Readers Choice Awards for La Jolla businesses
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Find your perfect tree at Mr. Jingles
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COVID-19 vaccine: Who is getting it first?
SEE PAGE 5

Sleux Minton and Jiggs, the Airedale terrier, with Lisa Andreig and Bobby, the Belgian draft horse, which won for ‘Santa’s Favorite’ at the La Jolla Christmas Parade and Holiday Festival on Sunday, Dec. 6. Due to the pandemic, the event showcased stationary floats with spectators driving through to see them. Themed ‘Christmas the Cove – in the Time of Covid,’ the annual homegrown event featured virtual entertainment, socially distanced photos with Santa, and the traditional community Christmas tree lighting at La Jolla Rec Center. The holiday celebration included virtual parade marshals honored for their year-long community contributions.

PHOTO BY DON BALCH
Find your perfect Christmas trees in Pacific Beach and La Jolla.

By DAVE SCHWAB

“Tis the season for seasonal Christmas tree shopping and Pacific Beach and La Jolla have two of the best outlets: Christmas Tree Country in PB and Mr. Jingles Christmas Trees in La Jolla.

CHRISTMAS TREE COUNTRY

“This is our 28th year,” said Bruce Bertagna, co-owner, along with Alex Baker, of Christmas Tree Country at 870 Garnet Ave. in the lot adjoining Dziner Eyez. “We’ll be open through Christmas Eve.”

For fall and Halloween, Bertagna and Baker convert the lot into a pumpkin patch to sell pumpkins. “We close for a couple of weeks and then do Christmas trees,” said Bertagna. “During the offseason, we do paid parking.”

What’s special about Christmas Tree Country

“Our trees are cut and then shipped that day so they’re here at 2 or 3 p.m. at the latest,” Bertagna answered. “They’re the very freshest trees that we get in almost daily.”

A recent visit to the site on a Sunday afternoon revealed a bustling venue on the Garnet and Bayard corner lot. There were trees everywhere and holiday-garbed families, kids, and dogs were either picking out their favorites or standing in line to pay for them.

Customer satisfaction is a top priority at Christmas Tree Country. “Our sales reps show customers the different types of trees, put them in stands they bring or ones we have, then help them load their trees and tie them down so they can drive home,” said Bertagna. “We also have reasonable tree prices and delivery fees.”

Trees at Christmas Tree Country Retail for $39.99 on up to as much as $700 for the largest specimens that take 20 years or more to grow. The delivery fee for PB and environs is $12. Christmas Tree Country also carries all the accessories.

“We have tree wreaths, mistletoe, and garlands,” noted Bertagna. “We also sell different types of tree stands for $7.99 and up.”

Bertagna attributes his company’s reputation, long tenure, and enduring appeal to hard work on the part of him and his staff as well as the attention they pay to guests.

“Over 28 years, we’ve strived to provide good customer service and make sure everybody is happy with their trees,” he said. “We’ve always been good at replacing them or refunding their money if there’s a problem. We’ve stood for customer satisfaction – and it’s paid off. We have lots of people that come back every year.”

For more information, visit btchristmastreecountry.com.

MR. JINGLES CHRISTMAS TREES

A one-stop-shop for anything and everything Christmas, Mr. Jingles at 6710 La Jolla Blvd. offers six different tree types, as well as fresh garland and wreaths anywhere from 8 to 60 inches. Guests are greeted by team members when they arrive who will explain the tree types and sizes offered.

Once you select your tree, the team will apply a stand with a custom fit water bowl so your tree can drink water to stay fresh throughout the season.

“If you have your own stand, make sure to bring it and we will put it on for you,” stated the company’s website at mrjinglechristmastrees.com. “Once the stand is applied, we will make sure the tree is straight and that you will be happy with it. We will then secure the tree to your vehicle with twine to ensure a smooth and safe ride home.”

“Our comprehensive delivery package includes stand application, transportation of goods, set-up, and installation. Our Jingles delivery team will give you a call once they have an estimated time of arrival inside your booking window and once when they arrive,” the company said. “If you plan on coming into one of our locations to select your tree you can set up delivery at the register. If you want Mr. Jingles to pick out a beautiful tree for you and have it delivered, go to the order online tab to place your order.”

And Mr. Jingles has gone all out to ensure safety during the pandemic. Safety precautions and health protocols include:

- Employees wearing masks at all times.
- Employees receiving daily temperature checks and questionnaires regarding any COVID 19 symptoms
- Social distancing required at all lots.
- A designated sanitization employee sanitizing highly touched areas on site.
- All customers must wear masks at all times.
- Sanitization stations are located throughout all lots.
- Mr. Jingles is a second-generation family-owned Christmas tree business since 2000 operating 10 locations nationwide. Its Christmas Trees are hand-picked premium-grade trees shipped from Oregon, Washington, North Carolina, Wisconsin, and Canada. Mr. Jingles Christmas Trees are cut and loaded only a day or two before shipping to ensure the freshest trees possible for our customers.

Added Mr. Jingles: “Additional items such as wreaths, garland, tree bags, stands, lights, ornaments, and tree preservatives are also available.”

CHRISTMAS TREE TIPS

- Have the right space for your place. Before you head out to pick this year’s perfect tree, you must be certain of where you want it to be placed or left in the space available. Try to avoid spots near heat sources such as radiators, fireplaces, heat vents, and even sun-drenched windows. Also, try to keep the tree into a low-traffic area to avoid accidental bumping and possible safety issues. Measure space dimensions you have to work with carefully.

- Know what you want. Each tree species is a little different, so to find the best types of real Christmas trees, you need to match trees to the needs and wants of your household. If you have children, you might lean toward pines or firs with soft needles instead of spruce trees, which have sharp needles that can hurt when you step on them. Some things to consider when choosing the right type will be the color, shape, and feel of a tree. Some trees are dark green and others have gray or white hues. There are trees with tight branching patterns and some with more spaces. One thing to remember is that if the tree looks very full while being absent of ornaments, it may be difficult to decorate.

