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March 2023

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San Diego

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San Diego Community Newspaper Group



Hillcrest updates neighborhood sign with new lights that can change colors. (Photo by Kendra Sitton)

SEE **HILLCREST SIGN**, Page 11

Funding secured for Caltrans to design suicide prevention barrier on Coronado Bridge

By KENDRA SITTON

Caltrans announced in January \$14 million funding was approved by the California Transportation Commission (CTC) to design a stainless steel vertical net over the next three years. Pending further funding, the net would then be constructed on the outside of the bridge rail to deter suicides.

Similar physical barriers have reduced the suicide rate at other suicide hotspots by 90%. The proposed eight-to-10 foot net would not be scalable.

For Wayne Strickland, the announcement came after years of advocacy for the government to step in to prevent people from losing their lives on the bridge.

"I'm very happy that Caltrans is listening and taking measures

to save lives," Strickland said.

The former firefighter was part of a political action committee that advocated for lights and a center divider to be added after it was initially built. He responded to many scenes of head-on collisions until the bridge was made safer. Since retirement, he has continued to advocate for the

SEE **CORONADO BRIDGE**, Page 12

Lack of public restrooms acute issue Downtown

By KENDRA SITTON

The County of San Diego announced in February that a person experiencing homelessness died from Hepatitis A and five

SEE **LACK OF RESTROOMS**, Page 13

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Man sentenced to 11 years prison for Mission Hills slaying

By NEAL PUTNAM

One of two men who participated in a fatal stabbing of a homeless man in Mission Hills has been sentenced to 11 years in state prison.

Willie Gray, 67, pleaded guilty to voluntary manslaughter while his co-defendant Darcell Marquise Moore, 42, was convicted by a jury of first-degree murder in the slaying of Shawn Timothy Puzzo, 60, in 2020.

Moore, who is expected to receive a sentence of 25 years to life in prison, had his sentence delayed Feb. 23 to June 21. Moore remains in jail without bail.

Moore was acquainted with Puzzo, who was stabbed 10 times and robbed of gift cards while he was sleeping in front of the Mission Hills Bicycle Shop on Washington Ave. on April 15, 2020 at 9:15 p.m.

Gray contended his only involvement was to be present and that he picked up the knife after Moore dropped it and gave it back to him. Gray denied stabbing Puzzo, but he also pleaded guilty to robbing him.

"They both should spend the rest of their lives behind bars for what they have done," said Michael Puzzo, the victim's brother, in a letter to the court.

"Nobody deserves to die like he did. It is really quite upsetting," wrote Puzzo. "This did not have to happen."

Deputy District Attorney Philippa Cunningham said the victim's DNA

was found underneath the fingernails of both Moore and Gray. Gray's probation report said Moore stabbed Puzzo in retaliation for something before. Moore injured his hand and got stitches in a hospital before his arrest.

In addition to the prison sentence, San Diego Superior Court Judge Michael Groch ordered Gray to pay \$1,570 to Jon Cantwell, owner of the Urban Index, on Fourth Avenue which Gray burglarized on April 15, 2020, in Hillcrest, for damages.

Security cameras captured Gray throwing a rock through the window of the business and carrying out numerous backpacks in a large trash bag by himself, according to his probation report.

Cantwell told probation officials he filed a claim with his insurance company for the first time in 10 years and they promptly dropped his coverage. He told probation officials that Gray represented "a menace to the neighborhood."

Gray was charged with looting during a state of emergency because this was in the initial months of the COVID-19 pandemic. Gray has a long criminal record, having served time in prison before for multiple burglaries in Louisiana and Texas as well as parole revocations, according to the probation report.

Gray received credits of 1,269 days spent in jail and was fined \$2,181.

Uptown // Downtown Briefs

FLEET SCIENCE CENTER TO CELEBRATE 50 YEARS

Visitors to the Fleet Science Center can hop in a time machine and explore 50 years of science, pop culture, trends and San Diego history with "Flashback," a new exhibition which opened Saturday, Feb. 11. The exhibit features the Fleet's classic collection set in five themed galleries representing the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, 2000s and 2010s.



Flashback opens ahead of the Fleet's 50th-anniversary celebration on Friday, March 10. The Fleet will be celebrating all year long with events, activations, community partnerships and more.

To celebrate this milestone, the Fleet Science Center is rolling back prices from March 10-14, 2023, to its original 1973 ticket price of \$2.50.

The Fleet is open daily to the public from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tickets are available for purchase at the ticket

counter and online at fleet-science.org.

NORTHBOUND TEXAS ST. CLOSED INTERMITTENTLY

The City of San Diego will be closing the northbound traffic lanes of Texas Street to replace a guardrail and reconstruct the stormwater channel adjacent to the road. A detour will be in place to direct northbound traffic heading into Mission Valley from Texas Street to alternate routes on Adams Avenue and Interstate 805.

The Texas Street northbound lane will close intermittently throughout the length of the project, which is expected to last at least three weeks depending on weather conditions.



During the road closure, City crews will be doing grading and reconstruction work in the channel along the northbound lane of Texas Street to address erosion caused by recent storms. The project

also includes the removal and replacement of a damaged guardrail.

HOMES VALUED OVER \$1 MILLION HAVE INCREASED BY 17% SINCE 2015

According to a new Today's Homeowner research, San Diego has seen a considerable increase in million-dollar homes, with 17% more million-dollar residences in 2021 than in 2015. The study also finds that the share of million-dollar homes in San Diego is 23.8% More than the national average, and while over 28% of homes in San Diego are valued over \$1 million, only 16% of residents can actually afford them.

SAN DIEGO EXPO DAY IS BACK AT PETCO PARK

The annual San Diego Festival of Science & Engineering's signature EXPO day is scheduled to be back at Petco Park, and a full day of fun will be provided by hundreds of San Diego area businesses, schools, libraries, and museums.

Admission is free and the event is open to the public,

SEE NEWS BRIEFS, Page 3



41st Annual Parade and Festival
Saturday March 11, 2023
(rain or shine)

9:45 am Flag Presentation Ceremony Main Stage
10:30 am Parade Fifth Ave & Sixth Ave Route from Laurel to Upas
9 am-6 pm Irish Festival Sixth & Maple

Beer Garden
Live Music
Food Vendors
Irish Dance
Craft Vendors
Cultural Connections
Kids Zone

\$5 Festival Entry for 21+
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Main Stage Schedule

- 1PM Tony Cummings and Friends
- 2PM Blindfold Monks
- 3PM The Fooks
- 4PM Finnegan Blue
- 5PM Ass Pocket Whiskey Fellas

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Hotel with iconic Gaslamp District's name lives on

Gaslamp Landmarks

By **SANDEE WILHOIT**

This attractive little building at 538 Fifth Avenue came about through a carefully constructed party wall agreement between its two neighbors, Archibald H. Julian and Max Lowenstein. It came to sit snugly between the Lincoln Hotel and the Lowenstein Building (now known as The Field). A party wall is a shared wall between two separately owned or rented units. They were quite common in San Diego's early days, as Mr. Horton's lots only measured 25' wide, so owners and shopkeepers wanted to be able to use every inch of the space available! Additionally, construction was less expensive when one only had to construct three, or in this case two, walls. The structure was built to serve its proposed tenant, Isador Lewis, a jeweler.

