Alvarado completes ER expansion

By JEFF CLEMETSON | College Times Courier

A plan over 25 years in the making to expand Alvarado Hospital’s emergency room has finally come to fruition.

On Dec. 5, Alvarado held a pre-grand opening for its $14 million new ER facility that adds 20 new beds — which will relieve some of the pressure on the impacted emergency room that currently sees around 2,000 patients a month with only 12 existing beds.

“It’s huge for the community to have more space,” said Alvarado Hospital CEO Robin Gomez. "It’s easy to become anonymous in the sea of faces,” said Campus Pastor Darin Johnson, who coordinates Agape House. “We want to help the students feel connected. [to know] they aren’t alone.”

Agape House wants its students to have a place where they are loved and seen, despite the large campus population overall.

Those are the core values of the Agape House, located in the heart of the San Diego State University campus. They stem out of the last value, a need for community. Agape House wants its students to have a place where they are loved and seen, despite the large campus population overall.

Growth in community

Pastor Darin Johnson heads the Agape House on the SDSU campus that provides help for students in need. (Courtesy photo)

Agape House helps SDSU students with emotional, spiritual, physical needs

By JOYELL NEVINS | College Times Courier

Radical welcome

Rested in faith

Justice and mercy

Growth in community

Agape House helps SDSU students with emotional, spiritual, physical needs. (Photo by Jeff Clemetson)

Pastor Darin Johnson, who coordinates Agape House. “We want to help the students feel connected. [to know] they aren’t alone.”

Agape House does this through relationship building via weekly dinners, art and music

Pastor Darin Johnson heads the Agape House on the SDSU campus that provides help for students in need. (Courtesy photo)

Alvarado Hospital CEO Robin Gomez and head of ER Jordan Cohen, M.D. pose in front of one of the new GEDA ER rooms for senior patients. (Photo by Jeff Clemetson)

Heart of the house

Alvarado completes ER expansion

The City Council’s Land Use and Housing Committee voted to reform community planning groups (CPGs) on Dec. 5 that includes revisions from a maximum length of meetings to how elections are run.

The reforms come after a city audit, a Grand Jury report and Circulate San Diego’s Democracy in Planning all raised serious concerns about how the groups are run. In response, a task force was formed that created 53 recommendations on how to improve the groups. Those recommendations were voted on by CPGs throughout the region as well as the Community Planners Committee before being brought to the San Diego City Council.

The advisory groups are filled with elected members who volunteer to weigh in on land-use issues in their neighborhood. They are meant to be the lowest rung of democracy, but critics worry they are often inaccessible to marginalized groups. Research has shown CPGs skew whiter, wealthier and older than the neighborhoods they represent. In addition, they are often filled almost exclusively with homeowners, even in areas where the majority of people rent.

On a basic level, homeowners and renters have different concerns when looking at new developments — one of the main purposes of CPGs. A typical renter might favor bringing in developments that keep rent down by adding more housing stock, while a typical homeowner might favor keeping developments out that could potentially bring down their property value.

CPG reforms pass important committee vote

KENDRA SITTON | College Times Courier

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The community garden’s 'Orchard Whisperer'

When I was a little girl, we lived in a house in Ontario, Canada that had a small apple orchard as our backyard. It seems huge to me in retrospect, but it was probably no more than 20 trees. Every spring, the blossoms would delight us only to yield wormy apples not fit for eating, making pies, or anything. My parents weren’t botanically savvy and so most of the apples fell to the ground and rotted. We caught up with him and we talked, well, trees. Gabe's father had a landscape company and worked on the grounds at SDSU for seven years, while taking classes in the Horticulture Program at Cuyamaca College. This combination of activities, he says, was the catalyst for his love of trees.

As he mentioned, and I agree, it’s a rare person who has not been moved while gazing up at the boughs of an ancient redwood or spruce. That feeling heightens one's awareness and renders a reverence for those trees.