- Consider all angles: When picking one out, step back 5 to 8 feet and check the tree from several vantage points. Look for a densely branched tree with good shape, color, and fragrance. The trunk should be straight or nearly so and should not be visible through the foliage.

- Check freshness: First, check the trunk, it should have a slight stiffness to it. Bend a needle in half with your fingers; fresh fins should snap, while fresh pines bend and should not break. To find the best Christmas tree that will last the longest, gently grab the inside of a branch and pull your hand toward you. The needles should stay on the tree. Alternatively, gently tap the cut end of a tree on the ground; if a few needles fall off, it should be fine. If a lot of needles fall off, keep searching for a different tree.

- Bring along a tape measure. Take the tape measure with you when you shop. You’ll need it to measure the trees you consider so you don’t take home a 7-inch diameter tree trunk for your 5-inch diameter stand or a 99-foot tall tree if your ceilings are only 8 feet.

- Test the tree: When shopping, test the tree by giving it a slight shake. A few falling brown needles aren’t uncommon, but falling green needles mean the tree is dry.

- Look for a fully symmetrical shape. You can sacrifice a bit of perfection if the tree will be displayed in a corner. Be wary of branches near the ground that may have to be removed to fit into a tree stand.

- Feel the tree: The needles should be flexible but snap when bent sharply. Trees with stiff needles that are losing their color should be avoided. Also, avoid a tree with needles that pull off very easily.

- Be certain your vehicle can safely transport the tree: Bring rope or bungee cords to secure the load adequately. Take care to protect your vehicle because tree branches and resin can mar the finish.
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Country Club: SOLD $4,512,080
Bird Rock: SOLD $5,500,000
Beach & Barber: SOLD $6,275,000

La Jolla Alta: SOLD $2,460,000
Country Club: SOLD $2,550,000
La Jolla Shores: SOLD $3,150,000

Bird Rock: SOLD $3,850,000
La Jolla Alta: SOLD $2,080,000
La Jolla Heights: SOLD $2,050,000

Bird Rock: SOLD $1,970,000
WindanSea: SOLD $2,200,000
Muirlands: SOLD $1,850,000

Beach & Barber: SOLD $1,300,000
La Jolla Heights: SOLD $2,125,000
Bayside: SOLD $1,250,000

Billionaires Row: Gregg Whitney & Team
Info@BillionairesRowLaJolla.com
Coastal residents continue to be sharply divided over California’s handling of the COVID crisis, as a state-mandated stay-at-home order is now in effect here for at least three weeks. San Diego is being factored in as part of the Southern California region, rather than being considered individually as a county. The new state rules governing stay-at-home orders are triggered when fewer than 15% of beds are available in intensive care units for regional hospital networks. Once stay-at-home orders are triggered for a region, the state will order the closure of all hair salons and barbershops, bars, breweries and distilleries, casinos and indoor playgrounds.

Those orders also call for restaurants to be limited to take-out and delivery only, while retailers must limit customers inside their stores to 20% capacity during the busy holiday shopping season. Schools with waivers will be allowed to remain open, along with critical infrastructure.

By DAVE SCHNAB

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Three week closure of dining at restaurants, hair salons, barbershops, breweries, casinos and indoor playgrounds

Outdoor dining, such as at Bub’s at the Beach on Garnet Avenue, will be closed for three weeks during the new stay-at-home order.
City Planning Commission supports proposed short-term rental ordinance

COMMISSIONERS ALSO AGREED TO A MISSION BEACH ‘CARVE OUT’

By DAVID SCHWAB

The City Planning Commission on Dec. 3 voted 7-0 for a proposed short-term rental ordinance calling for licensing them, capping their numbers, and penalizing violators, while creating a City office to administer the new program while making it subject to annual review.

Commissioners also agreed to a “carve out” for Mission Beach, the community with the highest percentage of short-term rentals citywide, from the overall compromise plan offered by District 2 Councilmember Dr. Jennifer Campbell.

Campbell’s chief of staff Venus Molina testified the District 2 office felt it was necessary for Mission Beach to be dealt with separately from other City areas, because of its existing and historic preponderance of short-term rentals.

Reacting to the commission’s favorable decision, Campbell said in a released statement: “San Diegans have been ready for a plan that puts housing stock back on the market, provides licensing, regulation and enforcement in all short-term vacation rental space. This compromise provides a path forward toward a better San Diego providing more homes for San Diegans.

“The new licensing, regulations, and enforcement will improve the quality of life across our city. I look forward to working with city staff on reviewing the Commissioner’s amendments to this plan and bringing forward the best version possible to Council so we can pass lasting and reasonable regulations.”

“The ordinance will make everybody unhappy, which is our only successful option,” said commissioner Vicki Granowitz.

PHASE 1A, 1B AND 1C

The County is expected to get 28,000 doses of a vaccine made by Pfizer in the next few days, after it receives emergency use authorization. Critical care health workers will be the first people to get it, followed by long-term care facility residents and employees. As other pharmaceutical companies receive emergency use authorization, more vaccines will arrive in the region.

The initial distribution will not be sufficient to vaccinate all people in these populations. However, the state anticipates the second round of vaccines to follow about three weeks after the first round. If the ACIP approves the remaining recommendations, and once people in the first two groups in Phase 1A are vaccinated and more COVID-19 vaccine doses are available, they will go to essential workers (Phase 1B). These are people who work in education, food and agriculture, police officers, firefighters, correctional officers and transportation workers, among others.

After that, the priority will be to vaccinate adults with underlying medical conditions and people over the age of 65 because they are at higher risk of developing serious complications from COVID-19 (Phase 1C).

