Volunteers prepare deliveries that keep isolated seniors cared for. (Photo courtesy Golden Talk)

MAKARA HUEY | Downtown & Uptown News

People 65 years and older are at high-risk for severe illness from COVID-19, but during a time when staying home and social distancing are essential to remaining healthy, this same age group is also at risk for something else: loneliness.

Social isolation — or the physical or psychological distancing of individuals from their desired or needed relationships with others — puts seniors at a higher risk for health problems, including high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, a weakened immune system, anxiety, depression, cognitive decline, Alzheimer’s disease and even death, according to the National Institute on Aging.

Calls keep seniors struggling with social isolation connected

JEFF CLEMETSON | Downtown & Uptown News

[Editor’s note: SDNews spoke with Sara Jacobs prior to the death of George Floyd and the protests that followed, so this profile does not include the candidate’s positions on police reforms. For more information about the Sara Jacobs campaign, visit sarajacobsforca.com.] On March 3, voters in California’s 53rd congressional district made Sara Jacobs the frontrunner with 29.2% of the vote in what was a crowded field of 15 candidates. Jacobs, granddaughter of Qualcomm founder Irwin Jacobs, credits her success to reaching out to the district’s constituents.

“I love San Diego and I’m so proud of the primary campaign we ran where we talked to everyone and listened to everyone and built a broad coalition,” she said. “That’s what I plan to do in the general election and that’s what I plan to do in office — listen to everyone, work with people from all backgrounds and really make progress.”

Now that the race is down to a contest between Jacobs and City Council president Georgette Gomez, Jacobs stresses readiness in policy positions — Jacobs wants voters to focus on her experience working in politics at the federal level as reason to cast ballots for her in November.

“[Voters need] someone who has experience making and implementing policy at the federal level who understands all the levers of power that the federal government has to really offer San Diego — someone who is not going to take time to get their sea legs, but hit the ground running on day one and make sure San Diegans get the representation they deserve.”

Jeff Cletemson | Downtown & Uptown News

The owner of Riffs Yoga Studios, Steve Hart, sent an email to staff June 4 about how he could best respond of color while trying to formulate a plan to support the Black Lives Matter uprising. Things are really coming to light that have been boiling under the surface in the yoga community for a long time just because of the situation in which we find ourselves,” yoga teacher Karen O’Lone said.

Two local studios that publicly supported the Black Lives Matter, Riffs Yoga Studios and Pilgrimage of the Heart, came under fire from teachers and students about how they have privately handled these issues. The owner of Riffs Yoga Studios, Steve Hart, sent an email to staff June 4 about how he had been listening to people of color while trying to formulate a plan to respond to recent Black Lives Matter as a white male. The following day, Riffs Studios sent an email...
they need as these incredibly important decisions are being made.”

AN EARLY PATH TO PUBLIC SERVICE

Jacobs proudly says she is a third generation San Diegan, born and raised. When talking about her famous family, she focuses more on their early struggles than on their financial successes.

“When my great grandparents first moved to San Diego, they lived in College Area and that was one of the few areas that Jewish families had been allowed to live. Obviously a lot has changed in San Diego and in my family since then,” she said. “I was always taught about how much San Diego has given us and that it was my responsibility to do everything I could to give back and make sure that every kid in San Diego has the kind of opportunities that I was able to have.”

Unlike many other children raised in families with extreme wealth, Jacobs attended public schools growing up.

“My parents felt very strongly that they wanted us to be in public schools and getting an education that was more than just academics — that we interacted and got to have friends from all different walks of life and that was something that they felt very strongly about,” she said.

When Jacobs entered Torrey Pines High School, she expected that she would follow in both of her grandfathers’ footsteps and become an electrical engineer. During her high school years, Jacobs was involved in community service, such as leading the youth group at her synagogue and volunteering for San Diego Youth Services to serve the homeless. In her junior year, she took part in a program bringing Israeli Jewish teens together with Israeli Arab teens that inspired her to want to work with people over working in a lab.

With that as inspiration, Jacobs studied Political Science with a focus on international issues at Columbia University.

“There are some problems where there’s a solution but we just don’t have political will to do it, and there are some problems where we have had the political will, we wouldn’t know what to do,” she said. “And those are the kinds of problems I got really interested in college. I spent a lot of time studying some of the smaller conflicts around the world that weren’t getting much political attention and studying peace-building interventions and peace-keeping approaches.”

Jacobs earned her Master’s in International Affairs from Columbia and then took “a little bit of time off to celebrate” before going to work at the United Nations in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, helping write policy based on research she did in grad school.

After her stint at the UN, she went to work for UNICEF’s innovation unit, then went to work in the State Department’s Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations during the Obama administration, where she was tasked with helping the State Department before solve conflicts.

In 2015, Jacobs went to work on the Hillary Clinton presidential campaign, helping the former Secretary of State draft foreign policy. For Jacobs, the Clinton campaign’s loss in 2016 still stings.

“I’m pretty much frustrated and angry every single day because I know exactly what Hillary Clinton and our team would have been doing to prevent us from getting to the position we’re in with coronavirus,” she said. “I wrote the pandemic prevention plan and actually was working with members of Congress on setting up new funding streams for preventing and rapidly responding to pandemic threats.”

A FIRST RUN FOR OFFICE

Although Jacobs’ job for the Clinton campaign was more policy wonk than campaign strategist, she said she did learn some lessons about running for office from her time working for Team Hillary.

“I will say the thing I learned the most is that you have to find a way to let yourself be as vulnerable and authentic as possible, even when it’s really hard. I think the generation of women who ran for office before us had to be so perfect because they were held to such a standard,” she said. “When I first started running for office, I actually wrote down all the mean things I thought I could say about me and I made my friends read them to me over and over again to desensitize myself to it. Forcing yourself to just continue to be as open as possible even as difficult things are being said about you, I think is very important and something I learned during 2016.”