This 25' x 60' building has been used for various commercial operations on the street level, including Joseph Hensley's cigar and tobacco shop from 1887-1888, various billiard halls, and even a revival center, the San Diego Lighthouse Revival Center. In more modern times, it was a very popular ice cream parlor called My Yogurt! However, it gained its nickname, the Stingaree Hotel, in reference to the area's reputation



Details on the red building named after San Diego's historic red light district. (Photos by Tim Trevaskis)



Small but mighty, the Stingaree building earned its reputation as a part of San Diego's red light district.

as a former red-light district and the reputed use of the upstairs lodging rooms. When the property was restored in 1980, the upstairs ladies were asked to take their business elsewhere!

The two-story rectangular building was constructed of brick with a flat roof and a symmetrical facade. It features horizontal concrete bands forming a stepped brickwork molding strip across the front of the building below the roofline. The ground floor, the retail space, features two recessed entrances on either side of the building. Pilasters separate the decoratively executed windows into three vertical sections.

Smaller, horizontal, transom-style windows are placed in a row across the top of the ground floor windows and door entrances. These provide the ornamental element dividing the first and second floors.

The second-floor windows consist of two large window sections placed equidistant from each other across the main facade. Each section consists of three smaller windows placed side by side. The double hung sash windows are crowned with a decorative arch that encompasses all three windows. Pilasters are featured along the outer edges of all three windows. They reach the lower

edges of the arch thus creating an attractive frame for all three windows. When the building was restored, artful contrasting paintings highlighted the windows and gained an award of excellence for the developers, Will and Nora Hom Newbern. The award cited "outstanding visual contribution and contemporary application of period architecture." The ability to restore, renovate and repurpose the historic structures in the Gaslamp is a nod to their excellent and thoughtful design and construction. They were built to last!

The Lewis Brick Block is now the home of Ike's Place, a sandwich

STINGAREE HOTEL
(Lewis Brick Block)
538 Fifth Avenue
1885
Architectural Style: Victorian Commercial
Architect: Unknown

shop featuring huge — and tasty — sandwiches.

—Sandee Wilhoit is the Historian/Lead Tour Guide for the Gaslamp Quarter Historical Foundation. She can be reached at swilhoit@gaslampfoundation.org.

News briefs

CONTINUED FROM Page 2

and over 100 booths will be showcasing new and returning hands-on learning, interactive activities, and experiments to inspire kids (and kids at heart!) to engage in all things science, technology, engineering, arts, and math

The event is being held on March 4 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

SANDAG YOUTH OPPORTUNITY PASS REACHES 5 MILLION RIDES

Following the SANDAG Board of Directors meeting on Friday, leaders from SANDAG, Metropolitan Transit System (MTS), North County Transit District (NCTD), and the County of San Diego gathered to celebrate the significant milestone of recording more than five million youth rides since the Youth Opportunity Pass (YOP) program began in May 2022.

The number of estimated unique youth riders taking transit at least once a month has tripled since April 2022, and more than 40,000 Youth PRONTO cards have been distributed in partnership with schools and community organizations across the county.

During Friday's press conference, SANDAG and San Diego County Chairwoman Nora Vargas

expressed the importance of making a commitment to funding the extension of the SANDAG Youth Opportunity Pass pilot program indefinitely.

The SANDAG YOP is one of many programs in the SANDAG Regional Plan, which aims to advance equity, help eliminate disparities in the region, and improve quality of life for historically underserved and underrepresented communities.

"Today we are celebrating a big step toward transportation equity, thanks to years of community advocacy and the excellent interagency collaboration in our region," said SANDAG Vice Chair and San Diego City Council President Sean Elo-Rivera. "By extending this historic program, we are expanding opportunity for San Diego's young people and encouraging a lifetime of more sustainable and less expensive transportation habits."

The SANDAG YOP gives young people age 18 and under access to unlimited free rides on the bus, Trolley, COASTER, and SPRINTER with a Youth PRONTO account.

SAN DIEGO AUTHOR RELEASES NEW SUSPENSE NOVEL

"The Boneyard", a newly published suspense novel written

SEE NEWS BRIEFS, Page 12

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Parent volunteers save public school \$140k

McKinley Elementary School's library renovated by designer mom

By JILL ALEXANDER

Thanks to a dedicated mom and interior designer, McKinley Elementary School's library in North Park looks new again – for way less money than projected.

Heather Vitti Pruett, allied member of the American Society of Interior Designers, helped to complete a 4,000-square-foot pro-bono library renovation project at her fourth grade daughter Riadon's public school.

The McKinley Elementary School library was completed in November 2022. The professional interior designer and small business owner got the \$200,000 construction project completed with just \$60,000.

VOLUNTEERS

The construction team was comprised of parent and community volunteers who came together for the various stages, saving thousands of dollars and time.

"The efforts and hard work of every volunteer made this project materialize. The hard work of these volunteers created a space that will be used and enjoyed by generations of McKinley students, staff, and associates for years to come," Vitti said.

For example, the custom-made furniture was constructed from the parents' raw materials, resulting in items such as the circulation desk in the middle and two custom bookcases. The bookcases are curved so when people walk in, bookcases are visible but on the other side there is seating.

"From packing up books at the start of the summer, all the way through the demo, construction, carpet removal, building the custom circulation desk and custom bookcases, painting, and putting up the last piece of artwork at the beginning of fall 2022," Vitti said of the various roles volunteers took on.

The only item installed professionally was the carpet. The library has a detailed layout and it was decided the carpet was best left to the professionals.

The commercial grade carpet is 100% solution-dyed nylon,



Before the renovation, the library had plain gray carpet and beige furniture. (Photo by Heather Vitti Pruett)



The new round circulation desk on the right faces comfortable cushions for students. (Photo by Basile Photography)

has a severe traffic classification, is a green label, has been tested for indoor air quality, and has an environmental product declaration.

"I also selected a dark carpet to cover any stains or spills and went with a 24" x 24" carpet tile so that if any part of the carpet gets damaged, they can pull that up and replace it easily."

Many thoughtful decisions to prioritize long-term safety in the library were considered. The water-based paint has low Volatile Organic Compounds and was tested for indoor air quality.

This style overall is modern and contemporary, but "I like to categorize this project as 'Geometrically Modern,'" she said.

EARLY ON

Vitti said she decided to participate in McKinley's Parent Teacher Club to get involved in projects that benefit the school.

"It was at the very first meeting I attended that the Beautification Committee announced that the school would be remodeling the library," she recalled. "I thought, 'What a perfect project for me to get involved in!'"

The design was called in at the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year, and Vitti presented 3-D renderings and presentation boards to the school district, the PTC, and the school foundation.

In February 2020, she was ready to present to the parents of McKinley and the community ... then COVID-19 hit, virtual learning began, and the project halted for two years.

"After a long wait, in 2022 the principal at the time and I decided it was time to get this project started again," she recalled.

Vitti added she had a great time with the project and always wanted to design a children's library.

"I was a bookworm when I was younger, and I always loved going to my local library and checking out books. My mom has a drawer full of old pictures and I remember seeing a few where I am looking over my shoulder at the camera while laying on my bed with a book. As we all know, public schools are severely underfunded, and this was my chance to make a positive impact in my community and on my daughter. It's quite an amazing feeling to be doing what I love for a living and also giving back at the same time," she said.

SKILLS

Vitti used her skills as an interior designer including concept planning, space planning, color scheme, overall furniture planning, custom furniture building plans, finish selection, budget preparation, and sourcing materials.