PHASE 2

Immunizations will then be available for children and young adults under the age of 30 and then for critical workers not included in Phase 1 or Phase 2.

“Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe?”

The Pfizer vaccine coming to San Diego County is administered via two shots in the arm and research has shown that it’s about 95% effective.

“By Dr. ANDREW SCHWAB

The novel coronavirus vaccine is expected to arrive in San Diego County soon. Distribution of COVID-19 vaccine will be done in phases. The vaccine allocation was determined by the federal Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), which advises the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on the distribution of all vaccines.

The vaccine is safe, but about 10% to 15% of people may have some side effects such as fever, fatigue, headache and muscle pain. These side effects are usually mild.

PHASE 3

The final phase will be people of all ages who live in the United States. The phases could be revised as the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices determines if some groups are at higher risk from COVID-19 and therefore would need to be vaccinated sooner. The CDC anticipates that by June of 2021, everyone wanting to get vaccinated against COVID-19 should be able to do so.

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George “Theo” Theodorakos of L&G Projects is paving the way for other boutique art galleries in La Jolla.

Having opened last December, L&G Projects joined the rich mix of a dozen or more art galleries in the Village that includes Africa & Beyond, Alcalá Gallery + Bauer’s Rare Books, The Artful Soul, Contemporary Fine Arts Gallery, Cosmopolitan Fine Arts, Joseph Bellows Gallery, K Nathan Gallery, La Jolla Art Association, La Jolla Gallery, Madison Gallery, Mangelsen Images of Nature Gallery, Martin Lawrence Galleries, Thumbprint Gallery, Tasende Gallery, and Siamak Art Gallery.

Theo has more than 10 years of experience in the art industry and has traveled the world, most notably France, Greece, and Italy. He realized it was possible, and essential, to create a gallery that not only showcases talented unknown artists but also curates international from Tel Aviv, Australia, Poland, Greece, and the United States.

Of his gallery’s character, Theo said, “It’s modern contemporary. My artists display figurative, abstract art. I also have wooden sculpture and calligraphy art.” Theo noted his art gallery at 1111-1113 Wall St. is small compared to some others. “It’s about 500 square feet, a boutique,” he said while adding, “But if more gallerists feel confident opening up these smaller spaces in La Jolla, then we would have a really great gallery presence: It would become a melting pot. There are more little galleries like mine popping up featuring other artists. That allows more flexibility to the galleries, and La Jolla, in general.”

Though small in stature, L&G Projects makes up for it by having vaulted ceilings and lots of wall space. “I’ve utilized the space really well,” Theo noted. L&G Projects assists first-time to long-term collectors in building both private and corporate collections. It is a full-service firm that can research and acquire artists from all sources for collectors.  

Theodorakos was born in Pensacola, Fla., in a family rich with Greek heritage and culture. Theo became interested in black-and-white photography at a young age. Afterward, he had immense and varied exposure to the arts in a myriad of forms. He grew up in San Diego, but La Jolla is where he cut his teeth in artists, in my program, are international from Tel Aviv, Australia, Poland, Greece, and the United States.

His attitude about art collecting is also unique. “Some gallery owners come at it strictly as a business,” he said. “I do it for the art. I’m more of an artist than a gallerist, I’m a salesperson. But the art should sell itself.”

Off the beaten path in more ways than one, Theo noted when people visit his gallery they’re “seeing something different than what you normally see on Prospect. I’m not following with the neighbors, or what the next gallery over is doing. I’m pulling in artists exclusively, where I’m their only representation in the United States.”

Theodorakos also views the relationship between him and the artists he exhibits differently. “There is a partnership there,” he said. “My personality is very supportive. They create, and then my job is to sell it. They believe their art can sell. I opened my gallery believing their art will sell in my space.”

What does Theo like best about owning an art gallery? “I love interacting with the collectors,” he concluded. “At the end of it all, they become my friends.”

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BY DAVE SCHWAB
BUSINESS
WINTER WONDER AT BELMONT PARK

Belmont Park in Mission Beach is hosting its second annual Winter Wonder holiday spectacle every Saturday and Sunday in December from noon to 8 p.m. for the holiday season. On December weekends, the 95-year-old beachside park will offer a day-and-night experience, featuring a holiday toy drive, 15-foot-tall holiday-themed sculptures, outdoor winter-themed activities, and entertainment; plus illuminated Winter Nights when the sun goes down.

Race under dancing lights on the new Go Kari Track, visit with Santa, or get cozy at Beach House with holiday movies and dinner by the beach. Explore all the unique gift shopping, or for the best gift of all—adopt a pet from the pet adoption.

BELMONT PARK WINTER WONDER AT La Jolla Village Merchants Association is sponsoring a merchant window decorating contest. Village merchants and property managers are invited to spread cheer this unusual holiday season. Secret elves will be going through the Village all month long watching over the property. "Owls are my spirit animal, there is a genus of birds, including owls. "Owls are my spirit animal, there is a genus of birds, including owls." Crawley said her reward is seeing people come and go, but yoga has survived for thousands of years. And in 2020, yoga is a moving meditation, a way of aligning your energy and getting a smoother ride during this bumpy anxiety roller coaster.

In May of 2020, as COVID cases were escalating, Crawley took over the 961 Turquoise St. property, in the heart of the North PB Turquoise business district. She had no way of knowing the hurdles she would face.

"I worked with the owner and remodeled the inside of the building and the outdoor courtyard. We started new yoga classes in August. Ever since, it’s been a challenge to satisfy County and State COVID health restrictions. But we’re open and attracting more students every month."

Crawley has hired a dozen yoga instructors. They teach different types of yoga and there are different class levels, from beginners to experienced. For women and men. Ages range from the 20s to 70s.