—Robin Clarke lives in San Diego. She is a contributing writer who volunteers and leases space at the nonprofit, organic and sustainable Cuyamaca College Community Garden. For more information about the garden, visit collegearea-garden.org.

Gabe Mitchell (Courtesy photo)

Gabe cares for all 58 fruit trees in the CACG including citrus, apple and stone fruit like apricot, plum, nectarine and peach as well as many citrus trees and avocados and papayas. He and the CACG board dedicated the Espalier Zone (trained trees on a horizontal plane) to his grandfa ther, Augustine Mitchell Jr. We can’t help feeling his granddad would be proud.

—Robin Clarke

Gabe is the College Area Community Garden (CACG) volunteer orchardist. Yes, it’s a thing! Located next door to SDSU on 1 acre of private property, the nonprofit College Area Community Garden is one of only a handful of the 60-plus community gardens in San Diego County, which includes a substantial number of fruit trees.

Gabe is an arborist, certified with ISA (International Society of Arboriculture) and holds a number of certifications from the Cuyamaca College Ornamental Horticulture Program. He also holds a qualified applicator’s certificate (QAC) through the California Department of Pesticide Regulation. Gabe is clearly passionate about trees, and cites the SD Professional Tree Care Association’s annual seminars as having fueled this passion for orchard care and culture. He currently studies toward his bachelor’s degree, and works for Caltrains with the District 11 Water Management Team — all that while he oversees the CACG 35-fruit-tree orchard and its irrigation. He’s very busy.

Alvarado is one of only two ER hospitals in East County and with the new emergency room, it will be the first with a special accreditation for serving seniors. As an accredited Geriatric Emergency Department (GEDA), Alvarado Hospital staff is trained to give a special screening for older patients that covers medications, memory health, diet and living conditions. The hospital also provides special equipment for senior patients such as foam beds and informational cards with larger type for easier reading.

The expanded ER also boasts a new electronic medical records system that Gomez described as “the Rolls Royce of EMRs.”

Some additional staff will be hired for the ER including one extra physician shift, Gomez said. Jordan Cohen, M.D. head of ER at Alvarado said he and the staff are excited to move into the facility and are eager to be able to move patients through faster and reduce wait times.

“Robin and I have assembled the finest team I have worked with in over 30 years of emergency medicine — physicians, physician assistants, nurses, really down the line,” she said. “With this facility, we’re going to become the premier emergency department in the county.”

Alvarado Hospital's new emergency room facility (Photo by Jeff Clemetson)

Although the ER is ready to operate, Alvarado must wait for an inspection by the California Department of Health before it can begin admitting patients. Gomez hopes this will happen before the holidays, and by state law cannot take over 100 days before an inspector comes to do the site visit. Gomez is confident that Alvarado will pass the inspection.

“This isn’t a new service line for us. We know how to do ER,” she said. “We have all the policies; we have everything in place. The staff has been running drills. ... So we are literally just waiting on licensing. It’s going to be an easy one-day survey.”

For more information on Alvarado Hospital, visit alvaradohospital.com.

—Reach editor Jeff Clemetson at jeff@sdnews.com.

The entrance to Alvarado Hospital’s new emergency room facility (Photo by Jeff Clemetson)

The community garden’s ‘Orchard Whisperer’
“Planning Groups cannot rep- resent their community if they do not look like their community,” said Maya Rosas, director of policy at Circulate San Diego, in a press conference before the vote.

To that end, the reforms include creating a distinct category between renters and homeowners and reserving at least one seat for renters to be represented on the board. If the reforms are enacted, members of the CPG boards will have to fill out a demographic survey and termed-out members must wait two years to be elected again. In addition, a compromise was reached that in order to qual- ify to run for the group, a person only needs to attend one CPG meeting in the past 12 months.

