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## Uptown // Downtown Briefs

### World Design Capital announces year's program

World Design Capital San Diego Tijuana 2024 (WDC 2024) and the City of San Diego announced its year of programming for design-related events. The first cross-border designation in World Design Capital history, San Diego is the first U.S. city ever to receive the designation and Tijuana is the second city in Mexico to hold the title.

Throughout the year, WDC 2024 will present six signature events in partnership with the World Design Organization® across the San Diego Tijuana region featuring interactive design experiences for all. Signature events include the Community Celebration on February 28 at the

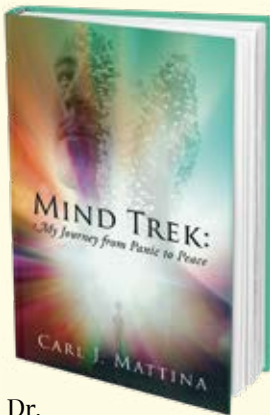
Tijuana Cultural Center (CECUT); the World Design Festival powered by Tijuana Design Week happening May 1-5 in Tijuana; the World Design Experience powered by the Design Forward Alliance and San Diego Design Week happening September 18-25 in San Diego; the World Policy Conference powered by the City of San Diego and UC San Diego Design Lab taking place November 12-13 in San Diego; the World Design Network of Cities organized in partnership with the City of San Diego, the City of Tijuana, and the World Design Organization on November 15 in Tijuana; and the WDC 2024 Convocation Ceremony organized in partnership with the World

SEE NEWS BRIEFS, Page 3

## North Park author launches book about overcoming agoraphobia, anxiety

Another local author is releasing an autobiographical book about a journey, although this one is more about mind than body.

North Park resident of 40 years, Carl J. Mattina, Ph.D. is launching his book, "Mind Trek: My Journey from Panic to Peace." This autobiographical work explores the author's struggles with stress, severe anxiety, panic and agoraphobia. Dr. Mattina reveals how mental and physical abuse at home and psychological torture from members of the medical establishment and religious sects aided in causing his self-esteem to plummet, leaving him in the depths of depression as a child. As a young adult, Dr. Mattina's conflicts with sex and religion forced him to come to terms with his own sexuality and religious belief system.



The battle was not altogether lost, however. The reader will witness the transformation to a positive lifestyle full of hope and personal accomplishments. Dr. Mattina discusses the necessary tools to overcome the symptoms of severe anxiety, panic and agoraphobia, as well as rebuild self-esteem. Fear is energy that contracts, shuts down, and harms us. Love on the other hand, reveals and heals.

After more than forty years, Dr. Mattina has turned fear into love and discovered his life's purpose. Be prepared to experience the author's magnificent journey from panic to peace.

Books and eBooks are available on Amazon, Barnes & Noble and from the publisher at: [www.outskirtspress.com/overcomingfearandanxiety](http://www.outskirtspress.com/overcomingfearandanxiety).



Greer has coached the San Diego Track Club for nearly four decades. (Photo by Craig Kerfstetter)



Paul Greer speaks with athlete Natasha Bliss. (Photo by Craig Kerfstetter)

## Legendary local running coach releases book

By HECTOR TRUJILLO

For those who are part of the ever growing running community in San Diego, the name Paul Greer is very familiar. His recently published book titled "Going the Distance" emerged from a 20-year-journey for the former San Diego State University scholarship athlete. He interweaves personal experience with fitness tips for those interested in running.

Greer is a formidable athlete infused with the ability to help other athletes as well. He was the SDSU school record-holder for 1500 meters before going on to compete in Olympic trials and internationally across Europe. Holding a master's degree in Kinesiology from Azuza Pacific University, Greer was inducted into the St. Augustine High School Hall of Fame in 1995. He also ran the mile in under four minutes (3:59.79) becoming U.S.

Olympic Trials qualifier at 1500 meters in 1992.

"It's not so much focused on me, but it's a way to introduce a certain tip by drawing from a personal experience that I went through and that related to that tip," said Greer. "Obviously the last three years was a lot more labor intensive as far as the editing and also including my personal experiences."

In his book, every tip he provides answers basic questions regarding different facets of running and fitness with one fitness tip included on each of the 250 pages. The book compiles 20 years of columns and other essays. Having previously contributed weekly columns for Sign On San Diego from 2003 to 2010 before moving on to write for San Diego Newsroom, Greer's expansive knowledge and experience in the field makes his book a welcoming source of knowledge for athletes of every level, even the elite.

Greer was recently selected to serve with USA Men's U20 National Team as a coach for upcoming 2024 World Athletics Cross Country Championships in Belgrade, Serbia this March. United States Track & Field picked him to coach after being selected for the Great Edinburgh Cross Country Meet of 2016 held in Scotland.

"It was a triangular meet between Great Britain, the United States and Scotland," he added. "I was evaluated as a coach by athletes that participated as well as the national staff to be considered for the World Cross Country Championships that I just got appointed to."

Greer has been teaching at the collegiate level for 34 years,

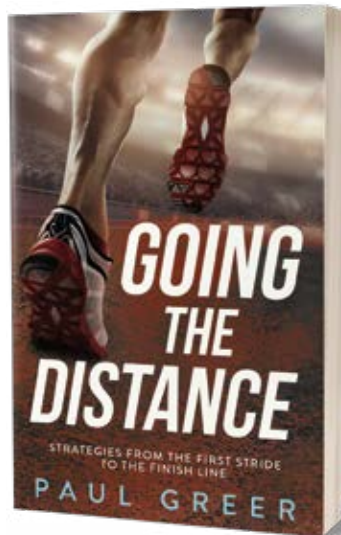


Greer complements running with strength-building exercises. (Photo by Craig Kerfstetter)

including his currently tenure teaching health and exercise science and Kinesiology at San Diego City College. Greer has also coached the San Diego Track Club for almost four decades along with mentoring and training hundreds of runners each year as part of the "Rockin N Runnin'" full- and half-marathon training program since the mid 1990s.

"It's been a wonderful journey," said Greer. "At the end of the day that's what it's about in the fitness world. It's about bringing people together in the spirit of promoting health and participating in these activities through friendship and meeting others."

The book release party for "Going The Distance" will be on Sunday, February 18 at Kona Kai Resort and Spa, but it is already available for purchase on Amazon.



Greer's book has one tip on each of its 250 pages to encourage runners. (Courtesy photo)

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# Gossip Grill arsonist sentenced

By NEAL PUTNAM

Moe Girton said she was satisfied with the drug treatment sentence given to Ryan Scott Habrel, 38, on Jan. 18 for setting fire to her Hillcrest bar, Gossip Grill, in the Oct. 20, 2023 incident.

"He lost his way. He was very mentally unwell," said Girton, adding she was "100% behind him getting treatment."

San Diego Superior Court Judge Rachel Cano ordered a 200-day jail term and ruled that since he had served 187 days in jail with credits for good behavior, Habrel was released Jan. 19 to the drug treatment program.

Cano ordered Habrel to pay \$5,849 in restitution to Girton for the fire, which damaged outdoor seating and awnings outside the entrance at the 1220 University Avenue restaurant and other areas.

She also ordered Habrel to stay away from Girton on two years probation. Habrel used to work as a bartender for Urban Mo's, another restaurant and bar in Hillcrest.

"If he violates his (probation) terms, he goes back to jail," said Girton.

The judge also suspended a 4-year state prison term which Habrel won't have to serve, but if he has significant violation of probation terms, he could end up in state prison. He pleaded guilty Dec. 18 to arson, which is a felony.

Girton said she saw him on the day of the fire and he was talking to himself, walking around without shoes, and was homeless. Later, when she viewed the restaurant video, it showed him setting the fire with lighter fluid and he was giggling, she said.

"He looked a lot better (in court)," said Girton.

Habrel was wearing blue jail clothes, but Girton said she thought he seemed more alert and clear headed and just better than when she last saw him just before the fire.

Habrel was also placed on concurrent two years probation for felony vandalism at Rite-Aid in Hillcrest in which he destroyed 10 champagne bottles in an Oct. 9, 2023 incident. After being arrested for that event, he was released on Oct. 16, days before the Gossip Grill arson. He was ordered to pay \$3,232 to Rite-Aid.

Cano ordered him to stay away from Rite-Aid, not possess firearms, ammunition, or incendiary devices.

Habrel said nothing in court, but he explained his actions to a probation officer, who wrote a report which was released on Jan. 23.

"My brain was fried from smoking that stuff," said Habrel, referring to fentanyl, according to his interview.

He said he didn't specifically target Gossip Grill, but he was "just high" and "is thankful he did not light himself on fire,"

according to the report.

Habrel wants to "make reparations," for the damages he caused from "his very dumb actions," the report quoted him as saying.

When he was first arrested, Habrel said he wanted to "burn the city down and proceeded to find the best wood structure."

He admitted to police that he shoplifted a bottle of lighter fluid from Ralph's and also had been smoking "some bad fentanyl," according to the report.

He told police he selected Gossip Grill "because they were gossiping and he needed the gossip to end in his mind." Habrel also said he tried to set a telephone pole on fire. He said he worked at other businesses Girton owned, but not at Gossip Grill.

The report said Habrel was polite and cooperative while talking to a probation officer. "The interview process was explained, including the fact nothing he said would be confidential and that he had the right to terminate the interview at any time. The defendant indicated he understood," the report said.