Those lessons were put to the test in Jacobs’ first run for congress — a 2018 bid to unseat Rep. Darrell Issa in California’s 49th.

Jacobs said she never thought she would run for office, but circumstances changed in 2017 while running a nonprofit organization after the Clinton campaign ended.

“I was spending a lot of time overseas and it was kind of the perfect thing to be doing [then] because I was doing really tangible good work around the world and it had nothing to do with Donald Trump,” she said. “But eventually I started feeling while the work I was doing was really important, everything I cared about was at risk here at home.”

Jacobs recalls returning from a work trip and landing at JFK the day the Muslim ban was announced and feeling disempowered.

Also during that time, the Trump administration’s stance toward the LGBT community was affecting her youngest sibling who is transgender and her middle sibling who is gender-nonconforming. That prompted Jacobs to want to do more.

“I looked at the races here at home and saw the 49th and reached out to Emily’s List and asked if they were going to get a woman to run because I would love to support her and help her run,” she said. “They eventually called me back and told me that if I wanted to be a woman in the race I had to run, so I did — after much heartache. They say you need to ask a woman seven times to run and I think that was pretty true for me.”

Jacobs lost the primary, coming in third behind Republican Dianne Harkey and Democrat Mike Levin who would go on to win the seat.

“One of the things I’m proud of is we ran a totally positive campaign, even in the midst of a very difficult primary,” she said, adding that after losing she spent the rest of the campaign season helping Mike Levin win, as well as lending support to other campaigns and other candidates at the local level.

After her run for the 49th, Jacobs started another nonprofit — San Diego For Every Child — because of what she learned while campaigning around the region.

“It became clear to me that here in San Diego County we have a huge

**SEE JACOBS, Page 13**
A 2018 AARP study revealed that prolonged periods of isolation carry the same health risks as smoking 15 cigarettes per day. In San Diego County, over 115,000 senior citizens live alone, according to the California Department of Aging.

Helen Rowe Allen, an 80-year-old San Diego resident, said she is coping well with the isolation resulting from the coronavirus because she has lived alone for a long time, has a self-reliant personality and is highly involved in the local community. The retired former educator spends her time reading, gardening, spending time with her dog Mr. Sneakers and engaging in community outreach.

However, she said she was caught off guard by the lack of concern people have for the physical and mental health of the elderly and believes that the pandemic has made this apparent. Many passersby do not wear a mask or respect social distancing guidelines when near her and are apathetic to whether seniors in general are struggling with social isolation.

“I think most people don’t give a damn about seniors,” Rowe Allen said. “I think we’re thought of as expendable and a drag on society — that we’re just superfluous to community life.”

Although she is not interested in receiving wellness calls from organizations themselves, she said she recognizes their value for seniors who are less engaged in their community.

“I think [wellness calls] are essential for some kinds of seniors who feel that they’re isolated and unable to create an environment that sustains them on their own,” Rowe Allen said.

AgeWell Services has expanded its Social Calls Program, in which city staff members check in with local senior citizens and connect them with enhanced life resources via phone calls. “Some of the participants have reported getting the phone calls as the highlight of their day,” Kristi Fenick, district manager of The City of San Diego Parks and Recreation Department, wrote in an email. “It’s actually a win-win for both parties: our volunteers who make the calls are seniors themselves, so making the phone call is also rewarding to them.”

The program has been in existence for about 15 years, but when seniors were advised to self-isolate due to COVID-19, the organization increased its outreach efforts and extended its hours and days of operation. Since the pandemic, the organization has more than doubled the number of seniors on the call list, Fenick said.

“Most of the people I speak with understand the importance of reaching out to others and how a lack of social contact can negatively impact people,” Fenick wrote. “I think there definitely could be more information about it, especially for folks who don’t have a computer at home and are not connecting with family members virtually.”

One long-time patron, a 91-year-old woman named Miriam, said she is especially thankful for the service because she lives by herself and has no nearby relatives. She looks forward to receiving the daily calls and describes the volunteers as reliable and pleasant.

After the coronavirus forced Serving Seniors to drastically alter its services, the nonprofit organization launched its Connections Program in April as a way to supplement its usual in-person activities to keep seniors active.

Through this program, volunteers regularly call senior citizens to prevent loneliness — an overlooked crisis that Serving Seniors president and CEO Paul Downey said has existed long before anyone ever heard of the coronavirus.

“What I hear from people is that seniors are invisible,” Downey said. “… People don’t see them, they don’t want to look at them, they don’t interact. Just making that extra effort to say hello or wave and make a connection is something easy that we can all do.”

Downey said he notices two different groups of seniors who are struggling: those who were already socially isolated before the pandemic and those who are accustomed to being socially active but are now forced into isolation due to the pandemic. He hopes this program benefits both groups.

They say it just brightens their day,” Downey said. “The simple fact that somebody is interested and knows their name and cares can make a profound impact on that person’s outlook and mental health.”

Upon recognizing an even more urgent need in the community as a result of the coronavirus, The I Did Something Good Today Foundation — a nonprofit dedicated to combating social isolation in the senior community — created GoldtALK, a 24-hour nationwide hotline intended to be a safe space for people 60 and older.

What began with nine volunteers grew to over 150, and since the establishment in March, the Los Angeles-based organization has had over 4,000 calls. The foundation’s executive director Kimberly Lewis said, “I think they like the idea of reaching out to others and with understand the importance of making the calls. We love when they’re able to just pick up the phone and call someone,” Lewis said. “They say that it makes them feel better and makes them feel safe. They have their favorite volunteers that they love to talk to.”

