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CONTACT US

Editorial
(858) 270-3103 x130
dave@sdnews.com

Advertising
(951) 296-7794
hfine@sdnews.com

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Birds of a feather flock together

Penguins were quite visible during a trip to Antarctica for one San Diego State University professor. See her story on Page 7. (Courtesy photo)

White appointed new principal at Patrick Henry High School

The search for a new principal at Patrick Henry High School had been ongoing for months ever since Michelle Irwin announced early last summer she was stepping down from that role.

Irwin left the principal post at Henry to take a position as a Middle School Area Superintendent for the San Diego Unified School District. Since then, the school has had interim people filling the all-important role.

That is until now.

In a letter sent out recently to PHHS staff, students and families, the school has a new principal coming aboard.

Sandra White, who has worked at Valhalla High School since 2006 as a school counselor and most recently as an assistant principal, began her new job at PHHS on March 4.

White is a dedicated educator with 23 years of experience as a mathematics teacher, school

counselor and assistant principal. In addition she has taught as an Adjunct Professor at San Diego State University and Cuyamaca College.

On a personal note, White was born and raised in Alabama. She attended Tuskegee University earning a Bachelors in Management Science. Her education continued with her earning two Master's degrees and she is currently a doctoral student at National University.



Sandra White

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Shana Morgan



Marie Monet



Dr. Abigail Fleisner

Area female entrepreneurs continue to shine, provide advice for newcomers in running a small business

By DAVE THOMAS

With March being Women’s History Month, is there a better time of year to highlight some of the great work a number of local female entrepreneurs do?

According to a U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business & Entrepreneurship report from the summer of 2023, of the more than 33 million small companies nationwide, close to 13 million of them are run by a woman or women. The report goes on to note that companies owned by women in the U.S. generate more than \$2.5 trillion in annual revenue, employing more than 12 million individuals in the process.

You do not have to look far to see the positive impacts many women are having on local small businesses.

Take for example the work of **Shana Morgan** of Morgan’s Monograms in La Mesa.

Perseverance is often a key to success

Perseverance would be a good way to describe this company’s ability to survive the times, times that included the beginning of COVID in 2020.

Opened in 1983 by Morgan’s mother, Mary, this local female-run business became the first computerized embroidery company in San Diego.

“Our first location was right up the street on La Mesa Boulevard

(8021) I believe,” Shana Morgan stated. “I was six years old and would sleep in a sleeping bag while she ran names and initials and tried to figure out how to use the machine. After time, we grew, moved and continued to grow until we had 52 employees and she owned the entire business park at 7584 University Avenue. She retired and I took over the company in 2012.”

To say things got a little challenging at the start of the next decade is an understatement.

In 2020, the company dealt with a flood, COVID hit and Mary Morgan shut down the company completely. It was Shana who would relaunch it four months later by herself, taking on the risk of renting this store front during COVID. To date, the company continues to be a success despite such challenges.

“COVID ended Morgan’s Monograms Inc.,” Shana noted. “We had employees of 38 years that we had to let go. My Mom had to sell the building and she dissolved the company. It was the saddest day of my life. While sitting at home everyday with no orders coming in via email or phone, I thought we were done forever. I was determined to save this company and I started an LLC along with one of my employees of 22 years and relaunched. We weren’t able to get any COVID funds because we technically started the company in 2020. I used all my

savings and helped my other employees and got an embroidery/screenprint production up and running in a warehouse in Casa de Oro. I got the storefront on La Mesa Boulevard and came in everyday hoping people would place orders and come in like always but that didn’t happen.”

One of the challenges Morgan faced was that one of her largest accounts are school uniforms. With in-person attendance sidelined by COVID for some two years, no one was buying school uniforms. Turn the clock forward when schools reopened for in-person attendance and things changed dramatically.

“Once school officially opened, there were national shortages on everything,” Morgan pointed out. “I had 1,500 families looking for school uniforms and I couldn’t find stock anywhere. It was a stressful nightmare, and it took over a year to get stock back to normal.”

While such challenges are not ones to be glossed over, they can be overcome with will and determination.

Roll up your sleeves and jump in

For other women thinking of starting a small business, Morgan encourages them to go for it.

“My Mom started a business on her own in 1983,” Morgan

SEE WOMEN IN BUSINESS, Page 5

27 Quick and Easy Home Fix Ups Sellers Need to Attract Buyers in Today's Market

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Women
in business

CONTINUED FROM Page 3

remarked. “In 2024 being a woman-owned business and being one myself is very natural to me and should be to all women who want to own their business. If you have a good business plan, a product that is successful and the drive to make it happen, you’re gold. Being a woman is just a bonus, it should never deter a woman from starting a business.”

Given her determination to make a go of it through some very challenging times, Shana Morgan has pieced together quite a successful small business story.

Another woman who has been a driving force for many years in the local small business scene is **Marie Monet**.

Owner of Marie Monet European Skin Care & Day Spa in La Mesa, Monet had her first salon in La Mesa all the way back in 1979.

“I had no work experience but always wanted to work in the beauty industry,” Monet commented. “Classes for estheticians were just becoming available and I was fortunate to receive a government grant to attend De Loux School of Cosmetology in La Mesa.” After graduation, Monet attended massage school before taking on her first industry job working for Scientific Skin in La Jolla.

As a longtime small business owner, Monet knows there can be challenges along the way, notably getting the word out about one’s brand.

Keeping your
name out there

“Advertising is very important and has significantly changed over the years,” Monet went on to say. “It’s crucial to maintain ongoing advertising especially on social media, which can be very costly. It’s important to keep your name out there, and to continually keep in touch with your clients. After COVID, there was a slow return of clients and it was imperative that they knew they were returning to a safe environment. It’s important to keep up with the newest technology and to be able to communicate it to your clients, which can be challenging.”

Having started her successful business many years ago, Monet knows all too well it can be very challenging in the beginning.

“It requires getting as much education and experience in your field as you can before opening the doors,” Monet said. “Have a mentor that you can follow to enhance your skills and who will support you through the good times and the bad. Never give up and never quit, once the doors open, the real learning begins.”

As someone who loves her work and her clients, Monet notes each day’s challenges and new successes make her job worthwhile.

“I didn’t give up, and I have enjoyed being a part of watching my clients achieve their goals.”

Running your own business
has its advantages

For **Dr. Abigail Fleisner** of Full Circle Acupuncture in La Mesa, owning and operating her business now for four years means she gets to run her operation on her own terms.