# News briefs

CONTINUED FROM Page 2

Design Organization on November 16 at The Salk Institute.

The program also includes over 300 endorsed community initiatives consisting of a diverse range of projects, events, exhibitions, activations, and more offering opportunities for active participation and engagement. The Community Programs will advance the mission of WDC 2024 to transform the region through the lens of design, curated and led by community members from San Diego and Tijuana.

## Downtown train Quiet Zone fixed

The City of San Diego received confirmation from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) that the Quiet Zone in Downtown will be reinstated, following work by City of San Diego crews to bring 12 intersections into compliance with federal standards for railway crossings.

According to a letter received by the City, the FRA determined that the Quiet Zone is in full compliance and trains will stop routinely sounding their horns.

The FRA suspended the Quiet Zone on Friday, Jan. 19, following an inspection that found deficiencies. Since then, in addition to responding to the impacts of last week's storm, teams from the City's Transportation Department have worked to create and install more than 120 railroad crossing signs and new road

markings at the Laurel Street, Grape Street, Cedar Street, Beech Street, Ash Street, Broadway, Kettner Boulevard, G Street, Hawthorn Street, Market Street, Front Street, First Avenue and Fifth Avenue crossings.

The City also completed the required traffic survey, or Average Daily Trip Count, to determine the number of vehicles entering the crossings daily.

## Board of Port Commissioners officers sworn-in

The Port of San Diego ceremonially swore-in its 2024 executive officers for the Board of Port Commissioners at a Jan. 18 luncheon. Officers sworn-in were: Frank Urtasun, chairman; Danielle Moore, vice chair; and Ann Moore, secretary. Urtasun premiered his theme for 2024, "Delivering on Our Promise." He reflected on the transformation of San Diego Bay and the experiences it offers to all Californians.

## Measure introduced to help potential homebuyers

Assemblymember Chris Ward (D-San Diego) has introduced AB 1333 to prohibit the bulk sale of two or more parcels of single-family homes to defined institutional investors, granting families and individuals the same opportunity to purchase homes which would otherwise be sold directly to institutional investors. AB 1333 passed the Assembly Floor with bipartisan support and will be taken up by the State Senate later this year.

# Judge rules City College driver mentally incompetent

By NEAL PUTNAM

Following a two-day trial, a judge has decided that a driver suspected of killing three unsheltered people in 2021 on a sidewalk near City College is mentally incompetent to face criminal charges.

In the wake of the decision, what to do with Craig Martin Voss, now 74, will be subject of hearings in February before San Diego Superior Court Judge Runston Maino.

Voss has been under house arrest in his South Park home where his wife has been taking care of him as he has developed congestive heart failure the last few years.

Voss did appear in court on Jan. 22 and 23 after waiving a jury trial, leaving Maino to issue a ruling. His criminal charges of three counts of vehicular manslaughter and injuring seven others remain suspended.

The witnesses included his primary care physician, Voss's wife, and two psychologists. Most of them testified on Jan. 22, which

was the day of the massive flooding in San Diego in which nearly three inches of rain fell. The courtroom was almost empty of spectators.


Normally, people found to be mentally incompetent to stand trial are committed to a state mental hospital, but Voss is in declining health from congestive heart failure. It is more likely he will continue to remain under house arrest until his situation changes. He is barred from driving.




Voss's attorney asked that he be found incompetent while Deputy District Attorney Cally Bright urged the judge to find him mentally competent.


Voss was driving March 15, 2021 in a rainstorm and as he drove into a tunnel at 9 a.m. on B Street west of Park Boulevard, he drove up onto the sidewalk hitting 10 unsheltered people, some of whom were in tents.

Randy Ferris, 65, Walter Jones, 61, and Rodney Diffendal, 40, were killed, and seven others were hurt. San Diego Police and paramedics responded, taking many to the hospital.

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Sue Palmer plans to collaborate with Alma Rodriguez to perform more at Queen Bee's, especially for swing dance events.



Sue Palmer smiles and giggles as she entertains. "It's not phony at all. It gives me a lot of joy and people like it and then that's even better because we're all in it together," she said.



In addition to the moniker Queen of Boogie Woogie, Palmer is known as the Sultana of Swing and Lady who Skates on the 88s.

## SD musical icon Sue Palmer connects with new audiences

By DREW SITTON

Fifty years into her career as a professional musician, Sue Palmer is still finding new audiences. The Talmadge-based pianist expanded her fanbase last year with a return to the women's and gay bars where she got her start— plus a foray into the world of ballet.

Her most popular performance of the year was an accidental gig. The Queen of Boogie Woogie was not booked to play at last year's Pride festivities, but a friend's illness meant Gossip Grill desperately needed a last-minute replacement for their live musician on the Friday of Pride weekend. That day, Sue Palmer and her Motel String Orchestra headed to the University Ave. bar to fill in for the headliner. She became an instant hit with the young bar-goers, many of whom had never heard her old style of music before.

"It made me very, very happy to be such a popular thing, again, in the women's bar," Palmer said.

Looking back, it was her most high-energy show of the year, which shocked her.

In the '70s and early '80s, Palmer and her series of bands were heavily supported by women's and gay bars where she learned to be an entertainer. In turn, she supported these communities at a "million AIDS benefits" and even political rallies for Chris Kehoe and Toni Atkins. She fundraises for the community to this day, including as the opening act at the San Diego LGBT Center's 50th Anniversary Gala.



Sue Palmer started performing with her Motel String Orchestra in 2003 and the band has won several San Diego Music awards in the interim, including "Movin' Along" for Best Local Recording in 2022. (Photos by Nicole Villa)

Before her foray into bar music, Palmer grew up in Ocean Beach in a family of musicians and discovered playing music is addictive. San Diego still influences her music. Her latest vinyl release "Looking for a Parking Place" is based on the experience of trying to park for gigs in Downtown.

In 2023, Palmer also connected with the staid audience of San Diego Ballet. Used to performing for swing dancers, the classic dancers interpreted her blues

music in new ways— much to the delight of her longtime fans.

"Playing for the San Diego Ballet was just the classiest thing I've ever done," said Palmer.

She was unused to the way ballet audiences remain still and quiet during the "Eight to the Barre" performances. Palmer typically smiles and laughs during her high-energy performances, glowing as she revels in the energy of the crowd. The new crowd was a challenge that pushed her music in new directions.

"A lot of the ballet people don't go out to hear my kind of music usually. So I got a new kind of exposure to different groups and that was wonderful," she said.

San Diego Ballet is known for artistic director Javier Velasco's fusion productions with ballerinas en pointe dancing to unusual music genres, according to the San Diego Union-Tribune. Velasco and Palmer are friends and have collaborated before in the one-woman musical "Toughest Woman Alive!" about late jazz vocalist



Jonny Viau plays sax and April West was on trombone for a swing dancing party at Queen Bee's.



# The Art of MartyO at Villa Montezuma

**Fashion Files**  
By **DIANA CAVAGNARO**

The Gaslamp Museum at the Davis Horton House and The Villa Montezuma Museum have joined together for a solo retrospective exhibition called “A Splendid Decennium: Victorian to Vanguard.” This exhibit features pieces from Marty Ornish, international fiber artist, who creates amazing wearable art, art quilts, and other assemblage. A progressive opening reception was held on Jan. 27 with guests starting at the Gaslamp Museum at the Davis Horton House before journeying to the Villa Montezuma Museum in Sherman Heights.

Ornish, known as MartyO, incorporates Victorian, Edwardian, and contemporary fashion styles in this retrospective of her art that addresses contemporary social issues. She reworks and repairs old cloth then transforms them into something new and magical. Ornish also shows wit and humor in her work as she addresses stereotypical societal roles of women through the ages. It will put a smile on your face; it may even make you chuckle!

One of the pieces in the exhibit is “You turn me on!” It has vintage leather measuring tapes on it and represents how women measure themselves. It also glows to the rhythm of the human heart beat. While pondering this piece of artwork, one could also imagine how men measure themselves. Another of Ornish’s pieces showcased at the



“You turn me on!” addresses how women measure themselves through its use of an historic measuring tape.

museums is “Banned, Burned & Blacklisted” which lists the titles of recent banned books surrounded by an 1880s theater skirt.

Another social issue Ornish confronts is that of overconsumption and fast fashion. Ornish demonstrates how this has had an adverse effect on our society through how she values historic materials. She pays homage to the pre-Victorian era when fabrics were held in high esteem, painstakingly cared for and repurposed instead of being thrown away. You will be amazed, uplifted and in awe of this showcase of her work.

The exhibition at these two jewels of our city will run through April 27. The tours at The Gaslamp Museum at the Davis-Horton House are Wednesday-Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. No reservation is required. The Villa Montezuma requires reservations and has guided tours from Friday through Sunday from 1 to 4 p.m.

—Diana Cavagnaro is an internationally renowned Couture Milliner based in Alpine, California. Learn more about our Hat Designer, Teacher & Blogger at [www.DianaCavagnaro.com](http://www.DianaCavagnaro.com)



“She gazed at the carousel through rose-colored glasses” is another piece from Marty Ornish that is part of this exhibit.