One of those volunteers is Gary Helton, who devotes three hours every night to giving and receiving phone calls to and from fellow senior citizens.

“One of the beautiful parts about this for me is that I feel I’ve developed genuine friendships with these folks over the phone,” he said. “I haven’t even met them personally, and yet often times we know so much about each other.”

Helton even calls one woman his “big sister” because she is just like family. They both look forward to their nightly conversations, discussing their favorite books, movies and travel destinations.

“I was totally expecting it to be a one-sided thing where they call me for help and I help them … so for me to actually develop really close friendships as a result was surprising to me, and I think that speaks to what’s going on with elders all over the place,” Helton said.

Lewis echoes this universal need for human interaction and said she wishes more seniors knew about the various resources available. “I love making them feel good, and everyone should want to make them feel good,” Lewis said. “They’ve given a lot to society and have helped build our world, and they deserve to have a peaceful and fun exit, for lack of a better word. For the rest of their life, they should not want for anything; they should be able to just enjoy.”

The leaders of these three organizations said they encourage individuals to reach out to and stay connected with senior citizens — not just during the pandemic but always.

To add yourself or a loved one to the city’s social calls list, call 619-236-6905 or email thescroll@sandiego.gov.

San Diegans who want to sign up for the Connections Program can call 619-246-4461. The organization also has a Virtual Care Package page on its website dedicated to sharing resources for seniors during the pandemic, including instructions on how to use Zoom and FaceTime as well as a list of virtual activities through which to pass the time.

To participate in GoldtALK or request scheduled wellness calls for a loved one, call 888-604-6531.

— Madea Huey is a senior at Pepperdine University in Malibu, California, pursuing a major in English and minor in journalism. The San Diego native was the editor-in-chief of Currents magazine and is currently the managing editor of the Graphic newspaper.

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Cara Dessert celebrates two years leading The LGBT Center

KENDRA GOTTEN | FEATURES & DESIGN STAFF

The CEO of the San Diego LGBT Community Center, Cara Dessert, is celebrating two years at the helm of the service provider. As a queer Latina, she brought renewed attention to the Latinx community and is currently focusing on addressing coronavirus-related challenges.

In her first year as the organization’s youngest ever and first Person of Color CEO, Dessert noted major accomplishments, including opening a South Bay Youth Center, increasing civic engagement and expanding services to LGBT+ immigrants.

“The organization has provided funding to LGBT+ immigrants. The Chula Vista-based center, which opened in February 2019, is the Center’s first new facility in over a decade. Dessert said it aims to bring a safe community space to an underserved area.

“Already, it has been an incredible place for families and for youth to come together and get services that they need in South County,” Dessert said. “It’s the first LGBT organization in South County.”

In 2019, Dessert also convinced the board to increase support and funding to LGBT+ immigrants. The organization has provided case management, legal services and humanitarian relief like food and water to over 100 LGBT+ immigrants and asylum seekers.

In 2020, Dessert convinced the board to increase support and funding to LGBT+ immigrants. The organization has provided case management, legal services and humanitarian relief like food and water to over 100 LGBT+ immigrants and asylum seekers.

“The response to the initiative was widely supported. Something Dessert credits to years of education on how immigration is an LGBT+ issue because LGBT+ people should be able to find safe harbor in the US after fleeing dangerous countries.

Dessert’s background was a major factor in addressing this issue as well. She previously served as the CEO of Immigration Equality, a New York-based nonprofit focused on LGBT+ immigrant rights, before returning to The Center four years ago as the chief development and community engagement officer.

After being raised in El Centro, Dessert served as The Center’s public policy and community organizing coordinator and as San Diego’s field director for the No on 8 campaign. In addition, she worked at Planned Parenthood before leaving San Diego for law school at UCLA.

After graduating UCLA, she worked in the Public Rights Division for then-Attorney General Kamala Harris.

“Through all of those steps, I learned how to serve better, how to lead better, how to listen better. But I am here today because people believed in me and gave me a chance to lead from a very young age, and I’m so grateful,” Dessert said.

The Center covers a wide range of services from housing to an emergency hotline and therapy. Most major metropolitan areas have multiple LGBT-specific service providers. While there is a North County LGBT Resource Center, The Center is the sole provider in San Diego City.

“Being the anchor organization of our LGBTQ community, there’s a lot of incentives to create community, to create space and resources for community and to provide services to thousands and thousands of people,” Dessert said. “It’s really important that the Center provides cutting-edge services for youth, for seniors and everyone in between.”

Her second year as CEO looks different due to the coronavirus. Many of the services like youth shelters, food distributions and HIV testing needed to remain in person while behavioral health services like support groups moved online.

In addition, the organization’s funding has taken a major hit, spurring pay cuts and hours reductions for staff. This was largely due to the cancellation of The Center’s two biggest annual fundraisers, both scheduled for the Spring. The Center created an emergency fund at thecenter,$100,000 that has brought in 200 new donors.

As national focus shifted from coronavirus to anti-Black racism, The Center has renewed focus on better serving Black LGBT+ community members. At a town hall last year, many Black people shared stories of discrimination and mistreatment in Hillcrest in general and even at The Center.

In response, a Black Council filled with community leaders was set up to provide recommendations on how to address these inequalities. So far, The Center amended its hiring practices to reduce education requirements, created a Black-specific support group and increased staff training on racism and discrimination.