"I did things the same way that I do my regular jobs. Every design I do is different, but my process remains the same for each project. What I did differently was involved the kids and used my connections in the industry to work with San Diego vendor representatives to get the carpet donated, attained list prices on commercial-grade furniture, and got half off the paint and final photography donated," the founder of Vitti Interiors said.

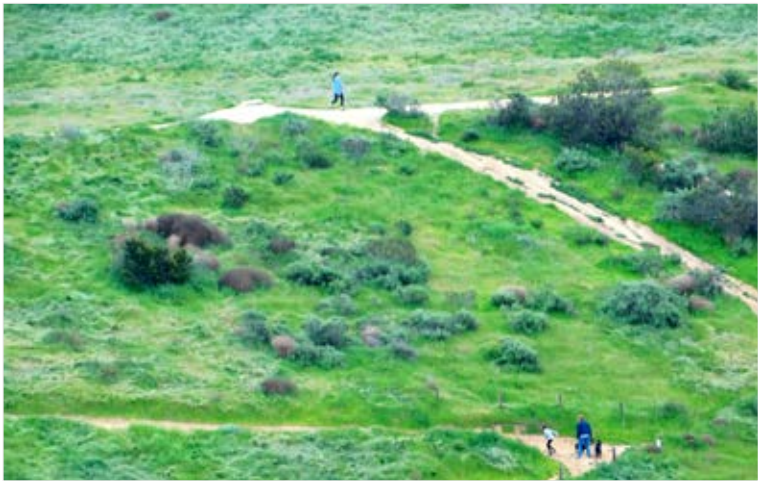
Vitti herself donated 150 hours to design and 200 hours to construction in between running her own business. The project



Heather Vitti Pruett and daughter (Photo by Camille Camacho Photography)



A bicyclist comes across a wooden bridge traversing a creek through Florida Canyon. (Photos by Cynthia Robertson)



Hiking and jogging are popular activities on the trails of Florida Canyon extending from Balboa Park.



Black Mustard abounds alongside the trails in Florida Canyon during spring.

Florida Canyon offers a wealth of hiking and nature experiences

By CYNTHIA G. ROBERTSON

For exploring San Diego’s urban trails, keep in mind Florida Canyon, one of the largest trail systems within the city. Consisting of 150 acres of coastal sage scrub, the trails provide habitats for native chaparral plants, birds and animals. Actually an extension of Balboa Park, interconnecting trails roam the east and west sides of Florida Canyon, popular for walkers, bikers and joggers.

A not-well known fact about this canyon is its link to a very important hiking organization, the Canyoneers. As volunteer naturalists, the Canyoneers lead free, guided nature hikes all over the county. This year, they’re celebrating their 60th anniversary. Originally, the Canyoneers started out by leading hikes through Florida Canyon. That is how the organization got its name. One of the key people who started it was Helen Chamlee, a botany associate and educator at the San Diego Natural History Museum. She advocated for keeping Florida Canyon in its natural state. To this day, the canyon and all its traversing trails have kept a parking lot at bay, thereby keeping a bit of paradise.

A friend of mine who lives near the trails recommended beginning at Upas Avenue crossing Park Boulevard. So off my husband and I went on a Sunday afternoon. Because of the constant drizzle and quite chilly temperatures, we opted to drive up to the dog park behind the native plants garden near Morley Field. The dog park is a wonder to behold. During the first few months of the pandemic, I discovered this place and marveled in the delight of all manner of dogs running to and fro through the park. My rapture was complete when I saw for the very first time a lovable Komondor, or Hungarian sheepdog. His flying mop hair went everywhere as he ran, his tongue and eyes the only things visible beneath its long, corded fur. Do make it a point to stop and ogle the dogs before you begin your hike.

On the rainy Sunday afternoon, we walked below the dog park to the sign pointing to the Florida Canyon trails. Right away, I noticed the beauty in the variety of rocks on the ground as we walked



Purple nightshade flowers are native to the dry chaparral areas of the west and their toxicity keeps deer at bay.



Red-tailed Hawks on a huge light pole over Morley Field.



The heavy rains mean many wildflowers are blooming, including this lemonade berry.

the trail. A rock hound could have a field day on the trail. Fairly quickly, the trail branches off in several different directions. You can take your pick of which direction to go, but generally, you’ll be walking parallel to Florida Drive. We chose to stay straight on the trail we were on; eventually, we came across a small wooden bridge traversing a creek, stepping aside to allow a lone biker cross the bridge.

This time of year, especially after the rains we’ve had, the wildflowers are spring-happy. Black mustard flowers carpet the sides of the trail. As we walked, we noticed a pretty bunch of Purple

Nightshade flowers waving in the chilly breeze. We admired the delicately pink flowers of native Lemonade Berry shrub that attract honey bees. Lemonade Berry was an important staple for the Kumeyaay people who inhabited the area. They soaked the berries in water to make a beverage, and ground the dried berries into flour for a mush or to add to soup.

My husband and I were starting to get drenched in the constant drizzle and as we turned around, we spotted a Red-Tailed Hawk soaring towards his partner sitting on a large light post over Morley Field. For a comical moment, they looked down at the

ground as though they had lost something and then turned to each other like they were arguing.

Across Florida Drive at the cactus garden in Balboa Park, you can see the trails of Florida Canyon crisscross through buckwheat, coast prickly pear cactus, chaparral broom, black sage, and laurel sumac. Because of all the rain, these native plants are all now in gorgeous shades of green. At the very north side of the canyon by the Blind Community Center, the view of the canyon is spectacular.

Winter and spring time are definitely the best times of year to hike Florida Canyon. All of

us owe a debt of gratitude to Helen Chamlee for starting the Canyoneers decades ago with the goal of saving Florida Canyon.

—Cynthia G. Robertson is an award-winning freelance writer and photographer, putting together interesting and informative articles for more than 30 years. Her stories, essays and poems have also been published in “Acorn Review” and several anthologies, including “Six Feet Apart...in the Time of Corona.” She blogs about her observations of nature and spirituality, and in 2019, she penned her first novel, “Where You See Forever.” Her website is www.cynthiarobertson.com.

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The importance of celebrating diversity

North Park News
By MARK WEST

One of the greatest accomplishments in my life was marrying a lovely woman from the great city of New Orleans. During our marriage, my wife has given me unending love and afforded me the opportunity to embrace a culture that likes to partake in the great art of socializing.

Additionally, being a person that rarely turns down a good party, the ability to embrace the rituals of the huge melting pot of cultures that is New Orleans, Louisiana, has worked to my advantage for years. There are very few, if any cities in America that have produced so much great art, great food and great music and it all comes together on the festival known as Mardi Gras. With its roots in ancient fertility rites and celebrations of spring, syncretized through the European Christian observations of Lent and Carnival, Mardi Gras or Fat Tuesday traditions are a prominent feature in my household. The idea of Fat Tuesday is to party as much as you can before Lent, when you are asked to give up something you love for 40 days (that part I rarely complete but let us keep that secret safe.)



A group of women business leaders in North Park (Courtesy photo)

There is another reason that I love the City of New Orleans. Like the North Park community but on a much grander scale, it is blessed with an amazingly diverse and thriving small business community where art, food and culture thrive. I am lucky to support North Park and you are lucky to live and work in or near this fantastic community. The diversity of the people of North Park, the shops of North Park, the activities of North Park; this is what makes us resilient to challenges life throws at us. That is why it is so important to embrace and celebrate diversity.