Villa Montezuma museum is showcasing Marty Ornish’s work through April. (Photos by Steven Ornish)

# Sherman Heights' palace of the arts

**Gaslamp Landmarks**  
By **SANDEE WILHOIT**



When most people envision a Victorian mansion, they inevitably think of a Queen Anne edifice. It seems to typify the golden age between 1880 and 1910, which stressed opulence, imagination, gaudiness, exuberant, eclectic ornamentation and over-the-top originality.

Although the Queen Anne style is most often associated with houses, this architectural mode is also expressed in hotels, schools, cottages, churches and even offices. Classic examples can be found throughout San Diego and include the Hotel Del Coronado and a bevy of beauties located in Heritage Park in Old Town.

The Queen Anne style was named after England’s Queen Anne, whose reign (1702-1714) was distinguished by a period of great economic growth, when

wealthy Brits and aristocrats were building elaborate homes as monuments to themselves. It later became a distinctly American style, even boasting regional variations. However, they all have several distinct and identifying characteristics. The structures have asymmetrical facades, wraparound porches, turrets, towers and balconies, irregular steeply pitched roofs with intersecting gables, patterned shingles, a variety of large windows with some incorporating stained glass, and a heavy wooden front door. The interiors feature intricate wood trim called spindle work, fireplaces lined with glazed tiles, elaborate wooden staircases, and ornate metal doorknobs

and hardware. Some also incorporated hidden rooms and staircases.

None personifies this age of romance and artistic creativity more than San Diego’s Villa Montezuma, built in 1887 for Benjamin Henry Jesse Francis Shepard, a.k.a. Jesse Shepard, world renowned musician, artist, author, and spiritualist.

The man was as interesting as his house. Tall, thin, handsome, poetic: Shepard had unusually large hands, possessed an ethereal singing voice, and was extremely self-confident. An acknowledged musical genius, Shepard was born in England in 1848 and performed extensively

SEE **VILLA MONTEZUMA**, Page 14

**VILLA MONTEZUMA**  
(1887)  
1925 K St. Corner of 20th and K  
Architect: Comstock & Trotsche  
Architectural Style: Victorian Queen Anne  
Builders: Cheney and Leonard

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**Avoid long lines by taking advantage of early voting!** Starting Saturday, Feb. 24, vote centers will be open daily from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. through Monday, March 4.

On Election Day, Tuesday, March 5, voting hours change to 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

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# Korean art recognized at phenomenal exhibit in Balboa Park

By KYUNGMIN MIN

If you are seeking a refreshing activity for your free time, how about visiting The San Diego Museum of Art (SDMA) in Balboa Park this weekend? It is showcasing a special exhibition, "Korea in Color: A Legacy of Auspicious Images," which will run until March 3.

I visited the exhibition and was amazed to see how people are genuinely interested in Korean paintings. Some were seated in front of the artwork, utterly captivated, while others engaged in serious discussions, closely looking at the paintings.

Korean art is often overshadowed by the frontrunners of Hallyu (Korean wave), such as music, films, and drama.

Hopefully this exhibit is part of a changing perception of Korea by Western audiences.

## REINTERPRET TRADITIONAL IMAGES

Korea in Color revolves around four themes "connected to a traditional household." The first theme, "Byeoksa," means "protection against evil spirits," and the art depicts "protection offered by animals at the doorstep." Visitors will first encounter a gigantic lacquer tiger on a panel and several more paintings of animals believed to be protectors from evils in older times. As they walk inside the gallery, they can enjoy the video performance of a dance inspired by Korean myth.

The second theme is "Gilsang," meaning "good fortune," and it



"Sacred Mt. Baekdu" by Lee Sookja (Photo by Kyungmin Min)

features paintings and photo works about "symbols of abundance and longevity in the garden." Traditional polychrome paintings with symbols of longevity will greet visitors initially. However, as they turn the corner, bright and intensely colored flowers are featured in a range of paintings by modern artists.

"Gyohun" is the third theme, meaning "edification," with paintings depicting "scholarly objects and books in the study." The third section is primarily by modern artists attempt to convey messages about contemporary issues, such as the pandemic, while still using traditional artistic styles.

## ON THE STEPS AT SDMA

San Diego Museum of Art

Saturday, Feb. 3 from 1-5 p.m.

- K-Pop performances and artists
- Korean art-inspired crafts
- Local artist booths
- Free museum admission

In the last theme, "Gamsang," which means "appreciation," there are artworks about "the appreciation of majestic mountains beyond the walls of the

SEE KOREAN ART, Page 12



Seongpa's "Fierce Tiger Woke Up" was made with lacquer on panel in 2012. (Photo courtesy Seongpa)

# The pay gender gap has narrowed — but the divide is still large

By DEBORAH DIXON

It's been 60 years since the Equal Pay Act and 75 years since California's Equal Pay Act was enacted, and while the pay equity gap has narrowed between men and women, especially among younger workers, there is still a significant disparity in earnings. Median wages for women are only 81% of what men make for the same work. In California, men earn on average \$59,577 per year compared to women at \$46,176. The gap for women of color is even greater. Many high-profile companies are faced with wage gap lawsuits too including Activision Blizzard, Disney and SpaceX.

One reason the wage gap persists despite the legislation in place is that most laws around pay equity are new and there are limitations in the language at the federal level. There is also a lack of uniformity in state laws when it comes to enforcing equal pay protections. For context, California and federal law prohibits employers from discriminating against employees in pay of employees based on race, ethnicity or sex. Then in late 2015, California amended its Labor Code to prohibit employers from paying employees of different sex, race or ethnicity differently "for doing substantially similar work." (Cal. Labor Code § 11975.) This unique statute is important because it: (1) requires employees to be paid the same for doing similar work, regardless of title; and (2) protects employees from retaliation for

speaking to each other about their wages. In 2018, California banned all employers from asking about a candidate's pay history, and in 2023, passed a pay transparency law requiring employers to include pay ranges in job postings.

This legislation is a step in the right direction but without complete pay transparency, we won't make the headway we hope to see on closing the gap. It is difficult, if not impossible, for women to prove they are being paid less than their male counterparts, for doing the same or substantially similar work, if they are prohibited from obtaining pay information from their employer during a lawsuit or are subject to being fired if they ask their colleagues for their pay information. That is what is happening in many states because many states do not have pay transparency protections and employees can be fired for requesting information about their colleague's pay. It's evident that these pay transparency protections are helping employees in California enforce fair pay and equal pay laws.

I remain hopeful that the new legislation will begin to close the gap by requiring employers to post pay ranges and job descriptions, so employees know the range to request for pay. And, since employers cannot request "prior pay" as part of the evaluation of a candidate, the hope is that those who have historically been underpaid will not be continually underpaid at future jobs.

Here are some ideas for employers to improve pay equity.

## EVALUATE BUSINESS PRACTICES

From an employer's perspective, you might not be able to spot systemic patterns when it comes to pay. Consider hiring an outside perspective to conduct a pay analysis and to evaluate your pay amongst similar employees to see whether equity adjustments should be made. There could have been legitimate reasons that someone might not have been hired and paid the same as a coworker doing similar work initially, but once those discrepancies are identified, employers can make appropriate adjustments for their employees. Engaging in a pay equity analysis can certainly save employers from lawsuits down the road.

## DEVELOP INCLUSIVE INITIATIVES

Many employers can foster an inclusive environment by creating more open communication policies between employers and employees. Often the lack of communication, or clear communication, can create a feeling of unfairness among employees. Employers who have clear policies on hiring, promotions, raises or discipline can promote a feeling of fairness. Employers who follow their own policies and take steps to demonstrate that commitment create a level playing field. Consider creating objective hiring processes with preset questions as a guide. If there is an application process, consider

removing identifying information on the applications to review the applicants objectively before an interview. If you have a review process, consider creating objective goals and standards, and allowing employees to participate in the review. Creating and encouraging a mentorship program will not only foster relationships between employees, but can also help individuals navigate office politics and provide guidance on how they can best advocate for themselves.

## KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

California's protections are a useful tool to ensure employers are paying their employees the same wages, regardless of sex, race or ethnicity. They are also useful tools for employees to know how to navigate the uncomfortable questions surrounding whether an employee is being paid for doing substantially similar work.

We all spend the majority of our days at our place of work and all of us have incentive to create the best work culture and environment to retain talented employees.

—Deborah Dixon, Founding Partner of The Dixon Firm based in San Diego, focuses on employee gender discrimination and harassment actions, as well as class and mass actions relating to defective products and fraud. She frequently advises employers on best practices to avoid lawsuits and presents on the importance of inclusivity in the workplace. She can be reached at [ddixon@thedixonfirm.com](mailto:ddixon@thedixonfirm.com).

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The west barrel of the building is mostly completed, with the Redwood lath roof finished.



The Botanical building has been closed to visitors for two years.

# Sixty percent done – cupola marks milestone in Botanical Garden building reconstruction

By DREW SITTON

The lead framer settled the 2,000 pound, refurbished cupola on top of the Botanical Garden building in Balboa Park on Wednesday morning, Jan. 17. All the wood was replaced but the copper steeple and dome is the same one first installed in 1915 as part of the Panama-California Exposition.

## EXTENDED TIMELINE

At a tour of the worksite, Jim Summers, Senior Construction Manager of EC Constructors, Inc. estimated the project is 60% done.

"It's a process to reconstruct a building that's been around for almost 115 years," Summers said.