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Crawley added: "Right now, we hold classes outdoors in the courtyard area, with colorful sails overhead to protect from the sun. Everyone is socially distancing. There are morning and evening classes during the week and on weekends. Currently, we have a new student special, 30 days of unlimited classes for $30."

What’s behind the Tyto (tie-toe) name? The manager explained: “The letters stand for, Taking You To Om. Om is the vibration and sound of the universe. Om is the main mantra of yoga.”

Crawley added that Tyto is also a genus of birds, including owls. “I worked with the owner and remodeled the inside of the building and the outdoor courtyard. We started new yoga classes in August. Ever since, it’s been a challenge to satisfy County and State COVID health restrictions. But we’re open and attracting more students every month.”

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Besides yoga, Crawley has also hired a massage therapist, an acupuncturist, also a Pilates and meditation instructor. Colon hydrotherapy is also offered. "My goal is to create a holistic wellness center for the mind, body, and soul. I want students to learn and listen to their bodies, find what works for them, and, above all, to feel good right now."

Lifestyle trends come and go, but yoga has survived for thousands of years. And in 2020, Crawley said her reward is seeing how yoga is lifting stress away during this unpredictable pandemic. One student told her, "Going to yoga every day has got me through it."

"If you’ve ever considered yoga," Crawley smiled and said, "Now may be the time to make your move.”
BIRD ROCK BAKERY HONORED

Wayfarer Bread & Pastry at 5525 La Jolla Blvd. in Bird Rock was honored by being named one of America’s 10 Best Bakeries by Food & Wine Magazine. “We are humbled to be on this list with such admirable company,” said Wayfarer founder Crystal White. “I’ve looked up to many of these bakeries as inspiration and it’s incredible to be included among them.”

Wayfarer Bread is a small neighborhood bakery focused on selling naturally fermented breads hot and fresh, directly to the community. Though primarily a bread bakery, Wayfarer also provides pastries and sandwiches on fresh bread in the afternoon.

For 16 years, White has worked her way through kitchens, honing her skills and narrowing her focus. In 2010 she co-founded and managed Proof Bakery in Los Angeles. Most recently, she worked her way up through the bread department at the world-renowned Tartine Bakery in San Francisco. The culmination of this experience has prepared her to launch a concept of her own.

FISH TACO CHAMP

The winner of Pacific Beachfest’s 2020 Best of the Beach Fish Taco Contest is City Tacos. It was a close competition, but the newest contestant squeaked out in front to clinch the title beating long time favorites. Discover PB congratulates the City Tacos. For more information, contact PacificBeach.org.

PB POP-UP BUTCHER SHOP

A chef-driven butcher shop specializing in Japanese Wagyu beef is opening a pop-up location having taken over Pacific Beach’s Isabel’s Cantina at 966 Felspar St. Chef Steve Brown opened his first Swagyu Chop Shop this past summer in Imperial Beach. Brown began selling his Wagyu beef on Dec. 9 in PB. He also hopes to revive his Cosecha wagyu tasting dinners at Isabel’s, once the dining ban is lifted.

WINDOW DECORATING

The winner for the Discover Pacific Beach’s year-end Window Decoration Contest is Prospect Home Finance at 875 Garnet Ave.

MB TOY DRIVE & BEACH CLEANUP

Draft San Diego is announced it is working with the Mission Beach community in hosting Toys for Tots toy drive and beach cleanup this month. Bring a new, unwrapped toy to Draft, Plunge Pool or Mission Beach Rentals now until Dec. 11. For each donated toy, you can receive a reward, like a day pass to The Plunge, discount on your next visit to Draft, or rent one get one at Mission Beach Rentals. Don’t forget to mark your calendars for the beach cleanup on Dec. 12.
COVID POSITIVE PEOPLE MAY JOIN CLINICAL TRIAL
UC San Diego and Johns Hopkins are encouraging people who have just been diagnosed with COVID-19, or who were exposed to it this week, to consider joining a local clinical trial. UC San Diego, UCLA and Johns Hopkins University are enrolling for two new Covid-19 treatment and prevention studies. You may be eligible to participate if you either:
A. Were tested for Covid-19 no more than 5 days ago and were positively diagnosed, still have symptoms, but haven’t been hospitalized.
B. Were in close contact with someone who has Covid-19 no more than 3 days ago, but don’t have any symptoms.
This clinical trial will determine whether giving people antibodies is effective at treating early-stage coronavirus and in preventing those exposed to it from catching the disease. Individuals over age 18 who meet the criteria above. Additional screening details are available at covidplasmatrial.org.

SD BLOOD BANK NEEDS PLASMA
San Diego Blood Bank is seeing a sharp increase in hospital orders for COVID-19 convalescent plasma. Orders have more than tripled in the last month.
On top of local demand, SDBB is being called upon to help supply national surge centers in anticipation of a spike in usage across the country. SDBB was one of the first blood banks in the country to begin collecting COVID-19 convalescent plasma. In addition to supplying local hospitals, SDBB has supported surge centers and other blood banks across the country.
Plasma donations from those who have recovered from COVID-19 are needed to help others who are currently fighting the virus. This is because their plasma has developed antibodies against a virus. Anyone previously diagnosed with COVID-19 can sign up at sandiegobloodbank.org.

LA JOLLAN JOINS PGA BOARD
John McNair, chief golf officer at JC Resorts in La Jolla, has joined the PGA board of directors as District 11 director for the PGA of America. McNair will represent the Aloha, Northern California and Southern California PGA Sections by fulfilling the remaining year-long term of Bill Troske, PGA. Afterwards, McNair will serve a full three-year term on the board.
A distinguished PGA member with more than 25 years of experience, McNair served as president of the Southern California PGA Section from 2015-16.