Fleisner purchased the existing practice from another acupuncturist who retired in January of 2020. When she decided to go back to school for acupuncture, Fleisner said she knew one day she’d want to run her own practice.

Like countless other small business owners, Fleisner had to confront COVID in 2020.

“During the time I was closed I worked on remodeling the clinic,” Fleisner noted. “I had many concerns opening back up and often wondered if I would make it due to being shut down and people not being comfortable coming back for acupuncture treatments.” While things were slow early on, Fleisner had a small loan through the SBA (Small Business Administration) which helped keep things running, though she did not qualify for any COVID relief funds.

Flash-forward to 2024 and Fleisner said her business is quite busy. She noted she is looking to add another acupuncturist and has expanded her business into offering functional medicine too.

When it comes to advice for other women looking at starting a small business, Fleisner tells them to go for it, even when they think it may be scary. “Do more, think less and lastly know your numbers,” Fleisner commented.

With her small business doing well, Fleisner is appreciative of what she has in front of her.

“I set my schedule, I take time off when it fits my schedule and I am my own boss,” Fleisner said. “I worked for a big corporation from the age of 21 to 26 and that was enough for me to know I didn’t

SEE WOMEN IN BUSINESS, Page 6

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College Area arrests should make coeds prioritize safety again and again

Editor's Desk
By DAVE THOMAS

The recent arrests of two males in the College Area related to allegations of prowling and being a Peeping Tom, respectively, should certainly give San Diego State University coeds room for pause. You can see the respective stories online at: <https://sdnews.com/college-area-prowler-turns-himself-in-at-sdpd-eastern-division-substation/> and <https://sdnews.com/peeping-tom-arrested-in-college-area/>.

While no young woman or any student for that matter should have to worry about someone watching them go about their daily activities, we sadly know this happens more times than gets reported.

That said, SDSU is by no means a hot bed for such activities. These things happen on and around many campuses nationwide.

When not worrying about a prowler or Peeping Tom, young coeds also need to think about who they get into vehicles with.

It was reported last fall that two women separately got into vehicles they thought were safe ride shares, only to find out otherwise. That story can be viewed

at: <https://sdnews.com/two-incidents-of-sexual-assault-involving-ride-share-vehicles-reported-in-college-area/>.

Keep in mind more times than not coeds have done absolutely nothing wrong. One should not have to think twice that their ride share driver might assault them or that they need to keep their blinds and curtains at home drawn 24/7.

With that in mind, following some commonsense approaches will more times than not keep one safe.

These include:

- Know your surroundings at all times – I think back to when I was a college student several decades ago and how carefree I was at times. That said, the odds of someone attacking me etc. were probably slim to none. Always stay cognizant of your surroundings both away from and at home. If anything even remotely looks or sounds suspicious, be sure and report it.
- Travel with others at night – While it is not always possible to do so, try and travel with at least one other friend when out and about at night. These losers targeting young women look for opportunities to take advantage of a situation. Nighttime can be an ideal situation for one of these creeps to cause havoc and worse. When coming and going



An alleged Peeping Tom was arrested recently after reported incidents in the 5700 block of Dorothy Drive. (Photo by Karen Austin)

once the sun has gone down, try your best to do it with at least one other individual you know and trust. Having that person by your side can greatly lessen the chances you will be the next victim.

- Be careful what you post socially – It is also important to be careful what you post socially. With sites like X, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and others quite popular with younger people, don't post something that will potentially make it easier for someone to target you. For example, don't give out your cell phone number, where you live, the gym you work out at and so on. You might be surprised how often people post such sensitive details and it falls into the wrong hands. For example, a female friend of mine on X (formerly Twitter) several years ago posted her resume online with a home address, cell

number and photo of herself. While she was not bothered by anyone, the potential was there for this to be an issue.

- Avoid doing the same thing over and over again - Last, be smart when it comes to avoiding a pattern that someone can pick up on. For example, leaving the same time each day, taking the exact same walking route etc. Change things up from time to time so that if someone is watching you, casing your residence etc. it will be harder for them to know when to potentially strike.

While there have been no deaths locally from such reported incidents, the goal is to make sure coeds and everyone else for that matter stays safe.

As a female college student at SDSU, are you concerned about these recent incidents and what are you doing to stay safe as possible?

Women in business

CONTINUED FROM Page 5

want to play by anyone's rules but my own."

Putting some pizzazz in your business

For **Nancy Losek** of Pizazz Salon in Del Cerro, having her own business under her roof and not having to rent has been ideal.

Originally opened in December of 2003, Losek had rented a booth prior to that for her business. Her coworker was also looking for a change, so they looked at renting booths at another shop, coincidentally owned by her original instructor and employer. "Upon arrival, we saw a shop in need of revitalization," Losek said. "The owner was ready to retire and suggested my partner and I buy the place. Never having the desire to own a business, my coworker convinced me to take the plunge."

When things changed with her partner, Losek was determined to make a go of it on her own.

"One of the major challenges of being a small business owner, I believe, is larger corporations," Losek stated. "They

have changed the way we do retail. As a victim of a theft ring, items stolen from my business have been resold online; my customers buy products online rather than from my shop, without realizing they may be compromising on quality. With the COVID shutdown, operators retired/moved out of state, clients stopped coming, while my overhead continued. It took two years for clients to fully return and for me to recover."

When it comes to advice for other women looking to start and run a small business, Losek advises that they believe in themselves without listening to naysayers. "Treat people as you want to be treated, be fair, always think ahead and persist, looking to the future and don't be afraid to think outside the box."

A longtime Del Cerro resident, Losek said the neighborhood is a part of her.

"I have grown to appreciate and love the people of this community and the lessons they have taught me," Losek noted. "I feel privileged to be an integral part of this neighborhood and to be able to serve others and give back."

Experiencing all aspects of a small business

Kimberly Purchase of Uneeke Boutique in La Mesa

opened the doors to her storefront back in June of 2014.

With a background in retail, Purchase noted, "I have been fortunate to experience all aspects from sales, merchandising, buying, management at both store and regional levels as well as the wholesale side."

COVID and some other challenges have not derailed Purchase from making her small business a winner.

"It's definitely been challenging and I'm constantly pivoting to stay up on the changes," Purchase said. "Even post-COVID, as a small business there are still some setbacks."