The family-owned construction company specializes in public works. Aspects of historic renovation were new for the firm, although not blamed as a reason for the extended construction timeline – with the conclusion of Phase I now expected in the late summer or fall, pending weather – eight months after the original plan.

Edgar Lozano, AEP Senior Civil Engineer at the City's Public Works Department, said the extent of the damage to the building could not be known by initial inspections because certain aspects were hidden behind walls. It was when concrete and stucco were removed that repairs got bigger.

Summers said the city originally thought the steel only needed to be repaired in 150 locations. EC Constructors repaired the steel in 1,258 places. The marine



The lead framer was the only person on top of the roof to settle the crowning dome back on its spot. (Photos by Drew Sitton)

coating on the steel should last 50-60 years at least, according to Summers.

While small plants are in storage at a nursery, crews had to preserve large plants in place, making the construction process delicate.

"It's going to be worth it. It's going to be beautiful," Lozano said.

## A RETURN TO 1915

The Botanical structure is one of only four original buildings from the exposition still standing.

Its open-air concept is partially why the structure was in such disrepair before the renovation. The last major reconstruction was in the 1950s, and included changes like replacing the stucco arches with lattice.

The comprehensive reconstruction will bring the building back to how it looked in 1915, down to the paint color which historians did spectrographic analysis of to find a modern equivalent. The windows

SEE **BOTANICAL GARDEN**, Page 14



The Japanese Friendship Garden in Balboa Park may not be a traditional museum, but entrance fees are still half off during Museum Month. (Photos courtesy San Diego Museum Council)

# 35th annual Museum Month returns bigger than ever

San Diego Museum Month returns for its 35th year from Feb.1-29, 2024, with an expansion across the border. For the first time ever, the popular program includes cultural sites in Tijuana and Baja California, making it the biggest, most diverse San Diego Museum Month ever, with over 70 regional cultural sites offering half-off admission throughout February.

World Design Capital 2024 also officially endorsed Museum

Month as part of the international showcase demonstrating how San Diego and Tijuana effectively use design to improve quality of life. Endorsed events are meant to stimulate thinking and bring communities together. San Diego Tijuana is the first cross-border region to be designated World Design Capital and the first time a U.S. city has been selected.

SEE **MUSEUM MONTH**, Page 15




The Over/Under exhibit at the Mingei Museum showcases woven crafts.

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# Sen. Toni Atkins seeks to ‘serve as’ Calif. Governor

By DREW SITTON

Senate President pro Tempore Toni Atkins announced she is running for governor in 2026. She is in her last term in the senate and has also termed out of the Assembly and San Diego's City Council. She launched her campaign at a rally at the San Diego Air and Space Museum on Jan. 19.

“It’s never been my ambition to ‘be’ Governor. But it is my intention to serve as Governor,” Atkins told the crowd.

In recent columns, she has spoken about embodying the California Dream as the daughter of a miner in West Virginia who found success on the West Coast. This was the theme of her speech, saying she found her own dream in serving others as they achieved their dreams.

“You shouldn’t have to be a millionaire to make it in California. You should only have to have a dream—and people who care enough to help you reach it,” Atkins said.

Already, the race is competitive to replace Governor Gavin Newsom two years from now, with many hoping to be California’s first woman governor. Her competitors so far held statewide office, although more



Supporters, including many union workers, joined Atkins at the press conference. (Photo by Bryan Giardinelli/Hello@BreathNewWinds.com)

candidates are expected to enter closer to 2026. Lt. Gov. Eleni Kounalakis was the first to announce her run, and is in a position where often California’s next governor occupies. Former Controller Betty Yee is running as well as Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond. Attorney General Rob Bonta also said he considering seeking the governorship. Atkins has never run for statewide office despite her high position in California’s legislature. As she finishes her final term as a state senator this year, she will lose her platform to reach voters and funders but have more time to devote to the campaign.

# Groundbreaking for the Nat’s new garden

By DREW SITTON

Construction is well underway at Nature Trail at the Nat, the native plant garden to flank the exterior of the San Diego Natural History Museum as part of the museum’s 150th anniversary celebration. The 22,000 square foot space will be free to the public and include a pollinator garden in honor of longtime Balboa Park boosters Homer and Betty Peabody.

Betty Peabody was dressed in yellow and black for the event with a few other people wearing bee-themed accessories in honor of her namesake pollinator garden.

“Birds, bees and bats will love this new pitstop in the park—and people will too,” said Judy Gradwohl, the Christy Walton President and CEO at the Nat at a groundbreaking ceremony on Friday, Jan. 26. Over a hundred people gathered for the event, with many standing in the grass field near the Moreton Bay Fig Tree as seats overflowed.

“Even though today is the official groundbreaking, we were too excited to wait for this event to get started with the construction. My notes here say the minute we got the permit, the bulldozers rolled in. Actually, I think it was a few hours [later],” said Gradwohl.

Since the garden is part of Balboa Park and not owned by the museum, the permit process required support from the city’s Parks and Recreation Department with private funding for the addition. Mayor Todd Gloria



A rendering of the pollinator paradise in the garden (Photo courtesy Spurlock Landscape Architects)

acknowledged that while the city is in charge of Balboa Park, private donors and foundations often fill the gap to keep Balboa Park up to the standard San Diego deserves.

With the fence of the actual construction site managed by Spurlock Landscape Architects behind them, Gradwohl, Gloria, Peabody, State Senate pro Tempore Toni Atkins, City Councilman Stephen Whitburn, and Tribal Chairman of the Barona Band of Mission Indians Raymond Welch ceremonially shoveled dirt at the groundbreaking.

Gloria quipped that he much preferred a ribbon cutting to a groundbreaking because of his impatient nature. The usually eloquent Gloria was tongue tied and struggled in parts of his speech.

“Talking too much— occupational hazard,” Gloria joked.

Atkins had similar problems during her own speech, as the two vacillated between celebrating the milestone and acknowledging that many San Diegans are suffering in the wake of floods.

“It has been a really long week and people are struggling. I think we feel that but as we feel the struggles that people go through on a daily basis in our own community, in our state, in the world, we need places like Balboa Park. We need this,” Atkins said to applause.

The garden was funded by private donors but Atkins secured state funds for the HVAC system. She said her staff initially pitched the state funding the garden instead.

“I said, ‘No, I’m going to contribute to the HVAC inside. Because I love the infrastructure and I was pretty sure a lot of you would like to contribute to the garden. We all want to contribute to beautiful things. but I think together we get the job done, whether it’s the infrastructure — the elevator, the HVAC system — or the beautiful garden that we’re going to create,” Atkins said.

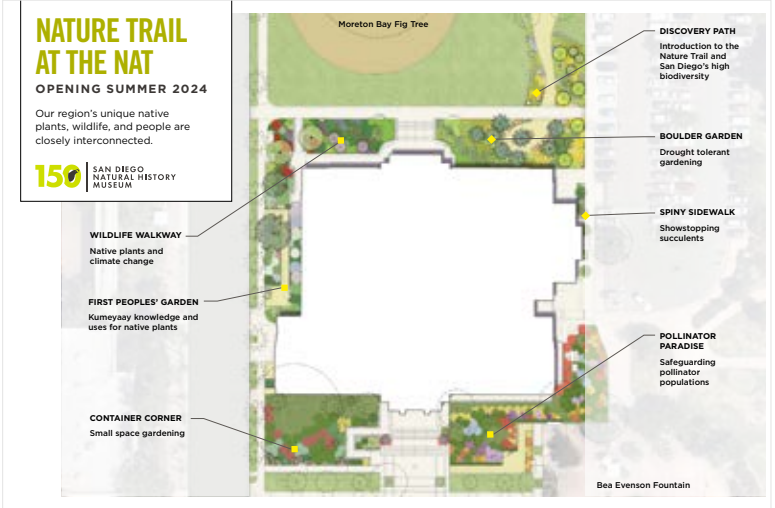
The garden is expected to be finished in early summer and serve as a classroom for local fifth graders to learn about the natural world along with any park visitors interested. Already, children have contributed to the garden.

Students at Barona Indian Charter School researched plants native to the region to advise what should go in the garden.

“We appreciate the staff at the museum reaching out and I am grateful to Barona’s youth for continuing to educate the greater public about our way of knowing,” said Welch.

Interpretive signage and online education content are being developed in partnership with Barona Cultural Center and Museum.

The garden will be managed by a volunteer corps Forever Balboa Park is organizing.



The site plan for the 22,000 square foot garden to surround the museum. (Photo courtesy The Nat)

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Century-old eucalyptus trees stand tall and majestic outside the Marston House.



The Marston House is a showcase of San Diego and Balboa Park history.



During spring and summer, roses flourish in the gardens outside the Marston House.



The old carport of the Marston House. (Photos by Cynthia G. Robertson)

# Showcasing Balboa Park history and plants at Marston House

By CYNTHIA G. ROBERTSON

This article is the first in a new column about Balboa Park’s places and spaces.

Whenever I visit the Marston House at 7th and Upas in Balboa Park, I immediately gravitate toward the trees and the vast lawn. First, I stop by the trees of which I still do not know their name; I simply call them the “twisted trunk trees” for their hobbit-esque appearance. The trees are a good place to hide and dream and soak up the coolness on a warm day. They also provide a bit of shelter if it’s sprinkling. They are trees to befriend.