READ MORE ONLINE AT sdnews.com

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John McNair, chief golf officer at JC Resorts in La Jolla, has joined the PGA board of directors as District 11 director for the PGA of America. McNair will represent the Aloha, Northern California and Southern California PGA Sections by fulfilling the remaining year-long term of Bill Troske, PGA. Afterwards, McNair will serve a full three-year term on the board.
A distinguished PGA member with more than 25 years of experience, McNair served as president of the Southern California PGA Section from 2015-16.

READ MORE ONLINE AT sdnews.com

COVID POSITIVE PEOPLE MAY JOIN CLINICAL TRIAL
UC San Diego and Johns Hopkins are encouraging people who have just been diagnosed with COVID-19, or who were exposed to it this week, to consider joining a local clinical trial. UC San Diego, UCLA and Johns Hopkins University are enrolling for two new Covid-19 treatment and prevention studies. You may be eligible to participate if you either:
A. Were tested for Covid-19 no more than 5 days ago and were positively diagnosed, still have symptoms, but haven’t been hospitalized.
B. Were in close contact with someone who has Covid-19 no more than 3 days ago, but don’t have any symptoms.
This clinical trial will determine whether giving people antibodies is effective at treating early-stage coronavirus and in preventing those exposed to it from catching the disease. Individuals over age 18 who meet the criteria above. Additional screening details are available at covidplasmatrial.org.

SD BLOOD BANK NEEDS PLASMA
San Diego Blood Bank is seeing a sharp increase in hospital orders for COVID-19 convalescent plasma. Orders have more than tripled in the last month.
On top of local demand, SDBB is being called upon to help supply national surge centers in anticipation of a spike in usage across the country. SDBB was one of the first blood banks in the country to begin collecting COVID-19 convalescent plasma. In addition to supplying local hospitals, SDBB has supported surge centers and other blood banks across the country.
Plasma donations from those who have recovered from COVID-19 are needed to help others who are currently fighting the virus. This is because their plasma has developed antibodies against a virus. Anyone previously diagnosed with COVID-19 can sign up at sandiegobloodbank.org.

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Friday December 11th 11-5PM
Saturday December 12th 11-5PM
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We will be safely serving hot holiday drinks and pre-wrapped treats outside.
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For more information call:
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DEADLINE JANUARY 10TH
ARTS BUSXPRESS NOW BRINGS STUDENTS ON VIRTUAL FIELD TRIPS

BY DAVE SCHWAB

ArtsBusXpress, a nonprofit that offers educational field trips, is bringing virtual field trips to students. "This provided my students with both a window, and mirror, to see themselves, and the potential that they would have if they want to go into that kind of research," said the Preuss instructor. "My students are now creating works of art based on what they learned about research at the Walter Munk Foundation. We are planning several more field trips." ArtsBusXpress president Ted Pena said COVID forced them to adopt a new business model. "When COVID hit, we lost 50 (field trip) busloads of kids," he said. "So we had to pivot, fine tune our business model to enrich students one field trip at a time ... with or without the bus." 

ArtsBusXpress now brings students on virtual field trips.
Sara Berns, long time leader of Discover Pacific Beach, leaving her position

Discover Pacific Beach’s long-time executive director Sara Berns is moving on.

“I’m leaving for another non-profit,” said Berns, who’s accepted a position with San Diego Fireman’s Relief Association and Firefighter Aid. “The opportunity just kind of presented itself and I’ve been here 13 years. It will be good for the organization moving forward to restructure some things. I just thought it was a good opportunity for me and my family at this point.”

Borns succeeded Andy Hanshaw at Discover PB as executive director in 2011. Hanshaw left to become executive director of the San Diego Bicycle Coalition, a position he still holds. Previously, Berns was the program manager for the City’s Juvenile Community Court.

The outgoing executive director said a hiring committee is presently engaged in interviewing candidates to replace her. She will be leaving on Dec. 14.

Discussing the skill set needed for her replacement, Berns said: “They have to know the ins and outs of office management. Somebody with business improvement district experience is a big plus. We hope to get someone one in here by the new year.”

Borns said the executive director’s job description includes being on behalf of the BID before the City Council and advocating on the merchants’ behalf. She described the role as varied. “It’s everything, including moving a barricade at 5 a.m. for the Beachfest,” said Berns. “It’s a different kind of skill set. You’ve really got to be flexible – and care about the community. There are many groups involved in PB. We’ve got to find someone that’s collaborative, and willing to be a part of this community.”

Borns noted COVID and health restrictions imposed because of the pandemic “have had a disproportionate effect on small-business owners, the live event industry and on our restaurants and retailers versus the big boxes.” She added her replacement “will have to work to get relief out to small businesses, help them get loans.”

Having had to cancel all of its in-person fundraisers this year, Berns noted Discover PB is operating at about half of its standard budget moving forward into 2021.

Added Berns: “The next person is going to be looking at the job and figuring out how we are going to change the way we gather and fundraise. Our business membership’s needs have changed. The bottom line for the position is to help our business members, and figure out how best to advocate for them.”

Borns added that the new executive director could also get to implement the pilot parking project on Garnet Avenue, if that program is approved by the City Council.

Reacting to Berns’ departure, Pacific Beach Town Council president Brian White said: “Sara has been a dependable representative of the business district, and her leadership has never been more valuable than during this year’s extremely difficult circumstances presented by the pandemic. Being a fierce advocate for the ‘shop local’ mantra and a great steward of the PB Holiday Parade, she always has a great attitude while juggling so many responsibilities. She will be a great loss.”

Caryn Blanton, co-chair of Shoreline Community Services assisting the unsheltered, who Berns succeeded as executive director of the San Diego Fireman’s Relief Association, which used unhoused individuals to do community beautification, said: “Sara and I met through the Discover PB Clean and Safe Program. The Pacific Beach Street Guardians were contracted to keep the streets, sidewalks, and public walkways looking good and to serve as ambassadors to our unhoused neighbors who were looking for resources to get off of the streets. Sara is not only organized and efficient, but she is compassionate and caring and truly wants what is best for everyone in our community. I will miss our frequent communications and laughs but I’m excited about the next season in her career and know that great things are ahead.”