Over February, we got to learn, listen and appreciate Black History. One month is hardly justifiable for all the history, culture, and learning, but it serves as a reminder for the progress we have made. At North Park Main Street, we reached out to our Black-owned businesses to hear from them and share their story. Business is never easy and working to build your life while you combat systemic issues makes it that much tougher. Each opportunity and interaction allow us to learn from the past, connect with our present, and work together to build a more sustainable future.

Now as we step into March, we celebrate Women's history. I, like many, naturally think of my mother. When I was being

raised in Denver, Co., I can say without hesitation that I was the typical "latchkey" kid being raised by a single mother. In an era that did not respect or embrace women business owners, my mother was not going to be denied and started a chain of retail establishments. The struggles were apparent, but I am so proud of my mother's accomplishments. Her

SEE NORTH PARK, Page 10

East Village Association welcomes return of their Opening Weekend Block Party for 11th year

East Village News
By ETHAN OLSEN

The East Village Association is excited to announce the return of their annual East Village Opening Weekend Block Party celebration for its 11th year on Saturday, April 1 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. after a successful weekend in 2022 following a two-year break. Taking place on J St from 7th to 10th Avenue in front of Petco Park, this event honors all things East Village including local small businesses, live music and entertainment, tasty bites, beer and cocktails, local retail vendors, photo opportunities, a variety of fun family-friendly activities, and of course, a celebration of East Village's very own San Diego Padres.

Back for its 11th year, the celebration will be bigger and better than ever before. For the past few years, the East Village Association has made it their goal to enhance the Downtown area by creating a more welcoming community, further solidifying East Village as the premier entertainment hub in beautiful San Diego. Through a variety of grand initiatives and improvements including updated parking programs, enhanced pedestrian lighting and the overall identity of the district, the East Village Association is excited to showcase these achievements and invites the community to come celebrate at the East Village Opening Weekend Block Party. Events like this feed the heart and soul of the community, bringing everyone closer together and allowing attendees to meet the hardworking, dedicated business owners throughout East Village.

Starting in 2010, with a two-year hiatus in 2020 and 2021, the East Village Opening Weekend Block Party has drawn in thousands of San Diegans from across the county. Now back in full swing, the event will feature fun for the entire family including a



Padres fans of all ages are welcome to the block party ahead of the home-opener. (Photo courtesy East Village Association)

variety of activations, vendors and one main entertainment venue, located at the intersection of 9th and J Street, featuring back-to-back performers and entertainers.

While dancing to the upbeat tunes from local performers, the community is welcome to peruse the fenced-in blocks enjoying bites and sips from a variety of local vendors. One landmark vendor, Sovereign Modern Thai, with two Michelin Guide Reviews and a visit from Guy Fieri in their portfolio, will even be selling tasty fresh Thai plates at the event. Pair any delicious meal with a brew, cocktail, or glass of wine from the many alcohol vendors at the event. Those over the age of 21 can enjoy sips from San Diego-based hard seltzer company, Ashland Hard Seltzer, who will be debuting their newest seltzer flavor, Musgrove Mango, for the first time to a large audience.

Offering family-friendly activities as well including scattered photo opportunities, professional dog adoptions with The Animal Pad and so much more, the East

Village Association welcomes Padres fans of all ages to attend. There is truly something for everyone at the East Village Opening Weekend Block Party. Featuring hundreds of local East Village businesses, the East Village Opening Weekend Block Party is a great way to learn about and explore all the amazing businesses and character East Village is known for. Following the celebration in East Village, the community is encouraged to join the Padres for their home-opener, with first pitch at 5:40 p.m. followed by a grand fireworks show at the end of the game.

Entry into the event is free. In addition to street parking throughout Downtown, parking is available in Park It On Market and 6th and K Street, but attendees are encouraged to take rideshare services or public transportation.

For the latest updates on East Village Association, please visit us at eastvillagesandiego.com and follow us on Instagram, TikTok and Twitter at @EastVillageSD.

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For those who don't qualify for medical-aid-in dying, voluntarily stopping eating and drinking (VSED) is an alternative method for mentally competent persons to hasten the end of life.

Hear from Kate Christie, author of The VSED Handbook; Nancy Simmers, a compassionate death doula; and Donald Moore, MD, a San Diego end-of-life care physician, who will share their first-hand experience with VSED Questions welcome.

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First Lady visits San Diego



Executive One Foxtrot aircraft, carrying First Lady Jill Biden, arrived in San Diego on Feb. 3. Biden visited on Feb. 3-4 in support of the Biden-Harris Administration's Cancer Moonshot and her own Joining Forces initiative for military families. On Feb. 3, Biden visited Logan Heights Family Health Center, a Family Health Centers of San Diego clinic, to highlight how the Administration is supporting health centers to improve access to cancer screenings and early detection efforts aimed at helping underserved communities.

"Really early detection is the key and a lot of cancers, a lot of cancers are curable. And people don't need to be scared like they - I mean, you're always scared when you hear the word cancer - but they don't need to be afraid like people were 10 years ago, because now things have advanced so far," Biden said.

Later that day, as part of her Joining Forces initiative, Biden delivered remarks at a gathering of the crew and families of the littoral combat ship USS Gabrielle Giffords at Naval Base San Diego. On Feb. 4, Biden visited The Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at Veteran's Village of San Diego in Oceanside. (Photo by Luke Johnson)

McKinley library

CONTINUED FROM Page 4

manager, Nancy Flores, was president of the Parent Teacher Club and donated hundreds of hours alongside Vitti to finish the renovation.

Vitti is grateful to have an understanding fourth grader because there were many weekends that Vitti brought her daughter along.

"She got in on some of the simpler items like painting and sweeping. We also had other parents bringing in their kids, so they had each other to keep company," Vitti said.

KIDS HELPED

As mentioned, the students played a role in the renovation. McKinley organized a Children's Library Committee for third-fifth graders (ages 8-11). Vitti treated the kids like a client.

"The kids were just wonderful to work with and they were interested and had lots of fun on the committee and they were my driving factor," she said.

The project also meant Vitti's daughter got to see her work in action and benefit from the project in weekly visits to the library.

"She remembers what it looked like before and how it looks now. On the back-to-school night, I was in the library with her, and she started running around telling everyone 'My mom designed this!'"

At the back-to-school night, Vitti's daughter told her that she was proud of her "and it just warmed my heart ... I feel like I showed my daughter that no matter how challenging something maybe if you stay focused, you can achieve it."

Today the students are enjoying the library whose color scheme is heavy on purple and blue and contrasting, complimentary green and orange accents.

"I can envision this scheme in other types of commercial projects, but it would take a unique client to have this color scheme, flooring, and textures in their house," Vitti said.

These days, the student love their new library and Vitti said she has been on campus for non-library-associated activities and will see her daughter's friends.

One time, one of the students turned around and told, "I just love the library; it is so much better than what it was, and I like being there now. Thank you so much."

Another student said that it is cool to see the finishes he selected and loves to tell everyone he helped.

"This project transcends generations of McKinley students and staff. These kids deserve this library, and I am so happy to be able to say that I helped make it happen," Vitti said.

To view additional before and after pictures, please website: www.vittiinteriors.com.



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Personal stylist helps ordinary people look their best

Fashion Files
By **DIANA CAVAGNARO**

Mahjuba Levine is a top personal stylist here in San Diego and Orange County for the past 20 years.

Levine said there are many different kinds of stylists. First there is the editorial stylist who works mainly with magazines and fashion shoots. They pull clothes and dress models for fashion shoots. There is the wardrobe stylist who works for film and television and then the production stylist who works for commercials and advertising. A prop stylist puts together photoshoots with backdrops and clothing. A personal fashion stylist is what she does.