The other prominent trees on the property of the Marston House, which became a museum and gifted to the City of San Diego in 1987, are Canary Island pines and live oaks situated around the bright green sweep of lawn. You’ll often find one or two people

tossing a ball to their dog gleefully running back and forth catching it. Little children sometimes will roll down the hill as in the olden days when playing outdoors was the way of life.

In the treetops, you can hear the chirping and cheeping of big and small birds, from crows to

black phoebes to song sparrows. You can’t help but feel happy and miles away from bustle, even though you can hear below the property the rush of traffic on Highway 163. Behind the Marston House stands century-old eucalyptus trees; their grandeur will make you feel small yet grateful.

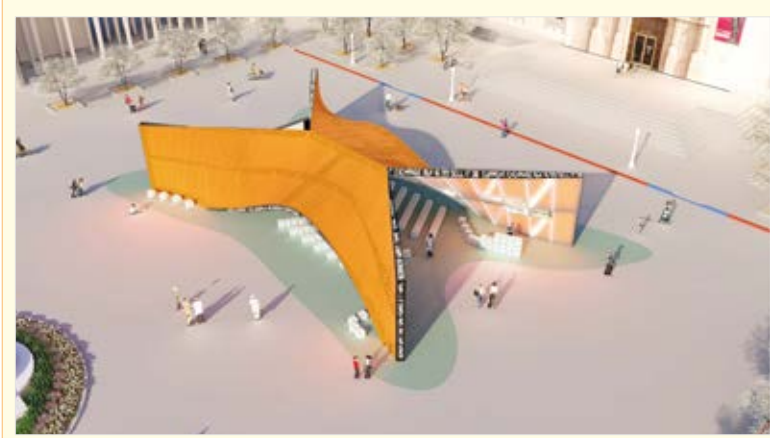
Easy to overlook unless you know Balboa Park well, the house is tucked away off the corner of 7th and Upas Drive. The house is a mini-mansion, the former home of George Marston, who was a prominent San Diego community leader and owner of Marston’s Department Store. From 1878

to 1961, Marston’s store was regarded as one of the finest establishments and cultivated meeting place for all San Diego’s people.

George Marston is noted for many things but most prominently as a civic leader whose interest

SEE MARSTON HOUSE, Page 12

## Temporary art installation coming to SDMA plaza



World Design Capital 2024 has selected internationally recognized visual artist, Daniel Ruanova from Tijuana and full-service architecture and design agency Heleo, to create a temporary art installation titled “EXCHANGE Pavilion” that will come to life in the Plaza de Panama at Balboa Park and the Palacio Municipal de Tijuana. “EXCHANGE Pavilion” invites visitors to immerse themselves in its physical and conceptual presence, contribute to its public memory and coexist with others who arrived along the way. “EXCHANGE Pavilion” will provoke dialogue, creativity, human connection, and the exchange of our collective experiences. A representation of the significance of WDC 2024 to the region, this installation will serve as a bridge, connecting people from various backgrounds, inspiring conversations, and fostering a sense of unity.

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# Vast ‘pastabilities’ and an amusing cheese wheel

## Restaurant Review

By FRANK SABATINI JR.



It was four years ago in early February when a trio of Sicilian transplants opened their warmly appointed RustiCucina restaurant on Park Boulevard. Only a short time later, however, Covid hit and the public would have to wait a while before enjoying the full experience at the much-anticipated newcomer.

The double-storefront space was previously home to Pardon My French, and Heat Bar & Kitchen before that. It's a prime piece of property that comes with an inviting bar and outdoor patio.

A friend and I walked into a nearly full house on a recent weeknight. The atmosphere was convivial. Seated cozily between two other tables along a banquette, we arrived ravenous for pasta and wine.

A couple glasses of the latter was love at first sip—a house blend of Cabernet and Chianti. Smooth, easy and juicy it was.

The culinary slant here claims to focus on the merging of American and Sicilian cooking

styles. At some points throughout our meal we made the connection. At other times we didn't.

Vibrant marinara sauce cloaking an appetizer of three sizable meatballs made of beef and pork was stamped with classic Sicilian flair. The balls themselves were much denser than I prefer, but with trusty flavor thanks in part to drizzles of tangy “Parmesan fondue” on top.

Our second appetizer was an attractive plate of Sicilian artichoke hearts attached to their long stems for easy handling. They were delectable on their own minus the pond of lemon-garlic sauce in which they were served. We couldn't detect the citrus or the garlic in the sauce no matter how hard we tried. With such beautiful chokes at hand, I fantasized about how they would have tasted simply grilled, with just a spritz of fresh lemon to boot.

A wheel of imported Parmesan cheese weighing at least 80 pounds comes into play for the daily pasta special. On this night, it was house-made rigatoni in white-wine cream sauce and with crumbled Calabrian sausage strewn throughout.

The wheel is partly hollowed out to create a bowl shape in the

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center. It's carted to your table and blow-torched for a minute until the middle and sides become melty. Then, the already-prepared pasta dish parked alongside gets dropped into the wheel for a vigorous swirling.

We loved the presentation. Everyone does. The pasta successfully picked up the cheesiness from the wheel, thus adding unforeseen heft to the rigatoni, which was already cloaked in cream sauce and oil from the sausage.

The dish was impossible to finish as our waitress pointed out later that most of the cheese-wheel specials are made with cream sauces (more typically found in northern Italy than Sicily) and that many customers split the orders and augment them with a lighter dish or salad.



RustiCucina's warmly appointed dining room (Photos by Frank Sabatini Jr.)

With better foresight, I would have chosen differently when crafting our second entree from the fun “build-your-own-pasta” section of the menu. In doing so, you first select a cut of pasta from about seven choices and then pair it to one of five different sauces. I chose spaghetti with carbonara sauce, which hails from Italy's west-central Lazio region, a considerable distance from Sicily.

The fully cooked spaghetti had the faintest chew, exactly how I like it. And the carbonara was classic with its blend of egg yolk,

pecorino cheese and rendered fat from guanciale (pork cheek). Thankfully the kitchen omits the cream, which is often used in Americanized versions. Needless to say, this too was a heavy dish, although expected, as it contained generous pieces of the pork, not to mention a better depth of flavor compared to our rigatoni entree.

Outside of RustiCucina's numerous pasta choices, the menu extends to dishes such as lamb ossobuco; braised short ribs with Parmesan-mushroom risotto; lobster ravioli; lasagna bolognese; and more.

For dessert, outsourced limoncello cake layered with mascarpone cheese took the lead for us over tiramisu, crème brulee, cannoli and chocolate lava cake. I've had this exact cake before and adore its fluffiness and tang—and bits of lemon peel hiding within. It was the perfect palate cleanser after our ultra-caloric dinner.



An appetizer of three meatballs



Spaghetti carbonara



Sicilian artichoke hearts



Rigatoni tossed in the cheese wheel



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# Amore is all around Little Italy this Valentine's Day

**Little Italy News**  
By **CHRISTOPHER GOMEZ**

Love can manifest and be expressed in numerous ways, one of which includes enjoying quality time with your partner. So why not spend it in Little Italy, one of San Diego's most romantic neighborhoods? Brimming with places to shop, eat and relax, Little Italy is the destination to celebrate your most cherished relationships.

**THE PERFECT PRESENT**

Your appreciation for your loved one is priceless— but if you're looking to express the depth of your affection with the perfect gift, Little Italy is the ultimate destination. A leisurely stroll along its boutique-lined streets promises discoveries tailored uniquely for that special someone. Art runs abundantly in this neighborhood with galleries like Meyer Fine Art, Mee Shim Fine Art and Jacqueline Lavenu Studio & Gallery, offering an array of masterpieces in different styles and mediums for your sweetheart.

Head to home furnishing shops like D3 Home, India Street Antiques, or Apollo Emporium for a wonderful assortment of home goods, ranging from unique antiques to the latest innovations in home décor, that will make for the ideal present for your valentine this year. Discover a new favorite wardrobe piece at Stroll or explore the incredible collection of high-quality face and body products available, allowing your lover to experience spa-like luxury without leaving the comfort of home!

And if all else fails, an expensive bottle of wine or local brews from Bottlecraft is sure to please!

**EXPERIENCES THAT LAST A LIFETIME**

If your loved one prefers an experience over a gift wrapped with a bow, Little Italy offers an array of places to spend an unforgettable day. Treat your valentine to a relaxing revamp at Visage Beauty Lounge and Theory Hair Studio, both of which will ensure your special someone looks and feels their absolute best. For a quick cut or a clean shave, Vince's Barber Shop and The Little Italy Barbery

will have you fully prepared for the date ahead!

**DATE NIGHT UNDER THE STARS**

If your shared love language is wine, sip some local reds and whites at Pali Wine Co. and VINO Carta before hitting the town for the main course! Enjoy a romantic sit-down meal with your sweetheart at Bencotto Italian Kitchen, Monello, Davanti Enoteca, and Civico 1845 for true authentic Italian flavors with a modern twist. For those looking for something other than Italian, feast on some flavorful dishes and sip on carefully crafted cocktails from Underbelly, Queenstown Public House, Puerto La Boca Argentinian Restaurant, and Ironside Fish & Oyster Bar.

When amore is in the air, Little Italy has locked in the perfect Valentine's Day with gifts, drinks, appetizers, dinner, and dessert galore all in one of San Diego's loved-filled neighborhoods!