Dessert said she remains proud of San Diego’s LGBT+ community. “Being gone for 10 years from San Diego is part of what helped me understand how special our San Diego LGBT+ community

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Homework – Still in school? We will have a place for you to do your work and tutors to help.

rockacademy.org/camp

SEE CENTER, Page 14
Amazing Grace

Jennafer Grace is known for her handmade clothing line here in San Diego. She is a textile-inspired designer who created a limited edition run of her kimonos and turbans. She has many different methods of tying them and includes videos on her website to show customers different styling methods. This Bohemian designer also offers adjustable yoga wraps and her signature garment is called “Paglamas.”

Grace said she first became interested in fashion through her great aunt who was in Home Economics and her grandma uses to take her to the fashion shows at Mesa College. In her early years, she loved films like “Auntie Mame,” “Birdcage” and “La Cage Aux Follies.” She is also drawn to the opulence of the ’30s and styles of the ’60s.

Taking her love for fashion to another level, she decided to attend Fashion Careers College to study fashion. As time went on, she began making costumes for a traveling theater company and spent time consulting for a company in Mexico. She went on to work with Tanya McAnear who was in fashion show productions and then interned with Dennis Nothdruft at the London Fashion & Textile Museum.

When she returned back to the U.S., she began selling her creations at Le Bel Age Boutique in Mission Hills owned by Valerie Lee.

Grace said, “Valerie is amazing at styling, she took my kimonos to a whole new level and changed me forever.”

Grace began building a livestream shopping community with Lee and McAnear, who owns Bad Madge & Co in South Park which carries vintage merchandise. Lee features Grace’s line on her ‘Daily Fashion Distraction’ where people from around the world can tune in at 2 p.m. PST on Instagram and Facebook. McAnear also features Grace’s goods in her weekly event on lash.live. People can tune in to buy her one-of-a-kind dresses, kimonos, and glam loungewear.

Since COVID-19 began, Grace started The Mask Project which donates one mask for each mask sold. She also has a tee shirt collaboration called Valle Road Collective, which raises money for charities.

Grace herself hosts a live stream shopping event on lash.live. People can tune in to buy her one-of-a-kind dresses, kimonos, and glam loungewear. Grace hopes to continue to grow her business. She enjoys making new designs while at the same time creating fair wage jobs in Southern California. I cannot wait to continue adding styles to my collection and getting Jennafer Grace Handmades into the hands of more friends.

Grace said, “The personal feedback for my functional, cozy yet glamorous goods are what makes my world go around.”

Visit her website at jennafer-gracecollection.com.

— Diana Cavagnaro is an internationally renowned Couture Milliner based in Alpine, California. Learn more about our Hat Designer, Teacher & Blogger at www.DianaCavagnaro.com
COVID-19 impacts state budget, core services preserved

Assembly update

By TODD GLORIA

In this difficult and uncertain time, Independence Day reminds us that the pursuit of a more perfect union – and a more just, equal and prosperous society – has always been difficult. The COVID-19 pandemic has upended our national economy and impacted every sector of our society. We can overcome this crisis if we work together, just as we have many times before. July is also the start of California’s new budget year. Fortunately, California has built record reserves over years of responsible budgeting and is positioned to weather the financial impacts of COVID-19. I recently joined my colleagues in the State Assembly to adopt the 2020-2021 State Budget. This compromise budget is not without sacrifice, but it reflects California’s values and meets the most immediate needs of the people of California.

Over the past few weeks, I heard from many of you about potential cuts to education, healthcare and social services. I share your deep concerns. I’m proud that we were able to preserve funding for these essential services. The budget supports vital public health measures to keep Californians safe, such as testing, contact tracing and personal protective equipment. It allocates significant funding for cities and counties to address homelessness, public health and public safety. It responds to the unprecedented disruption to our schools with billions of dollars for students most impacted by learning loss. The budget continues our efforts to expand California’s Earned Income Tax Credit to support working families. California also remains on solid financial footing, with more than $11 billion in reserves to safeguard against a lengthy economic downturn.

Looking forward, it is crucial that the federal government provide additional relief. State and local governments are constrained by balanced budget requirements and plummeting revenues. Federal funds will be needed to restore difficult cuts to our public universities and housing programs. I know many of you are struggling with difficult life changes and financial challenges. Know that you are not alone and that I will continue fighting for more emergency assistance and high-quality service from all our government agencies to give every Californian the security you deserve. Please contact my office if we can assist you with any state government issues.

Finally, I want to thank all of you for taking care of yourselves and each other. The most important thing we can all do right now is to keep each other safe. We must continue to take all necessary precautions as we reopen responsibly and let science and data guide our decisions. That’s how we save lives and speed our recovery.

— Todd Gloria represents District 78 in the State Assembly. Follow him on Twitter at @AsmToddGloria.
Convivio adds coffee to its cultural offerings

By CHRISTOPHER GOMEZ

The Little Italy Association (LIA) launched their “Ciao Bella!” reopening campaign this past month which included three nights of Al Fresco dining. The streets of Little Italy were transformed into open-air dining allowing 23 different restaurants to move tables onto sidewalks and streets. India Street from W. Beech to W. Grape Streets and including W. Date and W. Fir Street between Kettner Boulevard and Columbia Street were closed to vehicular traffic to allow people to wine and dine in the open air.

Many businesses in Little Italy have had to either adjust seating capacities or shut their doors completely over the last few months. However, this open-air dining experience allows for over 20 different restaurants to take steps in recovering from the loss of sales over the last few months by increasing seating capacities from about 50% to roughly 95%.

Little Italy and other Downtown communities have led the charge in implement- ing open-air dining throughout San Diego County. Mayor Kevin Faulconer held a press conference in Little Italy following the first weekend of Al Fresco dining, recognizing the success and opportunity the initiative gave to local businesses. Mayor Faulconer also encouraged other communities in San Diego to do the same and announced the city would be waiving all permit fees to help — saving organizations thousands of dollars.