She first got started working retail at Saks Fifth Avenue. Although most stylists want to work with celebrities, she loves working with normal people and 30% of her clients are men. She helps them feel amazing and look their best. It is so rewarding to have clients who achieve a goal that they are happy with.

When Levine meets a new client, she goes through their wardrobe at home and goes through their wardrobe and takes out some of the pieces to get rid of. The second step is to shop for the items missing in the closet. Before Covid she used to meet the customer at stores. Currently the inventory in the malls is low, especially with



the colors and sizes, so she buys the clothes online and then takes them to the customer's home. The third step is styling the different outfits and looks. She also helps the customer if they need photos, a lookbook or styling help.

"I get to work with people one on one and I just love my job," Levine said.

Levine models for her own Instagram. She does influencer styling and collaborates with other brands. On social media she gives tips of what to wear, what is in style and other inspiration.

Levine said, "It is not just about the clothing. It is an emotional impact that changes people lives. It is amazing to give that confidence to people in doing what I do, I give back in that way. It makes you continue to do what you are doing because it makes a difference in the person's life that you are helping."

For the next step in her career, Levine just signed a lease in



Liberty Station for a style studio. It will be by appointment only at (619) 838-7706. She is bridging the gap for clients who don't want to go to the mall but want



to get out of their home. This will be a place that is not a boutique but a location where she edits the clothes for her clients. They will be coming into the studio to be styled.



"Change your clothes, change your energy," Levine said.

For more information on looking your best, visit: www.Mahjuba.com



Mahjuba modeling her own personal styling capabilities. (Photos Courtesy of Mahjuba Levine)



UPCOMING EVENTS:

'Unstoppable Women' - Live Your Dream Awards Luncheon & Fashion Show at Sheraton San Diego Hotel & Marina on Saturday, March 18. For ticket email Erin Liddell at: erinlids@gmail.com

Spring Showcase 2023 presented by Fashion Week San Diego at the Hotel Republic from 6-9 p.m. on Saturday, April 22. For Tickets visit: fashionweeksd.com.



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Recipes from the most elevated country in the world

Restaurant Review

By FRANK SABATINI JR.



You don't have to endure a 30-hour flight itinerary to Nepal to savor some of its traditional, homespun dishes.

Amid the small number of Himalayan restaurants dotting our local landscape is Bhojan Griha, which is located only a few blocks past the heart of Old Town, where San Diego Avenue and Congress Street verge.

Pronounced "BO-jan Gree-ha," the restaurant's name translates to "food house" in Nepalese. It features a large, welcoming patio and a Zen-like interior adorned

with colorful prayer flags and other décor imported from the enchanted land.

Owner Smita Giri and executive chef Sanjog Chaudhary both originate from Nepal, a rugged country of high peaks with some rising to more than 21,000 feet above sea level. Their menu accurately reflects dishes they savored while growing up.

Before first meeting in San Diego and opening the restaurant a couple years ago, they each worked in the dining industry for a number of years—Giri in Nepal and England, and Chaudhary in San Diego and The Bay Area.

As I approached on foot, the redolence of cardamom, cloves, allspice, cumin and other spices

BHOJAN GRIHA

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bhojanguhaoldtown.com

Prices: Appetizers, soups, salads and dumplings, \$2.99 to \$15.99; entrees and other main dishes, \$14.99 to \$22.99. Lunch specials: \$13.99.

suddenly supplanted the aromas of hot tortillas and carne asada I had just left behind. Though similar to Indian cuisine, Himalayan cooking flaunts some distinct differences.

"Nepalese food is less oily and with no sugar. And we do more steaming of the vegetables and meats," said Chaudhary, who credits his mother and grandmother for teaching him classic Nepalese recipes at an early age.

In addition, cream is used in restrained measures—or not at all. Although an exception is made for an outstanding entree of velvety butter chicken, served in a slim copper bucket brimming with boneless chicken strips and cream-laden tomato sauce. Unlike the Indian version, which calls for a fair amount of butter, this receives only a pat on top. And it 100% sufficed.

Popular throughout Nepal are steamed momo dumplings with sturdy casings to support a variety of fillings. I chose chicken



(l to r) Owner Smita Giri and chef Sanjog Chaudhary



Veggie-filled chat samosa (Photos by Frank Sabatini Jr.)



Momo chicken dumplings

featuring finely ground poultry jazzed up with minced onions and cilantro. Somewhere in the scheme there seemed a pleasant hint of sesame coming from either the meat or the thin, zingy tomato sauce bathing the momo.

Chaudhary says the momo can also be served "fried, seared, sauteed or in soup form" if preferred.

Everything is made from scratch, including the dough for samosas. I opted for the "chat samosa" rising from a pond of yogurt-mint-tamarind sauce that tasted sweet and refreshing. It was filled with a comforting mix of spiced, tender potatoes and green peas. Wedges of chary naan bread served as mops for the exquisite sauces that varied distinctly in all three dishes.

Customers seeking a spicy kick in their entrees can choose heat

levels from a scale of 1 to 10. Fueling that heat is a red chili pepper native to Nepal called dhe-do khursani, which Chaudhary imports. He compares them to habanero peppers.

Bhojan Griha's menu is lengthy. There are nearly 90 items to choose from, including various naan breads, chutneys, sauces, and desserts. Among the top sellers is the butter chicken, lamb curry and momo dumplings. The menu extends also to seafood and vegetarian options, plus a few versions of chow-mein that reflect some of neighboring China's culinary influences.

The restaurant is open from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily. Lunch specials are available from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Tuesday through Friday.

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North Park

CONTINUED FROM Page 7

hard work, achievements and disappointments were hers and she never gave up. My sister and I saw her struggle each day and she passed her work ethic down to us. Thanks Mom and I love you.

We heard similar stories of struggles and success at our women-owned business meetup at the end of February. One longtime North Park-ian and dance studio owner shared with us that she had to have a man sign on her business loan because she was unable to as a woman. Their experiences of perseverance in the

face of discrimination serve as a reminder of the road ahead and an inspiration for those to come.

Remember that the importance of Black History and Women's history extends beyond February and March. History is constantly being created and it is our goal to make it a better one. We can do that by celebrating the diversity which makes our neighborhood strong.

North Park Main Street works hard to understand its shortcomings and the difficulties facing our community members because at the end of the day, we are all in this life together, regardless of color, creed, ethnicity, sexual orientation... we are all human.

Hillcrest sign returns brighter, more colorful

At the corner of Fifth and University Ave., the Hillcrest sign has returned after a three-week hiatus. While being repaired and refit, all the sign's electrical and lighting components were restored with new color changing technology.

That means that while most of the time the sign will display the familiar traditional neon white, the community will be able to change the colors of the sign letters to celebrate neighborhood events and seasons, with 16 million color hues to choose from. Pre-programmed

shows for events and holidays are ready, including rainbow colors for Pride season; red, white and blue for July 4th; and blue, pink, and white for Transgender Day of Remembrance.

First constructed in 1941 and first illuminated in 1984, the three-and-a-half foot tall and 20 feet wide popular neighborhood landmark has had many upgrades over the years including the addition of neon lights, artwork atop the poles, and environmentally friendly LED neon.