For more than a century, the SDFRA has been providing for the protection, care, and relief of the members of the San Diego Fire-Rescue Department. FirefighterAid is a fund managed by San Diego Fireman’s Relief Association. Its mission is to provide charitable assistance to Firefighters and their families in times of need and to promote awareness of firefighters’ health and safety issues.
Local women form Legacy13 to make a positive difference

By DAVE SCHWAB

A locally based women’s mastermind group is branching out to make a difference by connecting with other women and networking to champion gender-, racial-equity, and other social causes.

Known as Legacy 13, the group was formed in 2016 and meets twice monthly. The first meeting involves the group giving presentations on timely topics to learn more about them and/or take action. Those topic discussions sometimes prove so informative they’re turned into informational community workshops. The second monthly group meeting sets and shares goals.

Legacy 13 was begun by a small core group, which recently opted to add a second sister group with three members. The group’s core now includes Pacific Beach dentist Janelle Bacino.

“Cindy and I decided to start this group in 2016 after a women’s empowerment march,” said Andrea Esajian of her friend and co-member Cindy Phillips. After that, the pair, whose husbands are business partners, reached out to other women they knew who were community leaders and doers.

“We didn’t want it to be just friends of ours,” said Phillips. “We wanted to reach outside of our comfort zones and outside of our close circle of friends. We wanted to find other women in our community who wanted to be impactful and positive.”

Phillips noted that giving back is one of Legacy’s “strongest core values,” adding “we often partner with the nonprofit my husband and I started called Equal Footing Foundation, equalfootingfoundation.org. EFF is a nonprofit created by members with a shared passion for sports, health, and wellness which strives to help underprivileged children lead more active and healthy lives.

“From there we started a group of six women to meet monthly and set goals and support one another and really join forces to make an impact in our community and really uplift one another,” said Esajian.

“We would like to expand, not just for the sake of expanding, but to make sure we stick to our core values and provide members with the opportunity to have a big impact,” said Phillips. “We hold fundraisers and events that give back to the community. We’re looking to start adding some sister groups and try to make ourselves even more impactful in the community.”

“Legacy13 has been such a positive experience,” agreed Esajian. “It’s been important for us to give this support system to many other women.”

Charitable and fundraising events that have been held by Legacy 13 include a blanket and book drive for Rady’s Children’s Hospital, fundraisers for local women-owned businesses, school supply drives, donations to the Monarch School for the Homeless, and donations to Tiffany’s Place and Generation Hope benefiting sex-trafficking victims of all ages.

Workshops presented by Legacy13 have covered a plethora of subjects including feminism, domestic violence, bullying, sex trafficking, internet intelligence, financial literacy, and LGBTQ issues.

“Our first workshop we had talked about feminism leadership and modern-day gender bias,” noted Phillips. “We were so moved by another presentation that we did our own fundraiser and raised $10,000 that was donated to San Diego’s first home for minor victims of sex trafficking.”

“We had a big fundraiser with pop-up vendors where we invited local women-owned businesses, and we invited women and men from the community to shop and learn about them,” said Esajian. “We have a silent auction, sell raffle tickets, and we raise money for that cause each year.”

Legacy does not currently have a website but does have a Facebook page and Instagram account @legacy13.womenrising.
City Attorney cracks down on La Jolla COVID party mansion

Neighbors forced to endure loud parties, health and safety violations during pandemic

San Diego City Attorney Mara W. Elliott recently filed a civil enforcement action to shut down a La Jolla Farms short-term vacation rental property located at 9660 Black Gold Road. The complainants are maintaining a public nuisance and engaging in unfair competition, including false advertising. The City Attorney’s Office continues to operate in violation of state and county COVID-19 public health orders.

Citing extensive violations of state and local laws, Elliott is seeking civil penalties and a permanent injunction against property owners Mousa Hussain Mushkor and Zabara Ali Kasim, property manager Nital Meshkour, and Steven S. Barbarich, who leased the property from Mushkor and subleased it as a short-term rental.

The oceanfront mansion has been the subject of at least 30 calls to the San Diego Police Department, causing officers to experience more than 100 gatherings. The property owners maintain the property to investigate nuisances. Most of the incidents involved raucous parties, some of which had up to 100 attendees.

According to the board of the property, complaints about the COVID-19 pandemic being the only public health order prohibits large gatherings.

“Shutting down dangerous party houses protects the community, and eliminating nuisances from COVID-super-spreaders events and other illegal behavior,” Elliott said. “It’s unfortunate that San Diego does not have short-term rental regulations in place. Relief for this neighborhood would have come sooner. Instead, we must live with time-consuming evictions at significant taxpayer expense.”

During one of the parties, gunfire was reported to police. Officers arrived and found a large party in progress. Partygoers questioned by police admitted gunfire erupted during a fight that had occurred earlier. Police found shell casings outside the property and a neighbor found an additional barrel of gunpowder on the bathroom clothing rack when it came out of the wall and struck him causing a one-inch head laceration.