During Al Fresco, signs were posted on every block as a reminder to wear face coverings and maintain physical distancing protocols among other health directives. Following guest feedback from the first Al Fresco night, changes were made ahead of the second night including installing hand sanitizer stations and handing out face masks to those without them. Little Italy is facing the reality that COVID-19 is not going away any time soon and is adapting in order to keep everyone as safe and comfortable as possible.

Due the success of these first three nights, Little Italy has announced they will be continuing their Al Fresco dining every Saturday night through the end of July. It has taken 25 years for Little Italy to become what it is today and that is a mark of our community’s resilience and love for its local businesses and residents. We thank you for your continued support and believing in our families. As we navigate this “new normal,” we are fortunate to have the opportunity for Al Fresco dining and look forward to seeing you in Little Italy soon.

— To learn more about our latest reopening plans, visit CiaoBellaSD.com. For Little Italy COVID-19 resources and updates, visit LittleItalySDUpdates.com or follow us on Instagram @LittleItalySD, Twitter @LittleItalySD and Facebook @LittleItalySD.

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LITTLE ITALY kicks off “Ciao Bella!” with Al Fresco dining

Convivio adds coffee to its cultural offerings

By CHRISTOPHER GOMEZ

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A rose by any other name

Even after the boom building years of the 1880s, several of the structures along 5th Avenue were still relatively unadorned wooden buildings. After 5th Avenue was paved in 1888, many investors then turned their attention toward the underdeveloped areas of the avenue. The 90 feet fronting 5th and directly north of the Keating Building was one such parcel — actually three adjoining parcels.

Choate-Gerichten-Peterson Block was initially named after the owners — all commercial and political pioneers of early San Diego. Daniel Choate was a longtime crony of Alonzo Horton and was very active in real estate. He was considered the largest dealer in real estate behind Alonzo Horton. He also sub-divided the area known as City Heights, served as Postmaster and was a longtime member of the San Diego Board of Health. He was head of the Board of Public Works. He built his own ornate Queen Anne style home on 9th Avenue between Ash and Beech. Hanson and Engrebetson, also well known in San Diego having just finished the Timken Building and other Falkenham and Gill projects, did the car-pentry. They had been in business since 1883 and were considered master builders. This first-class project was to cost $20,000, making it the most expensive structure to be built in 1894.

The structure is brick with a pressed brick facade, large show windows and six arched bays displaying full-length glazing. They are divided by pilasters decorated with geometric designs. At the end of the adjoining structures, decorated pilasters also stand, and continuous molding adorns the tops of each bay. The second floor features 16-foot ceilings, arched windows and heavily corbelled decorative brickwork along the roofline. A raised parapet continues across the properties and has a raised detail in the center of the facade. All three owners had to execute agreements to share a common en-trayway, party (common) walls, stair-ways, a skylight and toilet facilities.

As this was, collectively, a large property, it had many interesting tenants. Shortly after its completion, Albert Ingersoll opened a confectionary and ice cream store called the Palace Cream Store called the Palace. He re-mained until 1901. Falkenham and Gill occupied one of the upstairs offices as did Choate and Peterson. Physicians, dentists and lawyers occupied the other offices. Other early first floor tenants included a barber shop, a tobac-co and cigar emporium, M.W. Jenks Jewelers, City of Paris cloth- ers, a dressmaker, the Benten, Japanese art goods and the C.W. Stults drapery company.

One of the early doctors to open his office in the building was Dr. James M. Steade. He was the son of a wealthy ranch- er from Kansas and had spent most of his youth hunting buff alo and fighting Indians. After his graduation from medical school, he spent several years practicing in the Oklahoma Indian Territory before coming to San Diego. He specialized in obstetrics and founded the Sunshine Maternity Home at 3856 Park Boulevard. He felt that maternity patients needed a restful place to recover and that this provided a perfect ad- junct to his practice. He was additionally active in the San Diego Medical Society and the San Diego Board of Health.

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Heroes and scientists
San Diego street names: Part three of the series

As discussed in earlier PastMatters columns, Ordinance No. 755 adopted May 23, 1906 changed the original names of more than 250 streets in San Diego. This ordinance eliminated duplication and achieved some continuity where street names changed from tract to tract.

The source of replacement names in Ordinance No. 755 was Louis Jackson Davids, the relatively new city engineer. He noted in his transmittal memorandum to the Board of Public Works that his suggestions for new street names were “taken from natural objects (trees, flowers etc.) or from men celebrated in Science, Literature, Statesmanship, War etc.; care being taken to maintain alphabetical order.”

These celebrated gentlemen include military heroes in La Playa and scientists in La Jolla and Clairemont/Bay Park.

LA PLAYA’S MILITARY HEROES

The Point Loma neighborhood of La Playa—which began where ships first landed at the southern end of the peninsula—appropriately gained street names reflecting historic naval heroes with Ordinance No. 755.

A remnant of Hull Street—which replaced Colorado Street on an early La Playa map—honors Commodore Isaac Hull (1773-1843), who took command of the USS Constitution from Commodore John Rodgers in 1810 and successfully led the ship in battle during the War of 1812. He later commanded the Washington Navy Yard from 1868 to 1873—or the officer’s young brother, John R. Goldsborough (1805-1877) — who was promoted to rear admiral in 1862 during the Civil War and commanded the Washington Navy Yard from 1868 to 1873—or the officer’s younger brother, John R. Goldsborough (1809-1877), John Goldsborough was captain of the USS Union, USS Florida and USS Colorado during the Civil War and commanded the Washington Navy Yard from 1868 to 1873—or the officer’s young brother, John R. Goldsborough (1809-1877), John Goldsborough was captain of the USS Union, USS Florida and USS Colorado during the Civil War.