When it comes to advising other women looking at starting and operating a small business, Purchase stated, "Know your purpose, do your research (competition, demand of product/service, and location). It's a commitment and unless you have help/support, it's all you. You need to be in 100 percent. Believe in yourself and go for it. You never know unless you take the leap."

Purchase also makes it a point that her customers feel welcomed and comfortable when they walk in the door.

"The fact they trust me to help in their search for a special outfit, or to help them enhance their wardrobe is so rewarding to me.

I am so grateful for my customers and for those who have become friends."

Having the right staff in place is key

Anyone with staff knows that their business is more likely to be successful if they have the right people in the right positions.

That said, **Dr. Rosina Cullins** (OD) of Allied Gardens Family Optometry has been in business since 2006. The existing practice has had several owners and dates back to the 1960's.

"Finding, hiring and keeping good staff can be difficult," Cullins said. "I've definitely come to appreciate when I have a great team at the office as I do right now. As far as advice to other women who want to start a business, I would say, trust your instincts and skills and find support when you need it."

Cullins enjoys being part of the Allied Gardens community. Owning the business allows her the flexibility to set hours and times that allow her to be with family.

"It brings me joy to help people see better and feel better," Cullins added. "I have the privilege to get to know some wonderful families and watch children grow up as I examine their eyes through the years. I'm certainly blessed."

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1621 Grand Ave. Suite C
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EDITOR
Dave Thomas
dave@sdnews.com

WEB & SOCIAL MEDIA
Dave Thomas
dave@sdnews.com

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Tom Melville x131
tom@sdnews.com
Dave Schwab x132
reporter@sdnews.com
Drew Sitton x136
drew@sdnews.com

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Chris Baker x107
chris@sdnews.com

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

ACCOUNTING
Heather Humble x120
accounting@sdnews.com

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



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PENINSULA BEACON



From Imperial Valley to Antarctica: SDSU professor joined international expedition for climate research

By NATALI GONZALEZ

San Diego State University professor Linda Lara-Jacobo was one of 74 women who traveled to Antarctica late last year for scientific research as part of the International Homeward Bound Program.

Lara-Jacobo, a professor in the Division of Environmental Health at the Imperial Valley campus, focuses on science diplomacy and policy. In doing this work, she learned about Homeward Bound.

The program is a global leadership initiative that aims to support women with science, technology, engineering, math and medicine (STEMM) backgrounds, empowering them to work toward a more sustainable future.

Lara-Jacobo heard about the program from a colleague and was drawn in by its leaders and other participants.

"They were wonderful, extraordinary women making change around the world," Jacobo said.

After an extensive application process, Lara-Jacobo was selected

to be part of the 2023 cohort. The group was made up of participants from 18 countries with a variety of research interests and backgrounds.

The group first flew to Argentina and then made the rest of the trip by boat, which they lived on for their three-and-a-half-week stay.

Once they arrived, the trip consisted of classes and landings on the continent.

Preparation for the landings was rigorous due to an aviary flu outbreak, according to Lara-Jacobo. To protect the penguins, all gear needed to be carefully disinfected and inspected before the group was able to depart.

"Sometimes we did two landings per day," Lara-Jacobo said. "So it's go in, come back, disinfect your shoes, remove everything, get it dry, take a shower if you got wet...and then prepare for another landing."

The journey to shore was often physically taxing as zodiac boats moved the scientists from the main boat to the landing place.



Linda Lara-Jacobo, left, got the opportunity to travel to Antarctica as part of an international Homeward Bound Program. Pictured with her is Dr. Toni Mizerek, an SDSU alumni. (Courtesy photo)

Traveling this way often meant going through rough waters, which was difficult on the body.

On the continent, the group explored Antarctica and documented the conditions for comparison with previous years. One of the

most significant changes they noted was the shrinking size of the glaciers.

Lara-Jacobo explained that the location is one of the biggest reflections of what is happening as a result of climate change.

"Around the world, we have a (climate) interference because of humanity," Lara-Jacobo said. "We're changing the weather. So, Antarctica, and also the Arctic, are environments that are really isolated from humanity. It (shows) the reality of what is happening."

Lara-Jacobo emphasized that the impact of climate change, such as what is happening in Antarctica, is an international issue and should be viewed as such.

"We cannot separate the air, we cannot separate the water, there is no border for that," She said. "We need to see it as one huge problem."

So, even though the expedition has finished, Lara-Jacobo says that, for scientists, the work never stops.

"No matter what you do, everything is related to your research. Not because you have to do it, no... it's because you have a real, authentic passion for what you do and you want to really make a difference and change the world," she added.



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Navajo Community Planners, Inc. set for March 13 elections

The election of representatives to the Navajo Community Planners, Inc. (NCPI) will be held on Wednesday, March 13 at Tifereth Israel Synagogue, 6660 Cowles Mountain Blvd between 6 and 7 p.m. in conjunction with the organization's regular meeting.

Each of the Navajo Communities of Allied Gardens, San Carlos, Grantville, and Del Cerro hold four seats on the Board. Members are elected to two-year terms. The seats up for election to begin terms on April 1, 2024 are:
Allied Gardens (two vacancies terms ending 3/31/2026)

- Marilyn Reed
 - Jessica Soto
 - Martin Marcus
 - Kevin Sullivan
- San Carlos** (Two vacancies terms ending 3/31/2026, one ending 3/31/2025)
- Danny Fitzgerald
 - Gary Whaley

- Grantville** (Two vacancies terms ending 3/31/2026, one ending 3/31/2025)
- Cory LaShell
- Del Cerro** (two vacancies terms ending 3/31/2026)
- John Hoy
 - Nate Stein
- Ballots will be cast in-person,

no means of virtual voting is provided. To cast a ballot at the time of voting you must show residency, property ownership, or business operation in the Navajo Community. Results of the election will be made during the regularly scheduled meeting.



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What are your priorities for concerns in Del Cerro?