CPGs have seen little support from the city of San Diego in re- cent years. Few have staff from the Planning Department assigned to attend and answer questions. Even fewer have representatives from the City Attorney’s office en- suring the group is following the Brown Act — which means any question about the specifics of a project or the legality of an action requires significant discussion with officials not in attendance, sometimes delaying the process.

The new reforms include direct- ing the Planning Department to closely monitor CPG actions and provide timely guidance to pre- cede requests for inappropriate project additions or modifications. The Planning Department is also tasked with providing resources to improve recruiting that could result in more diverse CPG mem- bership. The city attorney will al- so be more involved in conducting disciplinary reviews if a CPG vio- lates the Brown Act.

There will also be more trans- parency within CPG groups if the reforms are passed by the full City Council as the changes include deadlines on putting documents such as minutes, agendas, and res- ters in a centralized location avail- able for the public. Project review recommendations and member applications will also be recorded. It will also be explicit that groups are allowed to use social media, in accordance with the Brown Act.

Another major aim of the re- forms is increasing training for members of CPGs. Instead of just new members going through training, all members would be trained annually on the Brown Act, CEQA Review, and the city’s development review process. Some CPGs said this would put an undue burden on members, but the recommendations passed 4-0.

One group in favor of the chang- es are developers, with several speaking out about issues they faced getting project recommen- dations from CPGs at a public hearing before the vote. With each CPG being vastly different, getting projects past them was described as “shaking a magic eight ball.” Intentionally or unintentionally, CPGs can hold up projects or even shut them down by drawing out the process of giving recommen- dations. The cost of delays is then passed on to homebuyers and renters, according to the devel- opers who spoke. The reforms would standardize the process of making recommendations and impose deadlines so developers can get community input early on in the planning stage and not have to repeatedly return before the group.

College Area Community Planning Board (CACPB) chair Jose Reynoso said that a lot of the CPG reforms are “worthwhile to assure consistency across plan- ning groups but, in general, the whole exercise was driven by de- velopers or pro-developer groups to either bypass or restrain plan- ning groups.”

“I believe that it was driven be- cause of anecdotal evidence/con- cerns relayed by developers that CPG were delaying the approval process or that the make-up of the groups was too homogeneous and it was the same NIMBY’s chal- lenging and making things difficult for projects,” he said.

Reynoso has a different take on what holds up projects.

“If one were to go back and look at records, CPGs typically don’t take long to review projects,” he said. “What sometimes takes long is that many community plans are so old or outdated that projects require an exception to a commu- nity plan which can add up to a year in reviewing approaches.”

Another CPG reform that Reynoso said could affect the CACPB is the extended time for voting.

“[R] puts a strain on us because we do not have our own facility and are limited by the time we can use the meeting space. We’ll have to figure that one out,” he said.

While the committee over- whelmingly supported many of the recommendations, a plan to make CPG members file econom- ic interest forms was sent back to staff. Council member Chris Ward spoke out strongly against volunteers being forced to fill out the forms required by the Political Reform Act, as small mistakes could incur major fines and the forms themselves are complicated and burdensome.

A recommendation from the task force to tape, either via audio and visual choreographed sur- prises throughout the evening!

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**NEWS**


**College Times Courier**
College Area Happenings

By JOSE REYNOSO

As was reported last month, at its November meeting, the College Area Community Council (CACC) board approved the draft community plan update report. Even though the report included much of the content of prior visioning sessions and workshops, the board also approved a 30-day public review and comment period so residents can have an opportunity to see the final draft and provide comments or suggestions, if they wish. The report is posted on the CACC website, collegearea.org, under the community plan update tab. A separate executive summary of the report is also available online. To simplify the approval process, it was decided to create a

SEE CA HAPPENINGS, Page 5

Agape House

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Agape House hosts a weekly dinner for students. (Photos courtesy Agape House)

It’s a forgiving thing to do.” Johnson said of the gardening. “There’s a spiritual practice of being connected to the earth and life.”

Agape House is located in the middle of the SDSU campus.