The Hillcrest Community Foundation, a 501c3 community



Hillcrest updates neighborhood sign with new lights that can change colors. (Photos by Kendra Sitton)



organization, spearheaded the capital campaign to raise the money for the past six months and raised over \$80,000. Donors, including Foundation for Form, Rich's Nightclub, Flicks Nightclub, The Crest Cafe, Bread and Cie, Urban Mo's, Hillcrest Ace Hardware, Carmel partners, Ms. Mary McKensie, Mr. Kyle Seddelke, and Harley Gray, were backed up by a community GoFundMe campaign. No public funds were used.

"This is a wonderful upgrade to a beloved neighborhood landmark that enables our sign to be as vibrant and colorful as our community," said Benjamin Nicholls, Executive Director of the Hillcrest Business Association.

The project was managed by the Hillcrest Business Association. The Sign was repaired by the YESCO sign company. Permitting and street closure work was provided by Hudson Safe T Light.

Journalist Juan Villoro speaks about his book and the beautiful game

UC San Diego Center of U.S.-Mexican Studies hosts author

By HECTOR TRUJILLO

Renowned soccer journalist Juan Villoro spoke and engaged with attendees about his acclaimed book "God is Round: Understanding Soccer" at UC San Diego Park and Market on Monday, Feb. 27.

The event was hosted by the UC San Diego Center of U.S.-Mexican Studies with representatives of the Centro de Enseñanza Técnica y Superior (CETYS) also present along with the Consul General of

SEE JUAN VILLORO, Page 15



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Coronado Bridge

CONTINUED FROM Page 1

bridge to be safer— now for those suffering from suicidal urges.

According to the San Diego County Medical Examiner's Office, there were 13 deaths in 2022 where the manner was determined to be suicide and the death is associated with the Coronado Bridge.

Getting the Coronado community and Caltrans to be willing to add barriers took years of efforts. Residents were concerned barriers would obstruct views, ruin an iconic bridge and hurt tourism.

Throughout the years, some have wondered whether barriers would actually do anything to stop suicide deaths. After all, someone could just as easily jump from another bridge. However, evidence has strengthened since 2005 that restrictions to lethal means, especially for barriers at suicide hotspots, prevent suicide deaths in the area overall.

Suicide hotspots are more than just a place accessible to the public where suicide attempts are often fatal— they also gain a self-perpetuating infamy. While the Coronado Bridge is nowhere near as romanticized in media as the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, it is still a suicide hotspot with an estimated 400 lives lost to suicide since its inception.

Before the net as a physical barrier was approved, other deterrence measures were tried, including signs to suicide hotlines like 9-8-8 urging people to get help. In 2019, Caltrans added temporary spikes to the railing but those failed in reducing the suicide rate. Worse, Strickland noted people struggling with suicidal urges could no longer sit or stand on the railing so they just jumped. With the spikes, emergency responders had less time to rescue people.

Frustrated after years of waiting for the project to start at all, Strickland and fellow advocates hope the construction could occur faster.

"I realize government can work slowly, but it really needs to be faster because it ends up 15 to 18 lives lost every year," he said.

Stefan Galvez-Abadia, Deputy District Director Environmental Division of Caltrans District 11, assured residents, "This is a priority project and we are moving forward as quickly as possible."

The project itself is unusual for Caltrans. While the agency can make infrastructure changes as part of the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), fatalities due to suicides do not meet the program criteria. Still, suicide attempts and deaths do often include abandoned vehicles that can cause collisions and lengthy bridge closures,

EDITOR'S NOTE

I witnessed a man jump from the Coronado Bridge in 2018, when I was returning from a birthday celebration in Coronado. I called 911 but it was too late. I would later learn he drowned that night and his body was recovered a week later.

Since jumping is a public act, it is unique from other suicide means for having the potential to traumatize onlookers. I suffered from nightmares, guilt and depression for months after.

For closure, I used a variety of public records, most importantly an autopsy report and a previous traffic violation in another state, to track down his family and learn more about the man. This process was overall helpful for me but it was alarming to learn the Coronado Bridge was such a suicide magnet that someone would travel cross country to reach it. I want people to be attracted to San Diego for its balmy weather and beaches, not as a suicide destination.

Thankfully, I recovered from this incident thanks to therapy, treatment, interpersonal support and developing coping skills. If you or someone you know is struggling with suicidal thoughts, know help is available. Please call or text 9-8-8 to reach the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline or visit 988lifeline.org

another Caltrans concern. It was \$450 million of funding from the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 (IIJA) that finally launched the design process, with approval from the California Transportation Commission.

With its coastal location, a careful environmental review was completed last year and Caltrans promises to meet its environmental commitments. SR-75 is part of the Strategic Highway Network due to the naval base, so bridge closures or delays for constructions must be avoided if possible.

The coastal zone location, national security necessity of the highway and its place as a historic resource all add challenges to the difficult construction process.

"In addition to working with an existing complex bridge design, the proposed vertical net will block existing inspection and maintenance access to certain areas of the bridge. The engineering and final design must account for all details including providing the necessary inspection and maintenance access after the vertical net is installed," explained Galvez-Abadia.

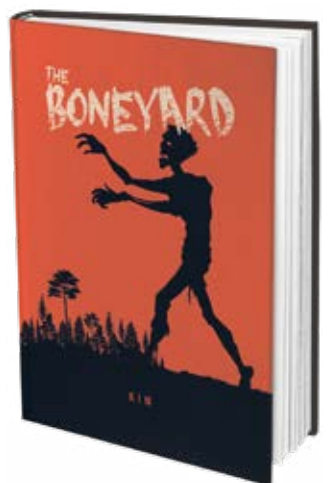
The Coronado Bridge has the most fatalities of any highway in Caltrans District 11 and is the second deadliest bridge in California. With the Golden Gate Bridge adding nets, by the time the Coronado Bridge has barriers constructed, it may be the deadliest bridge in the nation.

News
briefs

CONTINUED FROM Page 3

by San Diego resident KIM, follows Hugo Trainer, a small-time writer and paranormal investigator, during an investigation of a suspicious island off the coast of San Diego.

Still to this day, the U.S. Navy questions why they sent a team of explorers to an island and only four returned home. Discover why the island is named The Boneyard and the secrets beneath the land. "The Boneyard," a 112-page novel with a retail price of \$14.00, is now available in retailers nationwide.



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Lack of restrooms

CONTINUED FROM Page 1

more were sickened by the disease. While not enough cases to qualify as an outbreak, it still highlighted how little has been done since the major Hepatitis A outbreak from 2016 to 2018 to permanently improve sanitation infrastructure.

During the HepA outbreak and Shigella outbreak last year, port-a-potties and temporary hand-washing stations were added near encampments. However, those have been taken down without permanent facilities replacing them.

“I would not say it’s getting better,” said Terry McCleary, small business owner and member of Downtown Community Planning Council (DCPC).

In an audit of all the public restrooms in Downtown, SDSU researchers from the Project for Sanitation Justice reported in December that there are only two bathroom locations with both overnight and weekend access. Divided between the growing unsheltered population, that comes to one toilet for every 200 people experiencing homelessness.

“More than 44% of the unhoused people we spoke with told us that on a typical day they have to practice open defecation. So this is inequality. This is something that’s playing out on our city streets, and especially in Downtown on a daily basis, and I would emphasize also on a nightly basis,” said SDSU Associate Professor Megan Welsh Carroll who leads the Project for Sanitation Justice.

Alongside the community health risks posed by open defecation and lack of sanitation access, there are also individual health

concerns for people without access to a bathroom regularly. Welsh Carroll recalled an elderly homeless interviewee who intentionally dehydrates himself and does not eat after 4 p.m. so that he will not need to use the restroom during the night – putting strain on his own aging body.