Friends of Del Cerro
By JAY WILSON

The survey to determine the priorities of city related concerns in Del Cerro will be mailed to all property owners the week of March 25. Every property owner will receive a letter from the Enhance Del Cerro committee requesting property owners to respond to six questions relating to prioritizing concerns of city owned property in Del Cerro such as Medians, Open Space, Community-Identifying Signs and Community Parks. There will also be an opportunity to provide input as to concerns not listed in the survey. Property owners will be able to take the survey online or complete the survey included with the letter and return it to the Enhance Del Cerro committee. All results of the

survey should be posted online by the end of April for everyone to review. The city is completing two Get It Done requests. There is a replacement for Adobe Falls Rd. directional sign at the intersection of Waring Rd. and Adobe Falls Rd. A second directional sign at the same intersection should be installed by the middle of March. FODC listed a new Get Done request involving the damaged planter in the College Avenue median just south of Lambda Drive which appears to have been damaged when impacted by a vehicle. If you have a city related concern in the Del Cerro community, submit the matter on the city's Get It Done App or contact us and FODC will submit your request on your behalf. Email us at info@friendsofdelcerro.org. The FODC was contacted by a resident who lives adjacent to

the open space on either side of Pasatiempo at the top of Del Cerro regarding the ongoing nuisance and safety issues involving speeding on Pasatiempo and the continued drug use, graffiti and littering of this open space park area, particularly at night. Bob Hickman, the chair of the FODC Crime and Safety Committee, will be meeting on the site with several residents, city staff, Anthony Hackett, the senior community relations representative for Councilmember Raul Campillo and Police Community Relations Officer Robert Raynor. Bob is also working to expand the number of Neighborhood Watch groups in Del Cerro. If you are interested in more information about establishing a Neighborhood Watch program in your Del Cerro neighborhood, contact Bob by emailing him at info@friendsofdelcerro.org.

Put fun in your day! Every day!

San Carlos Area Council
By MICKEY ZEICHICK

The speaker for our March 20 meeting will be Tyler Sickmeyer, the marketing thought leader and founder of Fidelitas, a full-service marketing and advertising agency serving clients worldwide. He knows that brand loyalty is a company's most important asset and he and his team implement unique and innovative strategies to accomplish the goals of their clients. Sickmeyer is not speaking about that but another of his passions, a different type of goal: a "field goal." As in basketball. As in the Sharks. As an avid basketball player, Tyler played in many leagues and on various professional teams throughout his career. His love for the game is what spurred him to bring "The Basketball League (TBL) to San Diego in 2022 that strives to provide family entertainment, free kids clinics, and exposure to such a fun game!

("This also helps keep kids off the street!") The games are played at one of the high school gyms in our San Diego area and so far, are "free" and very exciting. Talk about "March Madness" (well not madness). You can go to the San Diego Sharks website: Sharksbasketball.com for free tickets and popcorn at the game, and a fun time for the entire family, kids are encouraged to be "kids." Their mascot Crunch and their fun master Mollique Johnson who is always up for random, funny, goofy, silly, good, clean fun. Tyler, Erica (his wife) and their two young sons are there helping to ensure everything runs smoothly and the fans (young and old) are having a fun time. And the Sharks will deliver an exciting game. Speaking of fun and March our San Carlos Recreation Center (SCRC) will be hosting a Spring Egg Hunt on March 30 at 6445 Lake Badin Avenue (92119) from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m. They will have plastic eggs, candy bags, games, arts, and crafts for the

kids, and a D.J. and, did I mention, it is "free"? The SCRC is offering many different activities throughout the year and you can go to their website: <https://www.sandiego.gov/park-and-recreation/centers/recctr/sancarlos> for a list of activities, or how you can get involved. Dave, his wife (Carolyn) and their family along with G.A.G. Kiwanis members are always up for a fun time (and doing service projects) and so we surprised (?) Dave at a gathering at McGregor's on his birthday Feb. 29. I referred to Dave as "Dave 7 X 3 X 4" and my little (really little) gift to him was a miniature grinning from ear to ear (do frogs have ears?) green frog trinket (leapfrog, get it?). I would like to make a motion that we adopt the "green leapfrog" as the mascot for Leap Year (day). What sayeth you? If you would like to be on the Board of the SCAC let me know, my contact information is sancarlosareacouncilpres@gmail.com. Our meetings are held on the third Wednesday of the odd months.

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Craft House Fashion Valley: Upbeat, fast, casual with an elevated experience

What's on the menu?
By **ROBIN DOHRN-SIMPSON**

Escape to a Tulum-inspired culinary experience at Craft House in Fashion Valley.

The decor will take you into a jungle with rope, wood, basket lighting, and tree trunk/live-edge tables. The food is a “New American cuisine with a Mexican twist.” The cocktails are unique to the concept. The music is specifically selected for the restaurant.

Caesar Huerta, executive chef and co-owner, like many passionate and successful chefs, began his culinary education at age five in his grandmother and mother’s kitchens. From then on he was hooked. He studied at the Art Institute Culinary School and hasn’t looked back.

After years of working with local mentoring chefs, he started Monster Crafts Food Truck and won awards at the Del Mar Food Truck Festival. His food truck success propelled him on to the Sky Deck in Del Mar and most recently, looking for a more central location opened a second location in Fashion Valley.

“People eat with their eyes; we also focus on the beautiful plating of our dishes. We like to say that our food is elevated, fast casual, and shareable,” Huerta said.

“Our monster burgers put us on the map and continue to be popular. We have five different burgers,” said Huerta. The Blue Dream Burger has applewood bacon, gorgonzola, onion rings, arugula, and bourbon BBQ. Shrooms and Truffle is another crowd-pleaser with roasted shiitake mushrooms, black truffle, smoked gouda, arugula and onion jam.

Another house specialty is the Charred Octopus.

This dish is a piece of art and is garnished with pistachio pesto, romesco sauce, fingerling potatoes, Longaniza sausage (a Spanish sausage similar to chorizo), crispy chickpeas and micro greens.

Diners are also talking about the Fisherman’s Stew. One fan said it is a celebration of seafood at its finest with impeccably cooked fish, mussels, shrimp and other shellfish. Sop up any juices with grilled sourdough bread.

The starters could be a full meal too. Short Rib Mini Tacos with chipotle aioli, avo-poblano crema, pickled onions, and micro



Monster burgers are among the options when you pay a visit to the Craft House. (Photo by Robin Dohrn-Simpson)

chipotle aioli, mini corn tostada.

Another tasty delight is the Pork Belly Bites with Achiote-chipotle mezcal glaze, pickled onions, avo-poblano crema, radish, and micro cilantro.

“We have a lot of fun with our cocktails, which pair nicely with our cuisine. Our signature drink is a Nautilus Old-Fashioned infused with smoke from our custom smoker,” Huerta added.

Located on the back side of Fashion Valley Mall in the food court area, 7007 Friars Road. Call for reservations at (619) 314-4574.

For the current menu and special events go to: <https://craft-housefashionvalley.com/>.



