitting, Jameson Whiskey in one hand, smelling salts in the other when they receive their copy of the inspection report.

The inspections and resulting reports are often so distressing to homeowners that I now prepare them with the following advice:

1. Unless you are selling an 'as-is' fixer, repair any dripping faucets, slow drains, windows that don't open and shut properly, broken garbage disposal, etc. Small, easy fixes should be done before going on the market but definitely before inspections.
2. Do not attend the inspection. Homeowners cannot help but feel invaded, sensitive and defensive during the inspection making their presence awkward for the buyers and their inspector. Go to the movies, visit with

family or friends, spend some time at the beach, or read War and Peace, something time-consuming as inspections usually take three-five hours, with even condos and small houses taking two-three hours. The listing and buying agents or a member of their teams should attend inspections on behalf of their clients.

3. Tools used by today's inspectors can include electrical testers, moisture meters, infrared cameras, AFCI/GFCI testers, combustible gas detectors, radon and carbon monoxide monitors, microwave testers, mold testing kits, and so on.
4. Surprisingly, not surprisingly, inspectors will find problems even with brand new construction homes.
5. The inspection report is traditionally ready within 24-48 hours after the inspection. The buyers' agent emails it to the listing agent who then forwards it to the home seller.
6. The inspection report will be detailed, thorough, and usually easy to understand. Every problem found will have a photo and an explanation. Most inspectors summarize their findings at the conclusion of the report, which often becomes the basis for the "Request for Repairs."
7. Experienced agents on both sides will smartly guide their clients through Request for Repairs. Asking for upgrades or to repair or replace something that was obvious when the offer was written should be off the table. For example, if the carpet is worn, one does not ask for new carpet or a flooring credit because ostensibly the worn carpet was factored into the purchase price. However, if it is discovered

the garbage disposal does not work, that should be fair game and agreeable to the seller.

8. Oftentimes inspectors will recommend secondary inspections such as roof, plumbing, HVAC, foundation, sewer scope, and electrical.
9. Customarily, sellers allow unfettered access for the inspections and buyers pay for inspections. The exceptions are termite and septic which are usually paid for by the sellers.
10. The inspection period of escrow - by default the first 17 days of escrow though most agents shorten that time period - can cause the most angst for the sellers and buyers because no one wants to discover something very wrong with the house, a "deal killer."
11. If something major is discovered like mold infestation, foundation problems, corroded cast iron sewer pipes, HVAC system at the end of its life (inspectors love saying, "at the end of its life"), leaking roof, etc. the buyer, depending on the buyer's desire for the property, could cancel escrow, negotiate for repairs and/or seller credit and/or price reduction or they could accept the findings and remove buyers' physical contingencies.

While one could argue that today's inspections are over the top, especially for older homes which are the norm in La Mesa, ultimately it is in the buyers' best interest to know exactly what they are buying and the sellers' best interest to be protected from future complaints from buyers who may accuse the sellers of hiding defects.

— Reach Laura Lothian at: Laura@LauraLothianRealEstate.com.

Summer is officially upon us



By SARA NIELSEN

The summer learning program is under way.

All ages are encouraged to participate, so visit the branch to sign up and receive an activity book with activities and challenges, museum coupons, and a free book, or tote bag. The La Mesa Library is now open seven days per week. Visit sdcl.org for the hours, and latest program and event information.

Whether you're traveling, at the beach, by the pool, or enjoying some indoor A/C, it's the perfect time of year to dive into a few fabulous books. Let's explore exciting new releases, and older summer favorites from all genres.

This summer brings a brand new book from the queen of beach reads herself, Elin Hilderbrand.

The Hotel Nantucket was a turn of the century New England treasure but is now in disrepair and under the new general management of Lizbet Keaton. Fresh out of a bad breakup, Lizbet is looking for redemption by breathing new life into Hotel Nantucket. Get lost in the hotel's scandalous history, and its uncertain future, and maybe some love and relationships along the way, in this gratifying page-turner.

Do you like your romance a little more light and fluffy?

Beach Read by Emily Henry has been called one of the best summer reads of all time. This delightful romcom tells the story of author January Andrews, who is stuck with a severe case of writer's block after the death of her father and helping her mother through two battles with cancer. January meets her next-door neighbor, Augustus, who is also a writer

lacking inspiration. As a fun summer challenge to get the creative juices flowing, the two decide to trade genres, and so January takes on American Lit, and Augustus attempts romance. Will finishing the challenge be the end of their story? Or will they just begin to learn about "happily ever after?"

If suspense is more your summer style, Ruth Ware, author of *The Woman in Cabin 10*, is back with a brand-new thriller.

In *The It Girl*, Hannah Jones is 10 years out of college at Oxford University, where her first college friend, April Clarke-Cliveden, was murdered. When a journalist shows up at Hannah's door with some shocking new evidence, she discovers that the man convicted of April's murder might have actually been innocent. Hannah decides to revisit her past, launching her own investigation into April's murder. Reconnecting with her once-inseparable college friends, Hannah starts to discover that these friends she thought she knew so well, might be hiding some pretty dark and sinister secrets - maybe even murder.

Finally, for fans of Only Murders in the Building, Clue, and/or Agatha Christie, try Alexis Hall's *Murder Most Actual*.

With her marriage on the rocks, true crime podcaster Liza's wife Hanna plans a weekend getaway to rekindle the magic at a luxurious hotel in the Scottish Highlands. While trapped at the hotel due to snow, the guests start dying one by one and Liza finds herself trying to solve actual murders instead of just talking about them on her podcast. Can Liza and Hanna save their marriage and their lives? Please note: this title is a digital exclusive, and only available through Overdrive as an ebook or downloadable audiobook.

Tiny house

CONTINUED FROM Page 12

classroom is what makes this program fully worth it.

"Something that like made my life was when [Hinojosa] talked about how as a woman, specifically, she became comfortable with taking ownership of the building process and power tools. I was like, 'Wow, mission accomplished.'"

The 2022 tiny house received offers and will be sold soon. With a completely sustainable design, it features a compost toilet and solar-powered energy. Another way TLC is implementing sustainability is by expanding its CTE program.

They plan to launch another tiny house CTE program at the Chula Vista location in the future.

To learn more about TLC visit: learningchoice.org/#

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



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

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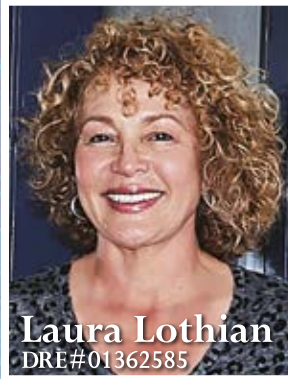
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