The garden and pantry also help meet the ongoing need of food insecurity. Johnson has been a part of the Agape House for 10 years and has seen this need rise. He noted the campus culture has shifted from primarily commuter students to primarily residential.

Finally, Agape House is continually accepting donations for their pantry. The biggest need currently is in women’s hygiene items and easy-to-fix foods, like ramen noodles or mac n’ cheese.

Business Spotlight

Since opening in 2012 in the SDSU neighborhood, City of Champions has been providing instruction in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, Muay Thai, Mixed Martial Arts and Strength and Conditioning in both class settings and private training. All skill levels and ages are welcome and accommodated through a variety of classes for adults and kids as well as instruction according to individuals’ skill levels. It’s important to have a clean facility and they take pride in that they have been praised as on of the best kept facilities in San Diego on Yelp! The instruction is professional, they have top of the line equipment and their energy is positive and contagious. Check them out with free class or take advantage of this month’s special. Whether it’s for self defense, getting into shape or to relieve stress, you will be glad you did!
COMMUNITY

From the Alvarado Estates archives

By SUSAN CLARKE-CRISAFULLI

The ultimate plan for Alvarado Estates was to create country living within the city. The choice of home sites was determined by lottery. Those whose names were drawn first had first option. It is amazing, however, how many families received the sites of their preference, regardless of whether they were high or low in the lottery.

For instance, famed architect Lloyd Russo held No. 31 and said it would have made no difference had he been far down the list, “because I chose a site that no one else wanted, anyway.” His home sits on the lip of a canyon, where the house is so well tucked into the hillside that it is not visible from the street front. The same situation applied to families with airplanes who wanted home sites adjoining the airstrip.

Although all the dwellings had to conform to strict architectural control that was maintained by a committee, like homes having a minimum of 1,500 square feet of interior living space, there is a great variety of design.

Alvarado Estates is a unique neighborhood featuring mid-century moderns and sprawling California ranches. In addition to Russo, Cliff May, Richard Neutra, Herman Hester, and Rex Lotery are a few of the renowned architects. Currently, five homes have historical designation including Hester’s that was featured on the cover of Life Magazine 1958 as the “Home of the Future.”

—Susan Clarke-Crisafulli writes on behalf of Alvarado Estates.

Mesa Colony Community Group news

By KRISTIE HIDDON

The Mesa Colony Community Group held its final meeting of 2019 on Nov. 20 at the College-Rolando Library.

Chairperson Bob Higon introduced the meeting speakers, beginning with Sanna Loando, District 9 representative for City Council President Georgette Gomez’s office, who updated the community about the recent CARPUS (College Area Public Safety) meeting and, in particular, construction progress on Reservoir Drive, SEE MCCR, Page 15.

I Love A Clean San Diego

By TASHA DEWEY

I Love A Clean San Diego will make a presentation at the El Cerrito Community Council meeting on Jan. 16, at 7 p.m. in the Blessed Sacrament Church Parish Hall, 4549 El Cerrito Drive.

I Love A Clean San Diego is San Diego County’s longest-running environmental nonprofit, having celebrated its 65th anniversary in 2019. When it was created in 1954, the organization’s main focus was litter prevention — the founding members called themselves the War Against Litter Committee. Throughout the years, this central theme has remained much the same, with I Love A Clean San Diego volunteers removing half a million pounds of debris from the county’s neighborhoods, creeks, canyons and coastline every year.

While these cleanups are still a fixture of their work, the organization’s programs have evolved over the years to provide resources and education to help the region’s residents reduce the amount of waste they send to the landfill.

In addition to clearing pollution, I Love A Clean San Diego provides recycling/disposal referrals through an online database (WasteFreeSD.org) and phone hotline (1-800-272-BLUE). It also has a robust environmental and zero-waste education team, which serves adults, business and school children through interactive educational presentations and workshops to more than 30,000 people annually. Through these programs, I Love A Clean San Diego aims to be an environmental catalyst — inspiring action and connecting people with each other, and the environment.