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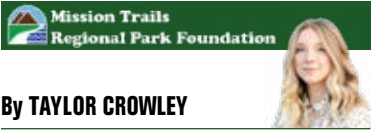
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Photo contest returns and popular native plant speaker booked for March 14



By TAYLOR CROWLEY

Members of the Mission Trails community: now is your chance to show off your beautiful photos from your adventures at the park.

We are excited to announce the 2024 Mission Trails Photo Contest is open, and we can't wait to see your unique perspective of

our special gem, Mission Trails Regional Park (MTRP).

This year, the MTRP Foundation will accept submissions until April 1.

Adults may submit one photo to the category of their choosing: Plants, Animals, Landscapes, or People. Teens and Kids 12 and younger can also submit one photo to an open category in their age group. This is an online only



SEE MTRP, Page 12 Mike Evans

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Express Blinds, Draperies & Shutters and Drapery Tradition Welcomes New Design Consultant, Jessica Acklin

Express Blinds, Draperies and Shutters and Drapery Tradition, two distinguished entities with a combined legacy of over 40 years of service in San Diego's window treatment industry, are proud to continue their unwavering commitment to the local community. Express Blinds, owned by Bob Sole, and Drapery Tradition, owned by Lizie Delgado, share a showroom located at 7424 Jackson Dr. in the picturesque San Carlos neighborhood, offering an extensive range of Blind, Shade, and Drapery solutions to clients throughout San Diego.

Both Express Blinds and Drapery Tradition have carved their own niches in the industry, each renowned for their expertise and dedication to excellence. Express Blinds, under the guidance of Bob Sole, has become synonymous with top-notch window treatments, catering to the unique needs and preferences of homeowners and businesses alike. Drapery Tradition, led by Lizie Delgado, is celebrated for its mastery of drapery design and craftsmanship, providing an array of elegant drapery solutions.

One of the newest additions to the team, Jessica Acklin, joins the ranks as the "star" designer/consultant. With her keen eye for design and an innate ability to transform spaces, Jessica will be instrumental in delivering personalized design solutions that exceed expectations. Bob Sole, owner of Express Blinds, is enthusiastic about the continued growth of both companies and the synergy between them. "We are excited to share our showroom with Drapery Tradition and continue our shared mission of enhancing the beauty and functionality of spaces through high-quality window treatments," said Bob Sole. "With Jessica on board, we are well-equipped to provide an even more exceptional customer experience."

Lizie Delgado, of Drapery Tradition, shares Bob's excitement about the partnership and the future of their businesses. "Our collaboration allows us to offer a comprehensive range of window treatment options to our clients," said Lizie. "From blinds and shades to exquisite draperies, we have it all covered."



Express Blinds, Draperies and Shutters and Drapery Tradition remain steadfast in their commitment to providing top-tier products, expert design advice, and personalized service to the San Diego community. Whether clients are seeking elegant draperies, practical blinds, stylish shades, or a combination of all, the combined expertise of Bob Sole, Lizie Delgado, and Jessica Acklin ensures a tailored and exceptional experience.

The showroom, which is shared by both Express Blinds and Drapery Tradition, welcomes clients to explore their extensive offerings and find the perfect window treatment solutions to suit their needs. To schedule an appointment or for product information, please visit the showroom at 7424 Jackson Dr., San Carlos, or call 619-461-2101. Jessica Acklin, the new star designer/consultant is waiting to assist you.

Express Blinds, Draperies and Shutters and Drapery Tradition are proud to continue their longstanding tradition of excellence in San Diego's window treatment industry, transforming spaces into stunning and functional works of art.

About Drapery Tradition: Drapery Tradition, with a legacy of over 40 years, is owned by Lizie Delgado, a renowned expert in drapery design and craftsmanship. Known for their elegant drapery solutions, Drapery Tradition provides clients with timeless and sophisticated window treatments that transform living spaces. Together with Express Blinds, they offer a comprehensive range of window treatment options to clients in San Diego.

Renowned San Diego Native, David Hingeley, Cultivates Success with Crown Point Clippers Tree Service



David Hingeley, a true San Diego native and the visionary owner of Crown Point Clippers Tree Service, has established an unparalleled legacy in the world of tree care. His remarkable journey began in Jr. High School when he embarked on his first journey into the realm of tree care. Through unwavering dedication and tireless effort after school, during vacations, and weekends, he steadily nurtured his passion, which eventually led to the founding of his own business in 1979. Notably, he simultaneously served in the fire service for an impressive 31 years, showcasing his commitment to excellence.

Nestled in the scenic La Jolla area, Crown Point Clippers Tree Service caters to an esteemed clientele in La Jolla, Point Loma, Rancho Santa Fe, and across San Diego. The company's mission is to help clients rediscover the inherent beauty of their properties through meticulous tree trimming and a range of enhancement services. With a fervent belief in the transformative power of well-maintained trees, the company underscores their pivotal role in enhancing the visual allure of both residential and commercial landscapes.

David's extensive background in tree care and public safety positions Crown Point Clippers Tree Service as a premier provider. The company seamlessly melds proficiency and dedication to craft secure and breathtaking landscapes for its valued clientele. Recognized for their expertise in expert tree lacing and trimming, the company stands out as a beacon of quality in the industry.

For those seeking trusted and experienced tree care services in the Greater San Diego Area, Crown Point Clippers Tree Service emerges as a reliable partner. David Hingeley's journey from modest beginnings to a revered entrepreneur serves as an inspiring reminder that dedication, expertise, and a commitment to safety can pave the way to remarkable success.

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Celebrate Persian New Year at the San Carlos Branch Library

San Carlos Library

By DAVID EGE



Join us as we celebrate Norouz, Persian New Year, on Friday, March 15, from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m.

We are excited to bring this traditional celebration to our community with our staff member, Ms. Shadi, speaking about the significance of this holiday and the cultural traditions that celebrate the beginning of Spring. Persian music will be provided by Dornob and we will be serving delicious Persian treats.

Author, Matt Coyle, will be

discussing the 10th book in his Rick Cahill crime series, *Odyssey's End*, on Friday, March 22, from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m.

This fast-paced tale has San Diego private investigator, Rick Cahill, looking into a missing persons case that spirals out of control. Cahill's past comes back to haunt him, and, with his brain disease worsening, he just wants to stay alive long enough to see his family one last time.

The Colored Pencil Society of America (CPSA) will be displaying their artwork from March 6 to April 5 in the Winer Family Community Room & Art Gallery.