For more information, please visit us at [LittleItalySD.com](http://LittleItalySD.com) or follow us on Instagram @LittleItalySD, Twitter @LittleItalySD and Facebook @LittleItalySD.



Find amore in Little Italy. (Photo courtesy LIA)

# Date night destinations in East Village

**East Village News**  
By **ETHAN OLSEN**

While expressing gratitude for your loved ones is important throughout the entire year, Valentine's Day offers a special opportunity to go above and beyond, ensuring that those who hold a special place in your heart feel truly cherished. Filled with romantic dining spots, unique shops and specialized services, San Diego's East Village neighborhood has all the perfect date night destinations. Whether you choose to celebrate with yourself, a loved one, family or surrounded by friends, here is the ultimate guide for Valentine's Day in East Village.

**PRESENTS GALORE**

Discovering the perfect Valentine's Day gift for your sweetheart is a breeze in East Village — a neighborhood lined with boutiques and shops offering a diverse assortment of goodies. From picking up new jams at Normal Records to gifting a cute plant in a uniquely crafted planter from Alter Décor, the Downtown neighborhood effortlessly guides you towards the ideal gift for your special someone.

**UNWIND AND REFRESH**

One of the best gifts you can give a loved one is a chance to decompress and unwind from the daily stresses of life. In the heart of East Village, exquisite spas like Essence Thai Spa By Nunu, Little Thai Massage & Bodywork, and Massage Envy Spa offer

immaculate services that will allow you to leave the negative energy at the door. From hot stone treatments and acupuncture to the simplicity of traditional massages and facials, these sanctuaries transport your loved one from the bustling neighborhood to a state of true serenity.

For the special lady in your life, or if you simply crave a delightful self-care experience, head to Toniq Beauty, Sev Laser, Lashes Y Mas, and Palmer Skin. These relaxing havens provide top-notch services, including waxing, skincare, laser treatments and more. And of course, let's not overlook the importance of nails! Whether it's a classic mani-pedi or a Valentine's Day themed experience, Noir Haus Nails and Nail Care & Spa stand out as the perfect destination for pampering.

On the other hand, cater to your valentine's luxury styling and grooming needs at Monarch Barber Shop, Michael Reyes Barber Services, and Tailored Hair, where patrons receive an exceptional experience from the very best.

**A FULL DAY OF ADVENTURE**

Now the true Valentine's Day date begins with a walk through the streets of East Village, admiring the many murals that blanket the skyscrapers in the neighborhood. Take a lap around Fault Line Park before venturing to find some delicious coffee and breakfast at Café De L'Opera, Copa Vida, Eastbrew Café, or Jai Jus, where you'll find sweet treats, locally brewed coffee and morning delicacies.



A couple enjoys East Village. (Photo courtesy East Village Association)

As the sun begins to set, enjoy an intimate dinner with your sweetheart at some of East Village's tastiest restaurants including Callie, Casa Octavio, Lotus Thai, Monzu Fresh Pasta, and Lola 55. Or if you're only looking to get a quick bite, City Tacos, MAKE pizza+salad, and Bub's at the Ballpark are all great options for an easy on-the-go meal for anyone who desires a more relaxed evening!

And if you decide to turn Valentine's Day to Galentine's Day, Punch Bowl Social and Moonshine Flats are excellent options for hitting the town with your girls! Share laughs, spread the love, and dance the night away with your closest friends in the vibrant neighborhood of East Village.

However you choose to spend this Valentine's Day, make sure you stop by East Village for a day full of love and adventure!

For the latest updates on East Village Association, please visit us at [eastvillagesandiego.com](http://eastvillagesandiego.com) and follow us on Instagram @EastVillageSD, TikTok @EastVillageSD and Twitter @EastVillageSD.

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# Marston House

CONTINUED FROM Page 9

and work in historic preservation, conservation and history is well known. He also had a great love for plants and animals, particularly of birds. He enjoyed studying their characteristics and behavior. Marston deeply appreciated San Diego for its great diversity of creatures and its perfect climate to grow nearly anything and everything. Constructed in 1905 for Marston and his wife, Anna, the home is one of the most cherished Arts and Crafts homes of the time. The property, located at 3525 Seventh Avenue, was designed and built by the internationally

renowned architects William Sterling Hebbard and Irving Gill, the latter of whom built several homes in close proximity to the Marston House. Surrounded by five acres of rolling lawns, manicured formal gardens, and rustic canyon gardens, this 8,500 square foot home includes a hot house, a rose arbor, and a perimeter brick wall in the north garden. In the northern garden, the colorful flower beds are a sight to behold with roses of every color blossoming in spring and summer. A tile-decorated tea house and a wall fountain complete the picture of genteel living in early 1900s San Diego. From the belvedere, you can see the deep woods where countless,



Marston House is a fine example of architecture by Irving Gill and William Hebbard. (Photos by Cynthia G. Robertson)



An archway in the old brick wall surrounding the courtyard of the Marston House.

invisible birds and butterflies reside. Curving cobble paths wend their way down the sloped eastern section of the property. Almost impossible it is to imagine that the area around the Marston House—any part of Balboa Park, for that matter—was once a barren and dry place. It was Marston's love for green and growing things that led him to horticulturist Kate Sessions, often referred to as "The Mother of Balboa Park," advising him on the original planting scheme and design. Since 1974, the property has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Today the Marston House is a must-see for visitors to the area and San Diego residents alike. The intimate glimpse into the life of a

prominent family man—he was the father of five children who carried on the tradition of philanthropy and a deeply involved civic life—helps us grasp the how and why of San Diego's Balboa Park developing into the one-of-a-kind park that it is now. Tours of the Marston House are available from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on weekends. Lasting approximately forty-five minutes, the tours cost \$20 for adults, \$15 for seniors, military and students. Call (619) 297-9327 for more information. —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



Fountain in the Marston House courtyard and garden area.

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." Find out more at [www.cynthiarobertson.com](http://www.cynthiarobertson.com).

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## Korean art

CONTINUED FROM Page 6

home." Visitors can appreciate a panorama view of majestic mountains, palaces, and more. In each section, traditional paintings aid in understanding the original meanings and intentions of the images. Moreover, the exhibit provides reinterpreted artwork from a modern viewpoint. Current artists express themselves through exceptional techniques on the same topics from the past or use traditional art forms to address contemporary issues. This makes the gallery more vibrant than with only the old paintings.

### OLD AND NEW ART TOGETHER

In Korea, reinterpreting traditions is a current topic in creative industries outside fine art, such as music and television, making this exhibition timely. During the pandemic in 2020, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, along with the Korea Tourism Organization, released 14 videos introducing cities in the nation, such as Seoul, Busan, Jeonju, and more in a YouTube series titled "Feel the Rhythm of Korea." These videos garnered praise for their storytelling combining traditions and new trends. Videos from the first season show tourist attractions in the cities with a soundtrack of Fusion Gukak, a mixture of modern music and Korean classical music, expressing a combination of 'oldies' and 'newbies.' In the second season, the filmmakers collaborated

with hip-hop labels to highlight hidden spots in Korea. Traditional folk songs such as Minyo and Pansori were reinterpreted with hip-hop style music backing the videography. The videos did not stick to an old-fashioned style and revealed a new vision of Korea. The Fusion Gukak song "Tiger is Coming" by the band "Leenalchi" successfully went viral and hit over 50 million views. After the success of the first season, videos from the second season also recorded over 130 million views within three weeks of release. Netflix's "Squid Game," which is now a representative work of the Korean drama industry, also incorporates traditional elements in a modern context. The series addressed the current gap between the rich and the poor while featuring Korean traditional games such as honeycomb shape cutting, tug of war, marble games, etc. This gives the show a more unique and quaint mood.

### WIND OF CHANGE OR BLOWING IN K-ART

Korea was not a mainstream player in the art field compared to its place in the international music, drama, and film industries. According to The New York Times, when Hyunsoo Woo, the deputy director for collections and exhibitions at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, "arrived in the United States in 1996, 'Korean art was nowhere to be found' in American museums, even encyclopedic ones." Museums with Asian sections focus overwhelmingly on Japan and China. However, the winds of positive change are blowing in Korean art.

Museums are showing interest in Korean art and hosting special exhibitions spanning from the ancient era to contemporary art. The Metropolitan Museum of Art (MET) opened the exhibition "Lineages: Korean Art at the MET" in Nov. 2023 and showcased 30 pieces of Korean artwork, including works from wellknown artists such as Kim Whanki and Baik Nam-soon. Moreover, The MET announced that "for the 2024 Façade Commission, South Korean artist Lee Bul will create four new sculptures that combine figurative and abstract elements for The Met Fifth Avenue's façade niches." Her sculptures will be installed until May 2025, marking the first time a Korean artist has been commissioned for artwork by the MET. The Philadelphia Museum of Art is running "The Shape of Time: Korean Art after 1989" through this month, which is "the first major showing of Korean contemporary art in the US since 2009" according to the museum. Other institutions, such as New York's Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and The Denver Art Museum, also hold Korean art exhibitions. "Korea in Color: A Legacy of Auspicious Images" represents a positive step for the Korean art industry. If you visit, you will appreciate the incredible use of color in traditional paintings and the fascinating recreation of old ideas by modern artists. I am glad that I can share one of the Korean art exhibitions taking place in the U.S. and hope you readers experience a valuable time if you visit. —Kyungmin Min is an international intern from Korea.