Commodore William Bainbridge (1774-1813), Isaac Chauncey (1772-1840) and Stephen Decatur (1779-1820) are honored with street names in Liberty Station. David Farragut (1801-1877)—a Civil War hero who was the first person to hold the ranks of vice admiral, rear admiral and full admiral in the U.S. Navy—is also honored with a street in Liberty Station.

The street name Goldsborough is gone in San Diego. City Engineer Davids may have wanted to honor Louis M. Goldsborough (1805-1877) — who was promoted to rear admiral in 1862 during the Civil War and commanded the Washington Navy Yard from 1868 to 1873—or the officer’s younger brother, John R. Goldsborough (1809-1877), John Goldsborough was captain of the USS Union, USS Florida and USS Colorado during the Civil War.

On this map of La Playa compiled by Charles H. Poole in 1854, the current military reservation boundary is approximated with a diagonal line drawn by La Playa historian Tom Ketttenburg. Most of the streets south of the boundary were never implemented, although a map like this appears to be what City Engineer Louis Davids used for his street name changes in 1900. (Courtesy of Tom Ketttenburg)
New opportunity to blaze the urban trail in Cortez

A volunteer putting up the new signage in Cortez. (Photo courtesy Circulate San Diego)

Among the changes to daily routines created by stay-at-home orders, many Downtown residents are getting to know their neighborhoods by foot. Whether you call it a walk or an urban hike, it’s a great opportunity to spend time outdoors. A recent placemaking project in the Cortez neighborhood brings locals and visitors outside through an easy-to-follow urban trail created with additional infrastructure and wayfinding.

In early 2019, the Cortez Hill Active Residents Group (CHARG) approached the Downtown San Diego Partnership with a problem and an idea. One of the group’s main concerns in its otherwise beloved neighborhood was the speed of vehicles coming off the freeway and in from other parts of Downtown, which impacted the ability of residents and visitors to get around safely. CHARG wanted to conduct a mobility study to identify issues like this and recommend improvements.

Luckily, like other Downtown neighborhoods, Cortez had parking district funds at their disposal generated by parking meters and reinvested in projects, like the study and its recommendations to improve parking and mobility in surrounding neighborhoods. With these funds, project management by the Downtown Partnership, the mobility chops of Circulate San Diego and the community expertise from CHARG, a comprehensive outreach process was conducted and the final report issued at the end of 2019. The report included a combination of short-, medium- and long-term recommendations.

The short-term recommendations were intended to be quick-to-implement projects that are impactful within a matter of six months. Unfortunately, conversations were underway to get those short-term projects launched just as COVID-19 hit, requiring a quick burst of creativity to assess new needs and bring benefit to the community.

What had previously been planned as a walk and talk became a webinar with a transportation specialist from the City of San Diego, and a planned in-person special event was transitioned into the Curbside San Diego pilot location outside of Achilles Coffee.

This creativity also included the most recent placemaking project to come alive in the Cortez neighborhood—the Discover Cortez walking loops. The one mile and 1.5-mile routes were initially designed by Circulate San Diego. They were then updated using the results of a digital survey sent to Cortez residents. The end result is two walking loops that follow the paths residents typically use to get to common destinations. Cortez is on a hill, so there’s also a choice between a flat, easy course and one that’s more moderate.

New wayfinding signage installed at the end of June accompanied the project. “We’re all aware that in Downtown a lot of the street names signs at intersections are oriented toward vehicles. With a lot of one-way streets, it can get easy to get disoriented about what street you’re approaching when walking,” said Sean Warner, director of community enhancement and project manager of the initiative from the Downtown Partnership.

One of the long-term projects the group has in mind for the mobility effort is the installation of permanent streetblade signage at all the intersections in Cortez to help walkability. The recently-installed signage includes street name decals at intersections and walking loop markers to help people navigate the new trails. They will also help other pedestrians get around the neighborhood.

“The projects are also building cohesion between lower and upper Cortez neighbors.”

“One of the things the CHARG Board has worked on is involving more members of the community in the Lower Cortez area west of Sixth Avenue to Front Street. Our board expanded to include three residents from Lower Cortez to really focus on improving this area of our district and creating a more cohesive neighborhood feel,” said CHARG Board member Ann Murphy.

Learn more about the study and efforts to improve mobility in Cortez at downtownsandiego.org/cortezmobility.

— Sarah Brothers is the Director of Marketing & Communications at Downtown San Diego Partnership.

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Yoga
CONTINUES FROM PAGE 1

to members stating a commitment to anti-racism with several goals including creating a statement for BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color), maintaining a zero-tolerance policy for racism, staff trainings and dissecting their role as yoga professionals in a largely-white industry.

Still, some viewed this as waiting until the Black Lives Matter movement became widely popular rather than making a stand proactively. The conflict worsened two days later when a Zoom call that was mis-market-ed as a space for Black grief ended up featuring a white woman speaker leading a meditation on white privilege and how to confront it.

Two longtime teachers quit the day after the Sunday Zoom call, stating Hart’s silence, and their desire to leave the popular yoga studio, had been noticed.

“Inclusion is a concept that we fully embrace, and we recognize the need to promote this value among the yoga community. As we re-open our studios, subject to applicable COVID-19 restrictions, we welcome any feedback as to how we can best serve our community’s needs,” Hart said in a statement to SD News.

One of the teachers who quit was one of the few people of color employed at the studio, which has locations in La Jolla, Bird Rock and Ocean Beach. He was not included on the limited class schedule as the studio gradually reopened. However, he found out a newer substitute teacher was offered two classes.