The CPSA was established 34

years ago to promote colored pencil art as a viable art form. They will have an artist's reception on Saturday, March 23, from 12 p.m. to 2 p.m.

The San Carlos Friends of the Library Used Book Sale is held on the first Saturday of each month from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Come buy books and support the Friends of the Library. Ask for a membership envelope from the book sale cashiers to join or donate to the San Carlos Friends of the Library.

We are in need of your gently used book donations which are accepted any time during library open hours.



Persian music will be provided by Dornob at the San Carlos Branch Library on March 15. (Courtesy photo)

Variety of events dot the College-Rolando Library schedule in March

College-Rolando Branch Library

By JESSICA BUCK



There will be two dragons, one dog, and a very tall coyote at the College-Rolando Library in March

Yes, that's right. Let me explain.

On the third Thursday of each month, you can find a friendly service dog in our Community Room for our Crafting for Critters program. During Crafting or

Critters you can help us make fun and easy enrichment items for homeless animals at our local Humane Society. Next event is Thursday, March 21 from 2:30-3:30pm.

Odi the Coyote is a coyote, just not one you will find in the wild.

ODI stands for Opportunity, Discovery, and Inspiration, and is our library mascot. Odi the Coyote also wears a red shirt and carries a backpack—not common for your usual coyote.

Why is Odi the Coyote visiting the branch?

We are celebrating our early literacy reading program 1000 Books Before Kindergarten with a party and Odi the Coyote will be at the branch for photos. There will also be crafts, dancing, bubbles, and live music from Ralphs World. 1000 Books Before Kindergarten is an early literacy program for ages 0-5 and is sponsored by The Library Foundation. This party will take place on Saturday, March 23 from 10:30 a.m. -12 p.m.

The Asian Story Theater will be presenting a special performance of their *Two Dragons*: a play featuring two stories: *Naga and the Princess and the Dragon Pearl*. Asian Story Theater celebrates our Asian heritage, multicultural awareness and understanding by dramatizing Asian and Pacific Island (API) stories, arts, and themes for family audiences. Join us for a magical showing celebrating dragon folktales on Friday, March 22 from 4 p.m. - 5 p.m.

There's always something going on at the College-Rolando Library. Visit us to find out.

Friends of the Library

I encourage you to accompany me in joining the Friends of the College-Rolando Library, whose mission is to support the College-Rolando Library. Friends make a difference in innumerable ways, from running the library bookstore to



Odi the Coyote is a coyote, just not one you will find in the wild. (Courtesy photo)

organizing special events and art exhibitions to sponsoring programming or spearheading campaigns.

To join the Friends of College-Rolando Library, visit: collegerolandolibrary.org. Individual memberships cost \$10 a year.

Jessica Buck is the youth services librarian at College-Rolando Library. She coordinates programming for youth and families. For more information, email her at JGBuck@sandiego.gov or visit sandiego.gov/public-library/locations/college-rolando-library.



Kids! Learn To Sail This Summer at Silver Gate Yacht Club!

The award-winning youth sailing program at Silver Gate Yacht Club has a summer sailing camp open to all kids aged 8 to 16. Whether a first time beginner or an experienced sailor, kids will have personalized instruction from our staff of certified coaches on our fleet of modern dinghies and keel boats. All kids are welcome and club membership is not required. Full day, weeklong sessions are available. Silver Gate Yacht Club is located on Shelter Island in San Diego and is convenient to much of the metropolitan area. Phone or text Kent @ 619-252-3762

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MTRP

CONTINUED FROM Page 11

submission process and there is no entry fee. This contest is for amateur/non-professional photographers only.

Finalists will be selected through a judging process, and those photos will be on view at the Visitor Center from May 23 – July 7, 2024. An opening reception and awards ceremony will be held on Thursday, May 23, at 6 p.m. The event will be free and open to the community, and

registration is requested at mtrp.org/photocontest.

If you have any questions about the contest, you can email me at tcrowley@mtrp.org.

Another way to engage with the park is by attending an upcoming lecture, *The "Rewild" Garden Concept: A Case History with Mike Evans* on Thursday, March 14, at 6:30 p.m.

Evans is the founder of Tree of Life Nursery (TOLN) in San Juan Capistrano and has produced and sold California native plants for 45 years. In his presentation, he will discuss what it means to

build a natural garden that is beautiful, sustainable, and functional, and the steps in doing so. Evans last presented in 2019 and the event sold out so get your tickets soon!

Register for the event through the Mission Trails website at www.mtrp.org/programs.

The MTRP Foundation has a lot of exciting events coming this Spring.

You can be the first to know of these events by signing up to receive email communications; subscribe to our email list at www.mtrp.org/enews/.

To be a part of the April Camp Section call:

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Library enhancements continue to be a priority

Allied Gardens/Grantville
By SHAIN HAUG

Under the leadership of Councilmember Raul Campillo the city is resuming work on the expansion of the San Carlos Library.

He will support us in an equally valuable community resource, Benjamin Library. Benjamin Library is less than one-half the size contemplated by the Navajo Facilities Financing Plan. Beyond being insufficient for Allied Gardens, it is not able to handle the needs of residential development in Grantville.

The Navajo Community Planners, Inc. (NCPI) recently recognized this need and placed the library on the priority list for the use of Development Impact Funds (DIF) for Capital Improvement Projects (DIP). We approached Councilmember Campillo for his advice and support. He responded with an amazing proposition. Why limit the use of the property to a library? We have the opportunity to build an expanded library, a senior citizens' center, and a child care and early childhood education center. He asked us, "Is the community willing to take this on?" The Allied Gardens/Grantville Community Council hopes that our answer can be "Yes."

We can do so by forming a committee of local building and landscape architects, land use attorneys, financial consultants, real estate developers, librarians, and realtors (to name a few of the necessary disciplines) to do what we cannot expect the city to do: To develop a guiding design that will be the basis for the community to go forward. Join us at www.agg-cashain@yahoo.com.

Here are some community events between March 8 and April10:

• On March 13, at 6:30 p.m. the Navajo Community Planners, Inc, (NCPI) will meet at Tifereth

Israel Synagogue, 6660 Cowles Mountain Blvd.

• On Thursday, March 14, the Grantville/Allied Gardens Kiwanis Club will hold a Trivia Contest at Palisades Church, 6301 Birchwood Street, beginning at 5:30 p.m. You can play as an individual or with a team of up to four members. For more information contact Kiwanis at www.alliedgardenskiwanis.org and click on 'Grab a piece of the Trivia Pie!'