An advertisement for Safe Step Walk-In Tubs. On the left is a photograph of a walk-in shower stall with a glass door and a showerhead. On the right is a white background with promotional text. At the top right, a yellow banner with black text reads 'SPECIAL OFFER'. Below this, the text 'Call today and receive a' is in black, followed by 'FREE SHOWER PACKAGE' in large red letters, and 'PLUS \$1600 OFF' in large black letters. The 'SAFE STEP WALK-IN TUB' logo is centered, featuring a blue icon of a person stepping into a tub. Below the logo is the phone number '1-855-417-1306' in large red letters. At the bottom, a line of small black text provides details about the offer: 'With purchase of a new Safe Step Walk-In Tub. Not applicable with any previous walk-in tub purchase. Offer available while supplies last. No cash value. Must present offer at time of purchase. CSLB 1082165 NSCB 0082999 0083445'.



## Villa Montezuma

CONTINUED FROM Page 5

in all the courts of the Continent before coming to San Diego.

He was persuaded to come to our fair city by William and John High, local ranchers, landowners and leaders in the spiritualist community. The High brothers financed the construction of Villa Montezuma to Shepard's specifications. The cost was \$19,000 plus an additional \$7,000 for the stained-glass windows. Shepard selected the crest of a rolling hill in the Sherman Heights area for the house, which allowed him a stunning view of the burgeoning city and the San Diego Bay. The house was completed in June of 1887, and Jesse opened its doors to the Press in the Fall. He then began to host receptions and entertainment, often called his "musical seances." As spiritualism was a craze sweeping the country at the time, the house was an instant hit with the spiritualists in the community. Jesse Shepard was said to channel the souls of past great musicians through his music, which was exceptional. He often simulated several instruments simultaneously, even though there was only one person playing. One such piece Shepard performed was known as the Grand Egyptian March. It was his signature piece. Using only the piano and his own voice, Shepard recreated a battle complete with two opposing armies clashing.

Some of his most ardent admirers were Mrs. Sarah Babe Horton, Mrs. Edward Bushyhead and Mrs. Fidelia Shepard (no relation). The ladies, as you may have guessed, were wives of prominent San Diegans and doyennes of society.

The house itself was, to quote Keats, "a thing of beauty." Shepard loved old houses, calling them a "combination of mystery, beauty, and illusion," and this house was no exception. It was, and is, stunning. It must be seen to be fully appreciated.

When the Villa opened its doors, the interior furniture, fabric, glass, and decor were a feast for the senses. The main entry to the house was on the north side, with the entry hall featuring dark mahogany and walnut walls, a silver Lincrusta (linoleum like material) ceiling, and numerous art glass windows and interior transoms. To the left was a reception room, dubbed the "Pink Room," as the upper part of the walls had pink fleur-de-lis designs and the furniture was upholstered in shades of pink.

Beyond the reception room was the Music Room, which occupied the entire east side of the house. It featured a rounded small conservatory with an encaustic tile floor, and art glass windows portraying the Four Seasons. The long east wall of the Music Room displayed a magnificent art glass window depicting the Greek poetess, Sappho, with separate panels on either side representing John Milton's "Il Penseroso" and "Il Allegro." At the north end of the

room are circular windows containing portraits of Beethoven and Mozart, with similar portraits on the south wall of Rubens and Rafael. Beneath them are two full length portrait windows featuring allegorical representations of the Orient and the Occident. It was said that the face of the figure representing the Orient was that of Jesse Shepard.

On the south side of the house, centrally located between the Music Room and the Red Room (Shepard's bedroom), was the drawing room. This room contains a corner fireplace and a stunning eighteen-foot-wide bay window featuring art glass portraits of Shakespeare, Goethe, and Corneille — the great poets of England, Germany and France.

Next to the Drawing Room was Shepard's bedroom. This is an unusual feature of a Victorian home, as it was customary to have bedrooms on the second floor. As might be surmised, all the furnishings, wallpaper and candles were red. Between the bedroom and the back hall was the dressing room.

At the southwest corner of the first level was the Gold Room, which Jesse used as his library. Again, everything was done in shades of gold with art glass transoms.

Between the Gold Room and the Blue Room was a stairway leading down to the kitchen — complete with an art glass window of Saint Cecilia playing the organ. The kitchen level also contained storage rooms, servant's dining

room, laundry room and basement.

The Blue Room, aptly named for its pale blue draperies, bed linens, upholstered furniture and candles, was the bedroom and office of Jesse Shepard's long-time secretary and 'companion,' Lawrence Waldemar Tonner.

Between the Blue Room and the entry hall, in the dining room, is the most elaborate fireplace of all — it has an ornate over mantel and French beveled crystal doors.

Returning to the entry hall, (one has now come full circle) a stunning staircase rises to the second floor to a museum and art gallery. The gallery displayed paintings, etchings, sculptures, letters, and other memorabilia gifted to Shepard by European rulers and his other patrons. This room gives way to a narrow staircase leading to the Tower Room, which has an unobstructed view of San Diego, Point Loma, San Diego Bay and even Mexico. It was here that Shepard began his literary career, using the nom de plume Francis Grierson.

Shepard and Tonner lived in the house for approximately two years before selling and leaving San Diego. The Villa then passed through numerous owners, none of whom experienced much good luck during their tenure. Not surprisingly, this gave way to the feeling that the house was "cursed"



The opulent exterior still stuns. (Photo by Tim Trevaskis)

and even haunted. Although rumors fly, as they will, Louise Torio, President of the Friends of the Villa Montezuma, the non-profit managing the historic property, says it is not haunted, but enchanted. It is certainly a symbol of a bygone era dedicated to opulence and beauty, where there was no such thing as "too much." The Villa is now open for guided tours on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. To reserve a spot, visit VillaMonteczumaMuseum.org.

Between January 27 and early April, in conjunction with the Davis-Horton House, the Villa will co-host a special exhibit, "A Splendid Decennium: Victorian to Vanguard" featuring works by internationally acclaimed fiber artist, Marty Ornish plus period art, furniture and ephemera of the period.

—Sandee is the Historian and Lead Tour Guide for the Gaslamp Quarter Historical Foundation. She can be reached at [swilhoit@gaslampfoundation.org](mailto:swilhoit@gaslampfoundation.org).

## ADMINISTERING YOUR TRUST UPON YOUR DEATH

By: Dick McEntyre and Chris von der Lieth, Attorneys at Law

You may wonder what is involved when your successor trustee administers your revocable living trust following your death. Here are the primary actions (not necessarily sequential) your successor trustee will need to take:

1. Arrange for the on-going care of your pets; secure your home; and make the final arrangements for the disposition of your body.

2. Order several Death Certificates through the mortuary to be used in connection with closing financial accounts and transferring title to real property.

3. Mail out "Notice to Beneficiary/Heir" letters as required by California law.

4. Obtain preliminary value of your estate to determine whether a federal estate tax return may need to be filed with the IRS (within nine (9) months from the date of your death).

5. Notify the California Department of Health Care Services as required by California law if you received or may have received any benefits from Medi-Cal.

6. Open a new checking account in the trust name (or convert an existing account). This account will be used to pay all of your debts and on-going trust expenses. In this connection, obtain from the IRS a new income tax reporting number (EIN) for the trust which the bank will require, since your trust became irrevocable upon your death.

7. Transfer title to all financial/brokerage accounts from your name into the successor trustee's name, or close (sell the assets in) all or some of such accounts and transfer the proceeds into the new account in the trust referred to in Para. 6 above.

8. Locate all outstanding bills and pay same from the account referred to in Para 6. above.

9. Make claim for any death benefit(s) payable on your death.

10. As to any personal property in your estate, have an appraisal of such property made by an estate personal property appraiser, and sell such property and deposit the sale proceeds into the trust bank account, or divide such property among the entitled beneficiaries based on value or as otherwise required by the terms of your trust.

11. Obtain date of death values of all other property in your estate. Your banks and brokerage firms can provide the trustee with a statement(s) covering the time of your death and/or a letter providing the date of death value(s) of such account(s). The trustee will probably need to hire a qualified real estate appraiser to value your real property(ies) (needed for income tax basis purposes).

12. The trustee should keep a good record of all trust income and expenses and trust distributions, since an accounting should typically be provided to each beneficiary at the end of the trust administration.

13. The trustee should pay to himself or herself the compensation he or she is entitled to under the terms of the trust; and if none is provided for, "reasonable compensation" as authorized by California law.

14. After all estate expenses and debts have been paid, make the distributions to your beneficiaries called for by the trust.

15. Have an accountant prepare and file the needed income tax returns for you and for the

*The above statements are not to be taken as legal advice for the reader's particular situation. Richard F. McEntyre practices law in the area of estate planning and administration, having served the San Diego community as a lawyer for over 40 years. Chris von der Lieth is a lawyer who has worked with Dick for over 10 years. Affordable rates. Highest quality services. House calls available.*

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## Botanical Garden

CONTINUED FROM Page 7

inside the returned arches were recreated by other historic experts based on the original designs and drawings from 1915.

Sandra Gramley of Platt White Law Architects, the architect who examined those original drawings, said the craftsmanship and process of building the one-of-kind wood lath building remains largely the same as it did in 1915.

"We are doing it just the way the guys did it 100 years ago, but now we have better materials," Gramley said. "Especially the wood hasn't changed that much. I mean, it's just wood and stucco."