Whether you want to take action to make a difference in your community, or learn about small changes you can make on a personal level, I Love A Clean San Diego is the county’s one-stop resource for help.

Visit CleanSD.org to find a community cleanup or educational event near you and connect with I Love A Clean San Diego on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn @iloveacleansd.

—Tasha Dewey is an adult education specialist for I Love A Clean San Diego. Visit cleansd.org.

El Cerrito Community Council news

By PATRICK HANSON

Recent studies have shown Californians are lagging the rest of the country in neighborliness. The studies say Californians are less likely than other Americans to work with their neighbors to improve the community, to exchange favors with our neighbors or to belong to community groups.

College View Estates must be the exception that proves the rule. Many in our community are busy decorating and getting ready for the holidays in spite of the rain. As part of the holiday celebrations, College View Estates Association (CVEA) will have two events for children.

The CVEA board purchased $200 of food for SDSU students in need. (Courtesy photo)

One will be on Dec. 8, 2-4 p.m. at which hot cocoa, marshmallows, small games and an art table will be provided at 5281 Manhasset Drive. Bring your own mug.

SEE CVEA, Page 12

CA Happenings

CA Happenings CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

new entity with a somewhat broader mandate in order to accommodate members of both the CACC, the planning board and other community entities that merit support. The new entity is the College Area Community Coalition — same acronym. CACC and the community council will function as a project of the new entity. The nonprofit’s board is a subset of the CACC board.

You may wonder what your donations are used for. Over the past year, the council has funded more than $5,000 for the preparation of the community plan update report. It is also funding the costs of outreach efforts to organize sections of the community that did or do not yet have organized community groups such as the new College Triangle community group that covers the area between El Cajon Boulevard, Montezuma Road and College Avenue. These subgroups of the College Area community are vital to the dissemination of information, creating community and working together in a cohesive way toward goals that benefit all of us.

There are still two or three areas that need to come together. We have also launched a series of fun, social events to support community-building and bring in new residents and families that have not, traditionally, gotten involved. A united community presents a stronger voice to the city and other entities with power over us. The first event was a family movie night at Hardy Elementary. Local businesses were also involved, providing treats. It was a success and more events are in the works.

We hope to finally be able to launch a campus/community project to assist residents unable to tidy up their homes. This will be a joint project with the associated students at SDSU. The barrier we had encountered was the need for insurance coverage, which we could not obtain without the 501(c)(3) designation. We hope to actively look into other community improvement projects and your donations will be key to our efforts.

Thank you for your past support and we look forward to it continuing and growing. We are building a cohesive, inclusive community that will serve the needs of its members now and in the future. Our mantra over the years has been neighbors helping neighbors. Help us deliver on that goal. Happy holidays!

—Jose Regnino is board chair of the College Area Community Council.

The Mesa Colony Community Council will function as a community council to bring neighbors together in a cohesive way to address goals that benefit all of us. Our mantra over the years has been neighbors helping neighbors. Help us deliver on that goal. Happy holidays!
For older adults, the holiday blues are real

By Simona Valancute

The “holiday blues” are a too-common experience for more than 8 million older American adults suffering from social isola-
tion, memory loss, cognitive decline, and even death. According to Pew Research Center, Americans age 60 and older who live on their own spend more than 10 hours daily alone. Thankfully, there are many ways older adults can combat isolation, over-
come the holiday blues, and improve their health in the process.

**WHY DO SOME PEOPLE EXPERIENCE THE HOLIDAY BLUES?**

“Guest’s guilt” over the pending of a friend or loved one in the previous year (especially if it’s the first holiday after their death), a decrease in energy or mo-
bility that limits activity, living far away from family and friends, the financial pressure of gift-giving, and social media-induced envy or FOMO (fear of missing out) can easily contribute to feelings of loneliness or isolation.