DIGNITY ISSUE

Beyond just complaints about the city lacking a key piece of public infrastructure, there has been a recent change in language to note that it is a social justice issue that exacerbates inequality.

“It is a justice issue to me because not everyone has equal access to high quality basic sanitation,” Welsh Carroll said.

Office workers who drive in and out of the city center may not feel the lack of public restrooms as acutely as someone who depends on public transit or a delivery driver.

It also makes visiting Downtown less accessible for disabled people or families with young children. Since most businesses require people to be customers to use the premise’s bathroom, it can cost money to be allowed to use the facilities. For people experiencing homelessness, figuring out where to use a bathroom can be a daily piece of their survival.

“The access is so abysmally low right now, and it’s especially low for folks who are the most economically marginalized in our society,” said Welsh Carroll.

McCleary, the owner of MAKE Pizza + Salad in the East Village, referenced Howard Schultz’s editorial stating that Starbucks cannot be the bathroom for America. McCleary said neither can small businesses.

“It is something that all small businesses are dealing with on a daily basis...It’s not something we’re necessarily equipped to handle,” he said.

In addition to welcoming in those living and working in Downtown, it becomes too much volume for small businesses to accommodate when factoring in crowds that flood the area for Padres games and tourists.

McCleary, who also leads the sanitation, health and dignity subcommittee for DCPC, noted that feces on the street is not good for the quality of life for those living in Downtown and is not welcoming to tourists whose money the city depends upon.

“It’s a dignity issue as well not only for those that have to use the restroom and might be forced to do it on a street corner,” he said. “I don’t want to have to necessarily walk everywhere with my head down, making sure that I’m not stepping in something and, certainly if I do, I don’t feel great walking into a meeting or into my home.”

Volume is an issue at the public restrooms that are open as well. The Civic Center and other locations have lines not everyone can wait in. So many people using the same facility also makes maintaining high quality restrooms more difficult.

The lack of bathrooms is also a gendered issue, with women often worrying about the security features at certain restrooms and facing time constraints.

Of the 22 bathrooms SDSU researchers studied in their census of Downtown restrooms, only four had menstrual products. Two of those charged money for those

SEE LACK OF RESTROOMS, Page 15

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- CLUES ACROSS**

 - Relaxing place
 - Plant by scattering
 - A type of explorer
 - Unique traits
 - Lady
 - Dismayed
 - Railway
 - Type of whale
 - Sodium
 - Manning and Lilly are two
 - Where golfers begin
- Entrapped
 - Influential punk artist
 - Hebrew calendar month
 - Car mechanics group
 - Undesirable rodent
 - Minneapolis suburb
 - Witch
 - Get free of
 - A written proposal or reminder
 - British School
 - Country on west coast of Africa
 - Cool!
- CLUES DOWN**

 - A person with unusual powers of foresight
 - Single sheet of glass
 - Portrays a character
 - Expresses happiness
 - Acquires
 - “The Martian” author
 - Degree
 - 60-minute intervals
 - A detective’s pal
 - Group of nations (abbr.)
 - Popular Georgia rockers
- Information
 - ___ route
 - Jim Nantz’s network
 - Something to register (abbr.)
 - Give cards incorrectly
 - One who’s learning on the job
 - Stevenson adventure novel
 - Taking careful notice
 - CNN’s founder
 - Speak badly of

- CLUES DOWN**

 - A person with unusual powers of foresight
 - Single sheet of glass
 - Portrays a character
 - Expresses happiness
 - Acquires
 - “The Martian” author
 - Degree
 - 60-minute intervals
 - A detective’s pal
 - Group of nations (abbr.)
 - Popular Georgia rockers
- Fencing swords
 - Basement
 - Samoa monetary unit
 - Male parent
 - Finnish lake
 - A smooth fabric
 - Arctic explorers (abbr.)
 - Mild yellow Dutch cheese
 - Very willing
 - Expressed pleasure
 - Lasso
 - Hindu model of ideal man
 - Move your head in approval
 - Ill-___ gained illegally
- Die
 - Accused publicly
 - Precious stone
 - Individual thing or person
 - Behaved in a way that degraded
 - Derogatory term
 - No seats available
 - Liability
 - Popular beverage
 - Tough outer skin of fruit
 - ___ Spumante (Italian wine)
 - Troubles
 - Negative
 - Camper

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Biographies on female spies

Celebrate Women's History Month in March with some good books revolving around women

By DENISE SMITH

March is Women's History Month and the 2023 Women's History Theme is "Celebrating Women Who Tell Our Stories."

According to the Library of Congress, Women's History Month originated in 1981 when Congress passed Pub. L. 97-28 creating "Women's History Week." This continued every year until 1987 when Pub. L. 100-9 was passed designating the entire month of March "Women's History Month."

For some, hearing the word "history" connotes homework, lectures, and boredom. But your local librarian has found some titles, available in physical and

digital formats, which celebrate women's contributions to history in an exciting way: covert operations and spying.

Virginia Hall's life is examined in *Code Name Badass* by Heather Demetrios.

Hall dreamed of adventure as a child in the early 20th century, learning how to shoot, speak multiple languages and pushing herself, and society's expectations, to become a spy during WWII. Demetrios keeps the tone light and conversational. But that does not make this tale of a civilian who became one of Nazi Germany's most wanted spies any less riveting.

Wise Gals, by Nathalia Holt, examines the lives of five women

from their WWII service into their work during the early days of the CIA and the Cold War.

One works with Ukrainians to infiltrate the Soviets while another tries to do the same from the Middle East; another works on covert, '007'-style, communications systems. Throughout, we see the sexism, misogyny, and struggle for equal pay these government workers experienced. Holt includes diary entries, letters, and declassified documents as fascinating sources.

Josephine Baker is well-known as the African American entertainer who took France by storm.

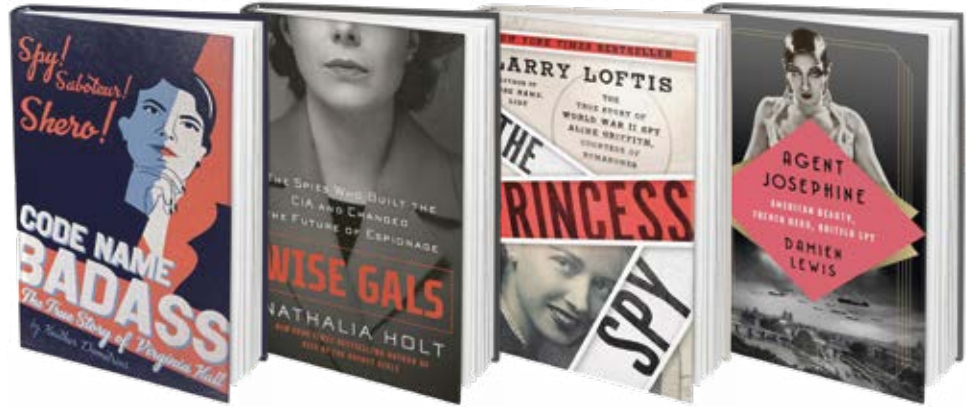
Damien Lewis explores her lesser known, but just as important, accomplishments in *Agent Josephine*.

It should come as no surprise that someone who grew up encountering racism in America immediately recognized the threat of Nazism. Baker became one of the most successful WWII spies by hiding in plain sight, chatting up Axis military personnel after her performances.