Other complaints to police involved:
- Fires on-site
- Assault
- Underage drinking
- Theft
- In addition to dangerous conduct, inspectors found health and safety, building, and fire code violations, including:
  - Mosquito larvae in standing water requiring immediate treatment
  - Multiple electrical violations, leaving electrical wires exposed and unprotected throughout the property
  - Excessive vegetation capable of being ignited causing the property to be deemed a fire hazard
  - Glass pans missing from the foyer window, which is covered with plywood

During the inspections, investigators also observed the following conditions:
- A tennis court filled with debris, torn fence coverings, and a broken tennis net; and
- A swimming pool containing debris; and
- Dead plants and weeds throughout the grounds, which could create a fire hazard;

- A partially empty koi pond emitting an offensive odor and a dug hole filled with dead plants;
- A gazebo with a diploid roof containing broken branches and dead leaves with trash;
- A garage filled with stacked mattresses, broken furniture, and other storage;
- Broken steps with large piles of dead leaves;
- Soiled rugs with cigarette burns;
- Damaged sinks, bidet, tiles, and doorknobs.

Despite these conditions, Defendants advertise the property for more than $900 per night on Airbnb with photographs showing the property in a pristine condition, which constitutes a violation of California’s False Advertising and Unfair Competition laws. The current Airbnb listing reads “Clifside 8 Million Dollar Beach Mansion w/ Ocean Views... Germ Free! Superior Cleaning – wall to wall windows w/breathtaking views; swimming pool – BBQ – tennis and basketball court – pool table – coy [sic] pond... 7 bedrooms. 12 beds, sleeps 16...”

In addition, defendants have been operating a business without the required business tax licenses in violation of the San Diego Municipal Code.

Concerns about the property were brought to the City Attorney’s Office by SDPD and neighbors who reported that the situation was becoming more pronounced as the COVID-19 pandemic progressed. The Office assembled evidence from investigations by SDPD, the Code Enforcement Division of the City’s Development Services Department, the County Health and Human Services Department, and the City Fire Marshal.

READ MORE ONLINE AT sdnnews.com
In her spare time, Pacific Beach environmental activist Karin Zirk is active writing fiction.

The print version of Zirk’s second book, “Falling From The Moon,” came out via Talk Story Publishing right before the pandemic hit. Her novel, which follows the quest of a 25-year-old character searching for her vanished father, leads to Friends of Rose Creek, a community. Earlier this year, Talk Story Publishing released the eBook version of “Falling From The Moon.”

Zirk’s novel is based on a traumatic life experience of hers.

“It is a fiction book, but it is grounded in many years of peace and healing gathering events where nobody is in charge and people are working collectively,” said Zirk, who leads Friends of Rose Creek, which is an environmental support group for the PB watershed and its popular community bike path.

A full-time IT worker, Zirk previously lived an alternative lifestyle as a young woman. “I spent about three years traveling around the country in a Volkswagen camper van,” she said. “Many years ago I was involved in a situation where a woman was sexually assaulted. I was really struggling to understand that. I started (afterward) to write down everything that happened, and it turned into 100 pages. Then I thought I should create a story, and that turned into 200 pages. Ultimately, I created a novel. That is my driving force for writing: trying to understand how things happen, and what we as a community do about that.”

Zirk didn’t know the assault victim personally but had “interacted with the suspect” in the days leading up to the alleged crime. “I had not listened to my gut instinct that there was more going on with him than other people seemed to think, although it’s hard to do much about people before they commit a crime,” she said. “I have always felt very culpable. That is really how the novel came into being. It was my attempt to sort through it all.”

About her writing, the author, who has a doctorate in mythology, noted, “We all have perspectives on the world based on our upbringing, our culture and the era in which we live. All of these things have an undercurrent of mythological themes. Think of it as an iceberg that is controlling our lives, not visible to us.”

Zirk characterized her second novel as a “hope-based narrative.” She added, “When we function as a community and work toward the betterment of everybody, we have hope in happy endings.”

Will there be a sequel? “It ends at a jumping-off point where the two main characters can see their futures,” answered Zirk of her new novel.

Of what she hopes readers will get out of her novel, Zirk said, “I would hope that this book gives people new perspectives on life and humans and communities. I would also hope that this book inspires people to maybe think outside the box for solutions.”

Zirk’s novel, “Falling From The Moon,” is available from your local independent book seller. It can be ordered direct from Indiebooks supporting independent bookstores. Watch Karin’s talk, “The True Price of Activism,” for a short reading and to learn about the inspiration behind her new novel on YouTube at youtu.be/baIEPyat1UY.

Karin Zirk’s second book, ‘Falling From The Moon.’
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Destroyed ancient Temple of Bel now open for virtual exploration

UC San Diego Library has digitally reconstructed the world-famous temple in Palmyra, Syria to preserve the cultural heritage for future generations.

Five years after its destruction, the ancient Temple of Bel in Palmyra, Syria has been digitally reconstructed by the UC San Diego Library’s Digital Media Lab (DML) using cutting-edge 3D methods and artificial intelligence (AI) applications. Inspired by a past collaboration between the Library and UC San Diego’s Levantine Archaeology Laboratory, this project has resulted in the digital preservation of more than a dozen lost reliefs, sculptures, frescoes and paintings, all made publicly available on the Library’s Digital Collections website.

Destroyed in 2015 during the Syrian civil war, the Temple of Bel has been called the most important temple in the entire Middle East (along with Lebanon’s Baalbek) and served as one of the best-preserved examples of ancient art and architecture, attracting more than 150,000 tourists annually. Through the use of more than 3,000 publicly available digital photographs taken over the course of a decade, the Library has successfully recreated the structure using Pointcloud, an online viewing platform.

“This project underscores the Library’s commitment to engaging in collaborative efforts to better understand how the university can support emerging teaching and research for future generations,” said Roger Smith, interim associate university librarian for scholarly resources and services at the UC San Diego Library. “It also allows the Library to better plan for our role in acquiring, preserving and sharing scholarship while incorporating new media and data formats.”

The digital photographs used to create the virtual rendering of the Temple of Bel were sourced from open access repositories such as the #NEWPALMYRA project, the Roman Society, Oxford University and many individual tourists, then populated into Pointcloud, which allows users to interactively explore the once massive temple compound. Additionally, artificial intelligence applications were used to isolate the temple’s important features from other elements that may have appeared in the images, such as tourists, weather conditions and foliage.