**WHAT CAN BE DONE TO BEAT THE HOLIDAY BLUES?**

Even if you feel down, you are still in charge of your life. If you are experiencing the holiday blues:

- Be around people and friends, even if you don’t feel like it. Perhaps skip the festive holiday bash, but start a new routine of having small groups of friends.
- Find new ways to keep busy. Book a tour and see your city like a tourist. Go to a theater show or a sporting event.
- Learn something new. Sign up for a class in a skill you’ve always wanted to learn.
- Keep moving. When you exercise, you release mood-boosting endorphins. Plan a workout with a friend or join a group exercise class.
- Avoid social media. These are “highlight” reels of people’s lives, not reality.
- Volunteer. Give back to your community; you will feel more connected, and have a sense of purpose.
- Create new traditions, especially if you’ve lost a loved one. It’s OK to be sad, but don’t feel guilty. Try new things to enrich your life in a way your loved one would have wanted for you.

If you have a parent or older relative who might be feeling the holiday blues, here are some tips for how to support them:

- Simplify your holiday plans to focus on the real meaning of the season. Consider cutting back on activities that require ex-
ensive outings or focus too much on gifts.
- Actively listen to them, even if the discussion is neg-
ative. The simple act of just listening attentively shows them that they are not a burden.
- Remind them how im-
portant they are as a part of your life. Look at family photos, watch home videos and holiday movies, or sing seasonal songs together.
- Help them get out and try new things. Check with your loved one’s religious or-
ganization, if they have one, to see if they can offer social and/or spiritual support. Also, check if there’s a local chapter of Oasis near you, offering classes and meetups for older adults that can help them feel more energized and mentally stimulated.

At San Diego Oasis, we like to say our classes, activ-
esties, and travel opportuni-
ties are the prescription for senior isolation. Our cen-
tral location in Grossmont Center encourages connec-
tion and socializing during the holidays and throughout the entire year. If you’re feeling a bit down, take a moment for self-care — to-
try new things, meet new people, gather with friends, and combat those holiday blues.

-Simona Valancute is the president and CEO of San Diego Oasis, an award-win-
ing nonprofit specializing in serving people age 50 and bet-
ter, who pursue healthy aging through lifelong learning, ac-
tive lifestyles, and community service. Learn more at sandie-
goaus.org.
The two big takeaways from these experiences are realizing how hard it is to reach the goal of reducing rising temperatures and there is no silver bullet to ending climate change. It’s going to take a combination of different approaches to get the job done.

We cannot just look at reducing carbon emissions — very important and a key component to reducing the effects of climate change.

We must look at sustainable communities. It’s not just cars with better gas mileage but how about fewer cars! Encouraging more bicycling through increased bike lanes, making public transportation more accessible, reliable, and more affordable.

There is reducing our reliance on fossil fuels and increasing access to renewable energy. Looking at population and deforestation. Carbon pricing needs to play a role as well as building and industry energy efficiency.

How we look at these aspects to address the climate crisis and doing it while working together is what En-ROADS is all about.

This climate interactive tool should not be seen as something just for the classroom or government representatives. It can be a resource for citizens to use to learn more about how we can address the existential threat of our lifetime. Maybe they can take what they learned to their local representatives with ideas and proposals on how we solve this problem.

Get together with your friends, relatives, and neighbors. The challenge: See if you can achieve what world leaders are striving for, which is to bring down our planet’s temperature.

We would love to hear what you discovered and how you approached the goal of reducing climate change. Send your findings to susandavis.house.gov/contact.

We are literally all in this together. No one is immune. This tool shows it will take a team effort — people coming together to find common ground to solve this. Only together can we create a sustainable Earth for future generations.

—Congresswoman Davis represents central San Diego, including the communities of Grantville, Allied Gardens, San Carlos and Del Cerro, as well as La Mesa, Lemon Grove, Spring Valley and parts of El Cajon and Linda Vista.