• On March 16, you should consider joining the Navajo Canyon Habitat Restoration City Park Ranger Event beginning at 9 a.m. through 11 a.m. The event will begin at 6511 Eldridge Street. To participate go to <https://www.sdcanyonlands.org/>, click on "Volunteer" and follow the calendar to March 16 for details.

• April 1, the monthly meeting of the Allied Gardens/Grantville Community Council at 6 p.m. at Benjamin Library by hybrid in-person/remote attendance.

• On April 10, at 6:30 p.m. the Navajo Community Planners, Inc, (NCPI) will meet at Tifereth Israel Synagogue, 6660 Cowles Mountain Blvd San Diego.

• On April 11, between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. I Love a Clean San Diego will lead work parties in picking up trash in Navajo Canyon. Join this event to help preserve this important community asset. You must sign up for the Sunset Sweep. Here is the link: https://cleansd.samaritan.com/custom/501/opp_details/3078

Benjamin Library offers free income tax preparation assistance by AARP on Mondays from 11:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., and on Wednesdays from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. No appointment is necessary. For information go to <https://www.sandiego.gov/public-library> or call (619) 533 3970.

Mark your calendar for "Swingin' with Dean" at the Benjamin Library on Saturday, March 23, at 1 p.m. Come listen

to Dean Ratzman play and sing America's greatest hits! Jazz standards, 40s - 70s rock and some of his original songs.

The Food Pantry is open on Tuesdays and Saturdays at Ascension Lutheran Church

and on the first Friday of each month at Church of Latter-Day Saints between 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Our community is deeply grateful for the support

SEE AGGC, Page 15

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For more info call (619) 246-2003 or go to the www.rightchoiceseniorliving.org. **NOW HIRING CAREGIVERS! CALL NOW!**

February was fun and productive month in the College Area

College Area Happenings

By KAREN AUSTIN

Some fun and productive things happened in the College Area during February.

The College-Rolando Library hosted a fantastic celebration of the Lunar New Year to the delight of many neighborhood families. Children were especially captivated by the sights and sounds of traditional dancing lions as everyone celebrated the Year of the Dragon.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held at the SDG&E Rolando

Substation to showcase the new mural installation they funded to beautify the facility and neighborhood.

It was completed by artist Katy Yeaw with ArtReach San Diego, a non-profit which collaborates with individuals, businesses and organizations to make creative community connections through visual arts expression.

With input from community members, she designed colorful mural panels which depict a path weaving through local wildlife and native plants, including Agave, palms, pines, oranges, a

hummingbird, falcon, parrot and coyote. College Area and Rolando residents welcomed this public art installation at El Cajon Boulevard and 62nd Street.

The next CACC meeting will be at 5:30 p.m. at the College-Rolando Library on April 2.

CACC-sponsored neighborhood Cleanup Days take place on the last Sunday of the month.

Take a selfie/photo of you helping to spruce up the College Area and send it to collegeare-acc@gmail.com to receive a CACC t-shirt and enter a drawing for a gift card, courtesy of a local business in the College Area Business District. The CACC will host a joint cleanup with SDSU Associated Students on April 21. Look for more information in the April edition of the Mission Times Courier.

The following are additional reports by our College Area neighborhoods.



Colorful murals now adorn the SDG&E Rolando Substation, seen here at a celebratory ribbon-cutting event on Feb. 15. From L to R: Sean Elo-Rivera (& son) San Diego City Council President and District 9 representative, Brittany Applestein Syz, Regional Public Affairs Director for San Diego Gas & Electric, Izzy Halpern, ArtReach Mural Program Manager and Katy Yeaw, ArtReach Mural Artist. (Courtesy photo)

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ALVARADO ESTATES

By KAREN AUSTIN

The Alvarado Estates Fire Safe Council hosted the second of three Fire Preparedness Workshops for residents on Feb. 8.

The first covered general preparedness including wildfire behavior, warning notifications, emergency planning, evacuation routes and more. The third workshop will focus on fire insurance issues. Workshop are provided

with support from the San Diego Regional Fire Foundation which provides grants throughout San Diego County for fire prevention and community education.

Morgan Dioli, Forestry and Fire Prevention Programs Coordinator at the Resource Conservation District of Greater San Diego County was the keynote speaker.

She assists in the formation of Fire Safe Councils and provides support to the network of 40 within San Diego County. She shared about critical steps residents can take to prepare for wildfire, including the creation of non-flammable defensible space in the first five feet around their home and the use of building materials like Class A roofing, ember resistant vents, fire retardant treated wood and rain gutter guards. She then described her organization's new

program to provide a free property assessment for homeowners who want personalized feedback about steps they can take to "harden" their home against the threat of wildfire. More information can be found at www.firesafesdcounty.org

The remainder of the meeting was dedicated to educating participants about the range of home hardening steps which might be recommended.

Representatives from Vulcan Vents, Ember Defense, BrandGuard Vents, Safer Building Solutions and Mataverde Hardwood Decking and Siding made presentations about their specialized building and retrofit products. Products are all rated and meet standards such as Wildland-Urban Interface

SEE COLLEGE AREA, Page 15

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GET READY TO MOVE

If you're planning to buy or sell a home or property, we would like to help you put your plan in motion. Here are some properties that are currently on the market, but they'll be going fast. Give one of us a call! **It's your move....**

Some real estate trends are beginning to become clearer

Real Estate Update
By SARAH WARD

Looking over residential real estate data for the last few years, some trends are becoming clearer. The population of “Accidental Landlords” is growing. With most homeowners locked into a mortgage rate in the 3’s, properties are now more likely to be rented out instead of sold. For example, when older people in the past might have wanted to sell their large family home and downsize into a smaller home, condo, or senior housing, this category of homeowner is now more likely to keep their family home and rent it out. Rent received is relatively high now, which can help with the purchase of a new smaller property or provide retirement income. Rents for an

average 3/2 property are now typically well over \$3,000 per month. Another similar trend is when parents pass, children would typically have their parents home sold. But children are now more often holding on to their parent’s home and renting it out for income. In economics, there is something referred to as *price expectations theory*. When suppliers expect prices to increase in the near term, supply tends to be held back in anticipation of receiving higher prices later. This is what is happening in real estate. As inflation continues to surge and property prices continue to steadily appreciate, property owners are holding on to properties instead of selling. Another consideration would be deciding where to place the funds from the sale. With the stock market at an all-time high, and equity valuations