Model, aristocrat, Office of Strategic Services code breaker;

just a normal American doing her usual thing. So goes the life of Aline Griffith in Larry Loftis's *The Princess Spy*.

Griffith was an American-born Spanish aristocrat who married into the Spanish nobility. She used her position, rubbing elbows with the Kennedys, Hepburn, and other royals, to spy for the OSS and then with the CIA. Loftis retells Griffith's life with plenty of twists and turns as well as with some romance.



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Hours: 9:00am-4:00pm

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San Diego Jr. Theatre's Popular Summer Camps are Back!

JT campers will participate in daily acting, singing, movement and specialty classes in weekly sessions offered from June 12 through August 18 in beautiful Balboa Park. Acting and musical theatre intensives, as well as pre-professional conservatory camps are also available. For more information and to register, visit juniortheatre.com or call 619-239-1311.

Summer Camps Are Back at Birch Aquarium

From snorkeling with Leopard Sharks to touring the Scripps Pier and hands-on animal encounters, Birch Aquarium offers an abundance of camps to choose from this summer!

As the public outreach center for Scripps Institution of Oceanography at UC San Diego, the aquarium offers a unique opportunity for children ages 4-13 to learn about the ocean. Campers will explore underwater worlds, meet ocean creatures, create crafts, play games and more.

Birch Aquarium's educators facilitate summer camps that range from immersive half-day experiences at the aquarium for younger campers to full-day adventures, including snorkeling and surfing at La Jolla Shores for older campers.

Safety continues to be a top priority at the aquarium. Camps will follow a number of safety precautions including COVID vaccine compliance per UC San Diego's policies.

Camps run from June 26 to August 18. Registration begins March 7 for the general public, with early registration available for aquarium members. For more information, visit aquarium.ucsd.edu, or call 858-534-7336.

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Juan Villoro

CONTINUED FROM Page 11

Mexico in San Diego Ambassador Carlos González Gutiérrez who moderated questions from the crowd after the hour-long presentation.

"Something that's very important is a recovery of our origins of what we've been as a species and who each and every one of us are as people," said Villoro. "Because fútbol brings us back to when our feet were important and decisive instruments in our civilization."

His talk covered several topics all relating to the sport, also known as the beautiful game, including anecdotal and historical accounts of players like Lionel Messi, and Hugo Sanchez, the era of hooliganism, and the Cachirules scandal that prevented Mexico from competing in the 1990 World Cup.

The 66-year-old Villoro was born in Mexico City and has been a writer and journalist for decades. He is the son of philosopher Luis Villoro and is well-known among intellectual circles worldwide but specifically in Mexico, Latin America, and Spain. Success among his readership has only grown since receiving the Herralde Prize for his novel "El testigo."

Besides his journalistic accomplishments, Villoro has taught at the National Autonomous University of Mexico, which is the largest university in Latin America, and has also worked as a visiting professor at Yale, Princeton, and Stanford universities.

"The world has organized itself better for the sport than for politics," he added. "In a world that has become better equipped to organize itself when it comes



Journalist Juan Villoro speaks at UC San Diego Park and Market about his book, 'God is Round: Understanding Soccer.' (Photo by Cety's Universidad)

to sports, this provides a signal as to what that says about us in our time. I'm convinced that in order to understand any era, we have to understand how people living in that era entertained themselves."

In 2011, Villoro appeared in the film production "Guerrero 12," a feature-length documentary examining soccer fandom passion, and received Chile's Manuel Rojas Ibero-American Narrative Award in 2018.

During the question and answer session with the audience, Villoro concluded with words of advice for journalists and those aspiring to enter the profession.

"The job of a journalist is to tell the truth," said Villoro. This answer came in response to a question about how the people came to learn about the Cachirules scandal and how many players and fans of the Mexican national soccer team, better known as El Tri, reacted to the news reports that uncovered the story more than 30 years ago.

Lack of restrooms

CONTINUED FROM Page 13

products. This comes after both the city and county promised menstrual products would be free at the bathrooms they maintain.

Lack of public bathrooms can push women out of jobs in delivery services or other sectors which depend on them. It is also a safety issue for unsheltered women needing to find a dark alley or private area to relieve themselves at night that will not put them at greater risk.

"There is a lack of dignity and a perpetuation of stigma anytime someone has to practice open defecation when they would rather be using a restroom," Welsh Carroll said. "When we interviewed folks about this, there was a deep level of shame and frankly sometimes anger about not having access to these basic resources."

The San Diego Downtown Partnership, with its motto of keeping Downtown clean and safe, agrees that more restroom access is needed.

"Through both service request data and their observations walking our urban neighborhoods, our team sees firsthand that the need for additional publicly accessible restrooms exists," the Partnership said in a statement.

In addition to inadequate quality and limited hours, Welsh Carroll noted many supposedly public bathrooms have barriers for entry. To use the bathroom at Frontline Park, visitors must find the correct person with a key to unlock the facility.

SOLUTIONS

Nearly everyone agrees that there are not enough quality, accessible public bathrooms in the city. Finding consensus on

what to do about it is much more challenging.

Some suggest that all new major building projects must add a public restroom component, something Council member Stephen Whitburn has done previously.

"Council member Whitburn believes safe and clean public restrooms are beneficial, and he has successfully secured restrooms at the corner of Park Blvd. and Market St., and in the plans for the Campus at Horton, East Village Green Park, and Children's Park," his office said in a statement.

The Downtown Community Planning Council also supports constructing new bathrooms. The citizen group wrote a letter urging Mayor Todd Gloria to add public restrooms in the upcoming Tailgate Park development.

There is also a push for funding monitors at bathrooms to prevent the bathrooms from being vandalized and misused so they may remain operable.

"I do think it would lead to fewer nefarious activities happening in these restrooms if there were folks down there," McCleary said.

Public-private partnerships could also be key in addressing the shortage of restrooms. A program in Germany currently utilized on a smaller scale in Coronado gives businesses grants to open their restrooms to the public. This would address the staffing issue to clean and monitor the bathrooms that McCleary said is a challenge many small businesses face.

Staffing monitors and opening new bathrooms are all costly—which is why some people have suggested a fee-based system where a few coins open the door. Paris and other European cities use this method which also cuts back on the volume of people using the public restrooms.

Welsh Carroll believes this would only increase inequality. She notes that tons of money has been wasted on temporary fixes, like bleaching the streets, adding port-a-potties and temporary handwashing stations that could be redirected towards improving current facilities and extending hours.

"Our team stands ready to support implementing additional restrooms — and the resources they need to stay accessible and safe — as a critical component of Downtown's public infrastructure," the Downtown Partnership said in a statement.

Welsh Carroll noted that so many agencies are responsible for different bathrooms that it is difficult to hold anyone accountable for improving the situation: some bathrooms are maintained by the parks department and some are not. In Downtown, public restrooms might be maintained by the city, county, or even Port Authority.

In addition to confusion over which agency is in charge of which Downtown bathroom, Welsh Carroll bemoaned that there is no clear person at the city or county in charge of sanitation infrastructure. She wants elected officials to appoint a restroom czar to oversee the facilities.

"Currently that does not exist and it seems to result in displaced responsibility," she said.

The lack of a well-organized, wide effort to advocate for better public restrooms is also a concern.

"There are disparate efforts by many different organizations and groups, but there doesn't seem to be necessarily one coalition that has come forth strong enough to be the leader in this and then put some pressures on the powers that be to make a difference and do it quickly," McCleary said.

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