When he raised several issues in a company-wide email, Hart addressed the issues in a reply sent to every staff member but him, which the teacher described as effectively muting his voice. Hart told the staff the man had not helped during the issue, he remarried her telling her to take care of the issue herself and that it was a burden to him. The student was not banned until he began sending her explicit messages.

She had a much better experience addressing harassment from students at Pilgrimage of the Heart, a North Park and Normal Heights-based studio with a zero-tolerance policy. Still, Pilgrimage had its own share of conflict since the52
guardian began over Western medicine and now racism.

When the studio closed, one of the longest-serving teachers at Pilgrimage who lead the Yoga Teacher Training for years, Nikole Fortier, shared social media posts with conspiracy theories about coronavirus, vaccines and masks.

Fortier was out of town and did not respond to a request for comment on this story.

Fortier is not the only yoga teacher who is a part of the anti-vaxxer movement.

“We’re starting to divide ourselves — the people who are more research based and have knowledge versus these people who think. ‘Put a crystal on your hair, it’ll help.’” said Sydney Cohen, an instructor at Pilgrimage. “In our community, a lot of us have gotten together and talked about how dangerous [that is], and we don’t want people to think that this light within you can conquer a virus.”

Despite these conversations, Cohen said many do not know what to do in response.

Around the same time Pilgrimage released a statement in support of Black Lives Matter, Fortier’s posts became more extreme with alleged Holocaust denialism and racism from her private Instagram and Facebook accounts. She posted about George Soros, Adolf Hitler and Aunt Jemima.

Fortier was not included in the reduced class schedule and is no longer listed as an instructor on the Pilgrimage website. People who contacted management of the studio about Fortier’s behavior were ignored. They wondered if she had been quietly let go but felt the studio should more publicly disavow her beliefs.

Without a public statement, a former student of Fortier’s, Joanie Baumgardner, individually contacted people she previously recommended join Fortier’s classes to avoid the teacher because her “true colors” were coming out.

“I have to do that work, I think Pilgrimage should have to do that work too,” Baumgardner said.

Sujantra McKeever, who owns the studio, explained that Fortier is currently not employed with Pilgrimage because her expertise is in a specialized form of yoga not included in their smaller class schedule.

He said he contacted a lawyer and an HR professional, who confirmed he cannot fire someone for protected free speech outside of work; he can only have a code of conduct barring prejudice and harassment inside the workplace. He said he chose to not address the posts when contacted or on social media because it would lead to a paper trail potentially opening him up for a lawsuit.

“I can’t fire someone for what they say outside of work. I wouldn’t do that because I legally can’t,” McKeever said.

“In terms of public statement, I don’t want to get into a war of words with people. We’ve made our statement about Black Lives Matter. We’ve had a business here for 12 years. I think things speak for themselves.”

Fortier deftly weaves in yoga concepts of non-attachment and uses her authority as a guru to convince others of the veracity of her sources.

“My path to ‘awakening’, whenever I was confronted with information that sat opposite to what I’d previously believed to hold true, I would do my own research. I would set my bias aside and look deeply across multiple sources to understand what the opposite opinion is,” Fortier said in a post about the etymology of Black Lives Matter.

Former student and current colleagues reached out to her for sources and were given YouTube videos tied to QAnon.

People who argued with her or said they were hurt by the anti-Semitism and racism in her posts were told they did not have an open mind and Fortier had no bad intentions.

“People look up to her as a spiritual leader and then she just fails to take any responsibility,” former Pilgrimage student Jill Bean said.

Bean is one of the people who has spent time gathering sources and speaking to Fortier directly about how harmful her rhetoric is to no avail. In the post about Aunt Jemima, a Black yogi said that her view-point was hurtful and harmful.

In response, Fortier said her intentions are pure.

“Yoga, especially in the West and especially in the yoga community, is very, very, whitewashed. So to have a white yoga teacher spreading stuff like this around is even more harmful than the average racist person because people have a tendency to put their yoga teachers up on pedestals,” Cohen said.

While the backlash has land-ed on Fortier, one of her coworkers said the issue is bigger than just one person.

“To honor the roots of yoga without appropriating, I think, is a really important conversation,” Karen O’Lone said. “I also just don’t feel like I should steal from other cultures and then use whatever I have stolen to tell other people exactly how to think or exactly how to feel or exactly how to be.”

When someone holds personal beliefs that they cannot express while working at a yoga studio, she said they cannot be open even as they ask students to be authentic, creating an imbalance. O’Lone also wor ries that forgetting the social justice roots of yoga can put people in community together who oppose each other in order to maintain studio’s profits.

“I don’t want to walk into a classroom and know that I’m teaching people who I’m in community with here but the moment they stepped out of the yoga studio would have no problem voting against my rights,” O’Lone said.

— Kendra Sitton can be reached at kendra@sdnews.com.
issue with childhood poverty,” she said, adding that even pre-COVID, 40% of San Diego kids live in poverty. Jacobs also joined the Knob School of Peace at USD as a Scholar in Residence.

A SECOND RUN

When Rep. Susan Davis announced she was retiring, Jacobs said there were two reasons she decided to throw her hat in the race. One was that the 53rd was losing 20 years of government experience with Davis leaving and that her previous work in federal and international organizations would help ease the transition.

The other reason was to bring a more youthful perspective to government.

“I think it’s really important that we have a new generation of leaders,” Jacobs said. “My generation are the ones who are really going to be dealing with the consequences of the decisions we are making right now and so we should have a seat at the table.”

During her primary campaign, Jacobs focused on issues included addressing gun violence, acting with urgency to address climate change and the high cost of living in San Diego.