elevated, many prefer to hold wealth in the form of real estate. Although some tax relief is available (\$500,000 tax-free gains for primary properties of married couples, seek advice from tax experts), with prices so high, there may still be a large tax liability with the sale of a home, again causing some homeowners to hold on to a property rather than selling it. This leads to another trend; property management companies are experiencing record business and growth. As a note, I own several rental properties and recommend professional property management for rental properties, as regulatory bureaucracy is high and tenant evictions, if needed, can be tricky. Property managers carefully scrutinize potential tenants (extensive background checks, etc.) and have tenants set up on rent payment apps so that rents are paid

seamlessly through direct deposit. Gone are the days of knocking on doors for rent checks. This all leads to very little inventory in the marketplace. I held an open house for a new listing last weekend in Carlsbad and we were absolutely overrun with potential buyers coming through for a \$1.6m fixer. With minimal inventory turning over, the population of renters will continue to rise in San Diego County. I read recently that we are slowly becoming a *renter’s nation*, with the majority of Americans having to rent, and less people owning properties. Another trend is that there are less flippers in the market. Desperate buyers are outbidding flippers to win a property and then improving the property themselves. If you have any questions on buying or selling real estate here

in San Diego, please call me for a no obligation chat or meet-up.
MARKET REPORT:

- Median single-family home price in **92115** is way up to \$1,110,000 with 29 new listings in the month of February.
- **92119** also saw a large increase in median single-family home price which hit \$1,162,000 with 12 new listings in February.
- **92120** single-family homes had a median price of \$1,006,000 with 25 new listings.

We have seen the number of new listings pretty much double from January to February. Despite an influx of inventory, prices are still way up and buyer demand continues to exceed supply.
—Sarah Ward is a REALTOR with Fine & Coastal. Reach her at: sarah@fineandcoastal.com.

College Area

CONTINUED FROM Page 14

Codes, which aim to mitigate the risks of wildfire to life and property. The vendors educated participants about how wildfire will impact a structure which hasn’t been hardened against embers, radiant heat and flames. Then they took turns describing how their product works to protect a home against wildfire, showed participants actual product samples and shared educational materials.

COLLEGE VIEW ESTATES

By JEAN HOEGER

The College View Estates Association sponsors a fun “First Friday” gathering at the home of a different CVE resident each month, where good food, good drinks and good conversation are the order of the day. These are held inside during the chilly months and outside during the warmer months. It is a nice time for neighbors to catch up with friends from around CVE.

EL CERRITO

By LAURA RIEBAU

March is elections month for the El Cerrito Community Council (ECCC) and there are openings on the Board. We would love to have new members join us with their ideas, vision and energy. The one requirement to qualify is having attended at least one El Cerrito meeting during the last 12 months. Please email us at: elcerritocommunitycouncil@gmail.com if you are interested or announce your candidacy at the meeting on March 21. During our February ECCC monthly meeting, Ramie Zomisky presented some interesting ideas to help address the San Diego housing supply problem and high housing costs. Her ideas include:

1. Limiting more Air BNB homes, which would put up to about 8,000 homes back into the housing supply;
2. Establishing a new tax on home flippers’ sales if they flip more than a predetermined number of homes each year; and

3. Ensuring bona fide permits and inspections are done for home remodels by flippers, so buyers get a good quality remodeled home.

El Cerrito has held a monthly community Cleanup Day for years prior to COVID and we have resumed them recently. We have coffee, a lot of fun, and really welcome and enjoy meeting new community members. We can always use extra help at these events, so please join us. Every little bit helps, even if you are not able to stay for the whole time. Notice of the date, time and location of these events is sent out via email and are posted on <https://elcerritocommunitycouncil.org>. A big thank you to all our community members who regularly pick up trash on our El Cerrito streets. Many of us have an unsung hero or two on our street who regularly pick up trash and litter, keeping it out of the storm drains and keeping the area looking great. If anyone would like to receive our ECCC newsletter and notices of events via email, please let us know

at elcerritocommunitycouncil@gmail.com.
MESA COLONY
By SUSAN GRANT
Folks in Mesa Colony are working on making sure that their street lights are working. We have started a campaign, complete with maps of the lights on each of the streets in our neighborhood. While it is still dark in the early morning and evening, we are walking our neighborhood to see if any of the lights are out. People are using the sidewalks and bike lanes when it is dark and they rely on the street lights to keep them safe. This is a great opportunity for us to improve safety while the City is focusing its attention on fixing the lights in the College Area and all of District 9. With the map on our phones, it is super easy to seek out and report faulty lights using the City of San Diego “Get It Done” App. Our goal is to report all light failures in our neighborhood by the end of March. Every resident needs and deserves functioning neighborhood lights.

AGGC

CONTINUED FROM Page 13

the Pantry offers to our neighbors who experience food insecurity. Coming up in the not-too-distant future:

- On Saturday, May 18, Benjamin Library will hold a Community Festival Extravaganza for its patrons and neighbors with the generous support of The Friends of the Library Allied Gardens/Benjamin Chapter. If your organization would like to have a table at this event you may contact Kevin Tran, community organizer for the Allied Gardens area, at the library. Come to our meetings in-person or remotely by Zoom. For more information and to get on the mailing list drop a note to www.ag-gccshain@yahoo.com.



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3 New Year's Home Resolutions

At the beginning of the year, it's common to set personal goals and make resolutions to improve upon last year. But have you thought about resolutions for your home? Here are some ideas to get you started:

1. IMPROVE INDOOR AIR QUALITY

Routine HVAC maintenance and filter changes help your system work optimally and improve your home's air quality. A more advanced resolution to fill your home with clean air is to install a whole home air purification system.

2. SAVE ENERGY

Replace your tank water heater with a high efficiency tankless water heater and save up to 40% on your energy bill. Another energy saving idea is to switch your light fixtures to LEDs.

3. PREPARE FOR AN EMERGENCY

Learn how to turn off gas, water, and power to your home. Find out what to do if your water heater leaks. Check angle stops around your home to see if they're working properly. Plan ahead by getting familiar with your home now.

5 SIGNS YOU MAY NEED A NEW FURNACE

- 1 Older than the average 15-year lifespan
- 2 Energy and repairs bills are increasing
- 3 Uneven temperatures throughout your home
- 4 Dirt, dust, and rust particles on your heat registers
- 5 Rattling, popping, or screeching sounds

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