Just as in 1915, the curved slat roof is being made from Redwood. At the time of its creation, California was promoting Redwood as a building material for the world said Gramley. Today Redwood is largely used in homes, not commercial sites. At some point between the 1950s and '90s, the Redwood roof was painted. EC Constructors used a clear gloss on the newly installed Redwood lath so the wood can showcase its array of colors as it ages.

Another reversal from the '50s reconstruction was to remove the steel trusses from concrete barrels that covered the bottom section of the steel. The bare steel trusses now sit on concrete footings from the original design.



Edgar Lozano, AEP Senior Civil Engineer at the City's Public Works Department (left) and Jim Summers, Senior Construction Manager of EC Constructors, Inc. (right), worked to ensure the paint color on the windows matches the original. (Photo by Drew Sitton)

"We actually shored up four of the trusses at a time, cut off the bottom of the trusses, and then rebuilt it from here down," Summers said, gesturing at about five or six feet high.

### NEW ADDITIONS

Although the focus is on historic preservation, modern amenities are being added. The Botanical building will have indoor lighting for the first time, which could extend visiting hours. Pathways are wider now to accommodate people with disabilities. A new patio is being added to the west end outside large wooden doors.

When the small plants are brought back, new plants will be added to the longer-lasting concrete planters that replaced the brick planters inside. New

irrigation methods should save water as well.

The \$28.5 million reconstruction, a budget above initial estimates, has been largely funded by the City with an \$8 million state grant.

Forever Balboa Park, the non-profit manager of Balboa Park, is fundraising for an additional \$10 million for Phase II of the project, an exterior garden focused on native plants and water conservation. The funds will also cover some programming and education. Elizabeth Babcock, the CEO of Forever Balboa Park, said the Botanical garden is important not just as a place of leisure and relaxation, but as a way to learn the importance of botany and biodiversity. She said 100 donors have funded \$4 million of Phase II.



# Museum Month

CONTINUED FROM Page 7

“As we celebrate cross-border collaborations during the World Design Capital San Diego Tijuana 2024, we're excited to welcome Baja California museums and galleries to Museum Month for the first time,” said San Diego Museum Council Executive Director Bob Lehman. “We hope this collaboration is the first of many to come as we promote our region as a global arts and culture destination.”

San Diego Museum Month was created in 1989 to promote the region's diverse range of high-quality cultural offerings during a traditionally slow period for most local museums. It has since grown to become a wildly popular program with both locals and tourists alike. In 2023, more than 110,000 people enjoyed half-off admission at local museums during Museum Month. The expansion into Mexico is expected to set a new record for participation.

“This event is critical in connecting visitors and locals with our rich arts and cultural landscape. Expanding Museum Month to incorporate cross-border elements not only highlights our region's diversity but also enhances the family experience with a broad array of art, science, music, and history. Museum Month will encourage visitors to see and do even more,” said Julie Coker, president and CEO of the San Diego Tourism Authority.

The program has also grown over the years to include a broader range of San Diego institutions beyond traditional museums, including aquariums, nature and wildlife centers, gardens, historic sites, state parks, and more. In 2020, 40 museums participated in Museum Month. In 2024, there will be more 70 participating locations, including



Model railroads are the lens into a miniature world at the San Diego Model Railroad Museum. (Photo courtesy San Diego Museum Council)

the newest additions of Legoland California Resort and SeaLife Aquarium, WNDR Museum, California Wolf Center, and Deer Park Winery & Auto Museum. For a full list of participating locations, visit the San Diego Museum Council website.

Museum Month 2024 is supported by First 5 San Diego as well as state, county and city arts funds and The Pecus Group.

“One of the best ways for children to learn is through hands-on experiences and that is exactly what museums allow them to do,” said Alethea Arguilez, Executive Director of First 5 San Diego. “Museum Month provides such a great opportunity for parents to engage their children in art, science, music, history and more. Most importantly, they get to do it together as a family, which is vital for the healthy development of children.”

The San Diego Museum Council has once again partnered with the Serra Cooperative Library System, offering convenient access to Museum Month passes for local residents in communities across San

Diego County to improve museum accessibility. Head to a local library to pick up a Museum Month pass for free. Passes are also available at the San Diego Law Library and Oceanside Welcome Center.

Each Museum Month pass can be used for up to four half-priced admissions at any of the participating museums (Additional fees may apply for special exhibitions and events at some museums). Guests can use their Museum Month pass to visit as many museums as they would like during the month of February. Museum Month is not valid in conjunction with any other discounts or with the Balboa Park Explorer pass.

This year also includes digital passes that can be found on sandiegomuseumcouncil.org. Guests will be able to download passes for each museum they would like to visit directly to their phones, although some sites may only accept printed passes. Others, such as Birch Aquarium, require advanced online reservations. Be sure to check the website for any restrictions before visiting.

# Editor's picks: February events

## 2024 SD Lunar New Year Festival

San Diego Lunar New Year is a three-day celebration taking place at City Heights Park at 3795 Fairmount Ave. from 5-10 p.m. on Feb. 9, 11 a.m.-10 p.m. on Feb. 10, and 11 a.m.-8 p.m. on Feb. 11. Enjoy a great selection of Asian foods, dragon dances, firecrackers, folk and traditional performances, cherry blossom trees, and more at this free, inclusive event.

## SuperPole Sunday

For those tuning in on Superbowl Sunday mainly for Usher's halftime show, Queen Bee's in North Park is hosting 'Superpole Sunday' on Feb. 11 starting at 2 p.m. During the first half of the game, which will be shown on the TV screens in the main room, attendees will have the chance to explore their pole dancing skills in the side rooms while the Pole Buzz members prepare for an entertaining performance. The public is then invited to come together to watch Usher take the Superbowl stage and the Pole Buzz team will follow the performance with a minishow of their own! Tickets will be \$15.

## Authors of the Month

Head to the fifth floor Virtual Travel Center of the Central Library to hear from African American poets Ted Washington and Alexis V.

Johnson about each of their latest books from 6-7:30 p.m. on Feb. 13 for this free author talk.

## Ultimate Taco Challenge

Experience a south-of-the-border twist on Fat Tuesday at El Chingon in the Gaslamp Quarter. Teams of four will compete to eat 42 tacos within 4:20 minutes on Tuesday, Feb. 13. The contest starts at 7 p.m. Sign up at elchingon.com.

## “Chicago” at Broadway SD

Celebrate 25 years of razzle dazzle at San Diego Civic Theatre (1100 Third Ave.) from Feb. 13-18. “Chicago” is a universal tale of fame, fortune and all that jazz, with one show-stopping song after another and astonishing dancing not to be missed. Get tickets for this Tony-winning musical at broadwaysd.org.

## 43rd Tribute to the Reggae Legends

Formerly known as Bob Marley Day, the WorldBeat Cultural Center in Balboa Park is holding its annual reggae festival on Saturday, Feb. 24 from 3-11:30 p.m. Tickets cost \$57-65.

## Pairings with a Purpose Dinner Party

Support Feeding San Diego by attending a five-course dinner by Chef Travis Swikard on Feb. 29 from 6-9 p.m. at Callie in the East Village (1195 Island Ave.). Tickets are \$495.

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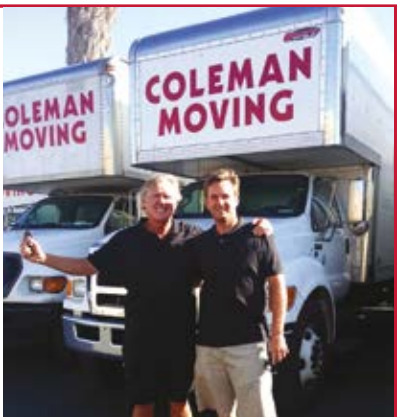
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Dining & Entertainment

American Cuisine	Coffee Shop	Mexican Cuisine
Bakery	Deli	New Restaurant
Bar	Dessert	Nightclub
Barbecue	Dinner	Outdoor Dining
Brewery	Donut Shop	Pet Friendly Dining
Billiards	Farmers Market	Pizza
Breakfast	Fine Dining	Seafood
Brunch	Greek Cuisine	Sports Bar
Burger	Happy Hour	Steakhouse
Business Lunch	Health Food Store	Sushi
Cafe	Indian Cuisine	Thai Cuisine
Casino	Irish Pub	Vegetarian/Vegan
Catering	Italian Cuisine	Wine Bar
Chinese Cuisine	Juice/Smoothies	
Cocktail	Lunch	

Business & Retail

Accountant	Dispensary	Optometrist
Acupuncture	Dry Cleaner	Pet Boarding / Day Care
Antiques	Fighting Gym	Pet Grooming
Art Gallery	Financial Planner	Pharmacy
Attorney	Florist	Photographer
Auto Repair Shop	Garden Supply	Rehab
Bank	Gym / Healthclub	Pilates
Barber Shop	Health Food	Plumber
Bike Shop	Home Improvement	Real Estate Agent
Boutique	Hotel	Real Estate Office
Car Wash	Hospital	Retirement Living
Chiropractor	Insurance Broker	Solar Company
Cosmetic Services	Jeweler	Tanning Salon
Credit Union	Manicure / Pedicure	Veterinarian
Day Spa	Massage	Waxing and Threading Salon
Dentist	New Business	Yoga Studio