“Those are still incredibly important, but I really believe that the next congress will entirely be focused on rebuilding and recovering from the [COVID-19] crisis that we’re in right now,” she said, adding that the current legislation passed so far only amounts to “stabilizing bills” and that more stimulus is needed to regrow the economy.

Jacobs sees future legislation as a chance to make some systemic changes and shape the future for “what we want it to look like” — especially when it comes to dealing with issues of climate change and protecting workers.

“We have a real opportunity here I think to do things differently,” she said. “Part of that is making sure that other priorities are imbued in any recovery and thinking about how we can make sure that we are prioritizing companies that have emissions targets in line with the Paris Agreement.

“As, well as doing quantitative easing or bailouts, [we should be] thinking about what the unemployed sector really looks like,” she continued. “A lot of folks are harkening back to the programs that came out of the Great Depression which are really good models in some ways but I think we need to realize that the construction industry has become much more technical than it was then and unlike then, the vast majority of people that are out of work right now are in the service sector.”

And despite the enormous cost of rebuilding the economy after the COVID-19 crisis passes, Jacobs still favors support for large government initiatives, including a Medicare for All plan.

“I not only believe that it will still be possible to do Medicare for All but actually it is more important than ever,” she said. “We’re seeing 20-30% unemployment and people’s healthcare is directly tied to their employment, which means we’re going to have a de facto public option when all of the people who lose their employer-sponsored health care still need care in the middle of a pandemic.

And if that’s the case, we might as well do it in a strategic way.”

To deal with the costs of programs, Jacobs favors repealing the GOP tax bill “that didn’t do anything to grow the economy,” raising taxes on very wealthy people and cutting tax loopholes.

“My generation will be the one that will have to deal with the consequences of this deficit down the road,” she said, adding that despite its costs, the government needs to use the current zero Fed rate to keep stimulus flowing and provide stimulus to jumpstart the economy.

—Reach editor Jeff Clemenson at jeff@sdcn.org.
Dessert said. “I am so proud to be part of this community and it is the greatest honor to have the opportunity to lead the center, which has been a beacon of hope for 48 years.”

— Kendra Sitton can be reached at kendra@sdnews.com.

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The Problem with Holding Title as Joint Tenants

Many married couples in California hold title to their real and personal property as “joint tenants” which comes with the right of survivorship in the surviving spouse upon the death of the first spouse to die.

Such a means of taking title does, indeed, result in the survivor of you (surviving joint tenant) receiving full title to the property on the death of the first of you, without requiring an expensive and time-consuming court administration (“probate”) of the estate of the first of you to die. It is thus an efficient means of passing title.

On the other hand, here are some negatives:

1) If you die together, you still must have a will or trust in place to indicate to whom the property will then go. If you have neither a will nor trust, then a court probate will be required, and who actually receives your property will be determined by statute (the laws of intestacy) – possibly a person or persons you had no intention of receiving it. Further, if you die with leaving only a will (and no trust), probate will still be required, because the law generally requires that wills (but not trusts) be probated.

2) In case of divorce, the divorce decree could be an option to joint tenancy while retaining the property as “husband and wife as joint tenants.”

Thus, each person has complete title while he or she is alive and ownership continues in the survivor of you upon your death regardless of what happens to the other survivor. There is no probate of the surviving joint tenant’s estate, and the survivor of you can then sell the property at any time without involving the probate court.

However, there are a few drawbacks:

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the Civil War and attained commodore rank in 1867.

**CELEBRATED SCIENTISTS**

City Engineer Davids provided an alphabetical series of engineers and scientists for La Jolla to replace street names that were duplicated elsewhere. Gone now are Agassiz, Borden and Ictinus, which replaced Vine Street, Olive Avenue and Garfield Avenue. Remaining today are Cuvier, Draper, Eads, Fay, Girard and Herschel streets, which replaced Palm, Orange, Washington, New York, Grand and Lincoln avenues, respectively.

Georges Cuvier (1769-1832) was a French naturalist referred to as the “founding father of paleontology.” John William Draper (1811-1882) produced the first detailed photograph of the moon in 1840 and helped establish the New York University School of Medicine.

Several of Davids’ other replacements were gentlemen renowned for significant engineering accomplishments.

James Buchanan Eads (1820-1887) designed and built the first road and rail bridge over the Mississippi River south of the Missouri River at St. Louis. The steel and wrought iron bridge was completed in 1874 and is still in use today. It is on the National Register of Historic Places as a National Historic Landmark and is the oldest bridge on the river.

John Doane Fay (1815-1895) was an American civil engineer who helped reconstruct the Long Bridge over the Potomac River. He was Resident Engineer on the New York State canals from 1841 to 1849 and Division Engineer on state canals during the 1850s and 1870s.

Pierre-Simon Girard (1765-1836) was a French mathematician and engineer in charge of the planning and construction of the Canal de l’Ourcq, a 67-mile-long canal with ten locks located northeast of Paris that was initiated upon orders of Napoleon Bonaparte in 1802.

In the Clairemont/Bay Park neighborhoods just east of present-day I-5, Davids replaced lettered street names B through Q with street names that were duplicated elsewhere. Gone now are Agassiz, Borden and Ictinus, which replaced Vine Street, Olive Avenue and Garfield Avenue. Remaining today are Cuvier, Draper, Eads, Fay, Girard and Herschel streets, which replaced Palm, Orange, Washington, New York, Grand and Lincoln avenues, respectively.

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Canada issued a postage stamp in 2000 to recognize Abraham Gesner’s invention of kerosene. Gesner Street in Clairemont honors him. (Courtesy of Library and Archives Canada)
PANORAMIC VIEWS FROM DOWNTOWN TO LA JOLLA

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