“This new technology has allowed the Library to combine image data from many different sources,” said Scott McAvoy, manager of the Library’s Digital Media Lab. “For example, a photo from a Polish tourist visiting in 2010 can be combined with a photo from a Japanese tourist visiting in 2015 to extract 3D features. These images have provided the basis for the reconstruction of this site — without them, we would not have been able to embark on or successfully complete this project.”

To view the UC San Diego Library’s digital recreation of the Temple of Bel, visit http://lib.ucsd.edu/templeofbel. The web viewer is currently supported by desktop versions of Chrome, Firefox and Microsoft Edge — virtual reality is supported through Firefox WebVR.

UC San Diego community members interested in using Pointcloud technology to access, analyze and visualize their data are encouraged to reach out to DML manager Scott McAvoy at DML@ucsd.edu.
Women in management in the 1970s – changing the business culture

By Natasha Josefowitz, Ph.D.

The 1970s were a wonderful time to be in academia. I was well ensconced as a faculty member in the Whittemore College of Business and Economics (WSBE) at the University of New Hampshire. The years in Durham, N.H., were happy ones for Herman and I; we did everything together. He was unwaveringly supportive. I was integrated into the university and had the freedom to be innovative, both on my home turf and away.

In 1979, a representative of a publishing house, Addison-Wesley, was asking secretaries at WSBE, what they were working on. My secretary showed him the outline of my course on women in management. The next thing I knew, I was signing a contract for a book I was not writing. My first book, “Paths to Power: A Woman’s Guide from First Job to Top Executive” (Addison Wesley) was written chronologically based on my class syllabus. I was fortunate to have the first and only book dealing with women in organizations. The book was adopted by over 100 universities and colleges, both nationally and internationally, and was translated into several languages. The book became a best seller in 1980.

I was thrust into the limelight as one of the early feminists dealing with issues encountered by women working in organizations. I remember my first TV interview. I was nervous, never having been in a TV studio. I drove to Boston from New Hampshire. Upon arriving at the studio, I was introduced to the host and was told we had five seconds before starting. My heart was pounding when his first comment was “I don’t like the title of your book. I don’t believe women should want power. They should stay home and take care of their families.” As you can imagine, I was taken aback. My response was “I am so glad you said that. My book is written for you; you are exactly who needs to read it.” I went on to explain what my book was about, in particular, the chapter dealing with exactly this kind of mindset.

My first radio interview was with Larry King. We pulled an all-nighter. He started our session with “I did not read your book. I do not know why you are my guest and neither does my audience, so it is up to you to set us straight.” Well, this was precisely the type of challenge which permitted me to put forth the reasons for writing the book.

My third interview was appearing on TV with Dr. Ruth; she was a kick. She came rushing in at the last minute before our live interview was about to start. She looked at me questioningly as if it was for me to start, so I did. “Dr. Ruth, I said, you talk about sex and how to do it at home. I want to talk about sex and how not to do it at the office.” That segment was rebroadcast numerous times.

There was a backlash from the men who had enjoyed the privacy of male jokes, cartoons, and locker room humor. Now, all of a sudden, it was deemed inappropriate to make any sexy remarks in front of women colleagues. It was a time of confusion about new expected behaviors. The Women’s Movement brought to light some of the ways women were responding to their new roles in the workplace. Should a man open the door for a woman? Or would she be offended because she can open her own door. Guidelines were needed to help and accepted consulting opportunities with various government agencies such as the FBI, the CIA, the California Chiefs of Police, and U.S. Postal Service, as well as in industry including General Dynamics, Teledyne Ryan, National Cash Register (NCR), General Motors of Canada, etc. I was surprised that I was considered to be an expert in this new field. However, at that time, there was no one else specifically dealing with women integrating into formerly male-dominated organizations. Often there was initial hostility from the men, who were asked to attend my workshops.

I started writing humorous verse to help relax the atmosphere, for instance, these two lines: “He taught her everything he knew. Now that she knows as much as he does, he doesn’t like it.” The ensuing laughter eased the tension in the audience. I had compassion for the men, who had to learn new behaviors and deal with their confusing feelings, to help them accept women as colleagues in the workplace. Using humor in poetry is a wonderful stress reducer.

Natasha Josefowitz is the author of 21 books of business and poetry. She currently resides at White Sands Retirement Community in La Jolla. Copyright © 2020. Natasha Josefowitz. All rights reserved.

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- Personal Care Items
- Prepaid Gift Cards
- Water
- Sanitizer
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UC San Diego receives $12 million endowment from Hellman Foundation

The Hellman Fellows Program and the University of California recently announced a plan to permanently support the Hellman Fellows Program on all 10 campuses in the UC system. With the establishment of this endowment, the Hellman Fellows Program will have committed a total of $125 million to support research for outstanding early-career faculty at all 10 UC campuses. The endowment will provide protected streams of funding in perpetuity through the creation of the Society of Hellman Fellows.

The program made its first awards in 1995 to a handful of faculty at UC San Diego and UC Berkeley. The program grew organically over the years to include all 10 UC campuses and four private institutions.

The gift will fund endowments at each campus, with the universities each administering the program. Fellowships are open to a broad range of academic disciplines across all fields, including the arts and humanities, social sciences and STEM. Fellowships can range from $10,000 to $65,000, and many former fellows have gone on to become department chairs, award-winning researchers, and MacArthur “Genius Grant” recipients.

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PB Fun Fact:
The first artificial Christmas Tree wasn’t a tree at all. It was created out of goose feathers that were dyed green. The first artificial Christmas trees were developed in Germany in the 19th century, due to a major continuous deforestation. The feather trees became increasingly popular during the early 20th century and finally made their way to the US.