MORE PRAISE FOR TUBMAN PARK PROJECT
Re: “City, school district break ground on joint-use park” [Volume 1, Issue 1]

The road to the Joint Use Park has been a long, arduous journey. The College Area Community Council (CACC) included a joint-use park in the area of Mesa Colony in their 1989 community plan. The community has worked for 30 years to bring this dream to fruition. Many of the residents who supported this plan have died, retired to senior facilities or moved. Over the last three decades, city staff and SDUSD staff have come and gone. New residents moved into the neighborhood and continued the work.

Below is a timeline of the park and efforts to ensure its creation:

• In the 1990’s, the city was experiencing reduced spendable income. Many important work had to be postponed for decades.

• The nation experienced a massive recession in the 2000’s that further reduced funding to all levels of government and SDUSD.

• Later school bonds were passed and there seemed to be hope for a joint-use park.

• In 2015-17, Tubman Charter School was found to be out of compliance with SDUSD. This prevented any bond money from being used for a park. Under the capable leadership of new principal Ryan Woodard, their school board and staff, the school finally met all its goals and is very successful. This allowed the possibility of school bonds for a park.

• Residents met with the SDUSD Charter Office and the Facilities Manager Lee Dulgeroff. District 9 Council member Marti Emerald and her staff to discuss the joint-use park. Council member Emerald and the school district made a commitment to the park.

• Shortly after this meeting, residents met at the Rolando College Library with school officials, including SDUSD Superintendent Cindy Martin. school board members, the District 9 Council member, Park and Recreation staff, the Mayor’s Office, the SDUSD Chief Facilities and Planning Officer and state officials. As SDUSD continued to plan the park, residents made a point to attend additional meetings.

• A critical point for funding the park came when Georgette Gomez ran for the District 9 City Council seat. She met several times with CACC and Mesa Colony residents. The number one request was building the Joint Use Park. Gomez made a commitment to this project. Council President Gomez secured funding and future upkeep from the city and SDUSD matched the funding from school bonds.

• Residents were also instrumental in planning the design of the park. Residents wanted a park that was family friendly and would bring the community and school together.

• At the ground breaking, Council President Gomez paid homage to resident Troy Murphree who worked tirelessly by communicating with the Council office and SDUSD. Ms. Murphree provided critical input in the design which would include plenty of trees in the landscaping (College area is considered a hot zone by the city), grass rather than turf, a truck for walking, and equipment for children and adults. She also shared the need for an entrance and exit on Saranac Street and exit on Mohawk Street. The later to ensure safety.

This story is a testament to the power that a few residents can have to improve a community. It also is a shining example of a neighborhood, city officials and a school district working together. The Tubman Charter School Joint Use Park is a “jewel” to the community.

—Christina L. Boyd.
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SDSU alumni make Forbes 30 Under 30 list

The Alcove holiday party opening

New event center has a lot to offer

The Alcove Wine Beer & Eatery will celebrate its grand opening with holiday spirit when it hosts its Christma

Make the Right Choice Senior Living

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Holiday Worship Guide 2019

Christmas Eve Service

Tues., Dec. 24 @ 5 & 7 p.m.

Cathedral Church of All Saints (0-3 yrs) Available @ 5 p.m.

College Avenue United Methodist Church (ZIP) Launchpad, or the Zahn Innovation

The Café X coffee shop operates year-round Monday through Saturday from 6 a.m.-9 p.m. It offers a variety of coffees, tea bags, pastries, and fresh bakery items.

The M.L. Legacy Center is a new business, the concept for the building has been in the works for over two years. In the event space, and Twynot Beauty Lounge, a mini fashion show sponsored by Twynot Beauty Lounge, and refreshments from Café X — all tenants who operate businesses in the event center building.

Although the M.L. Legacy Center is a new business, the concept for the building has been in the works for over two years. In the event space, and Twynot Beauty Lounge, a mini fashion show sponsored by Twynot Beauty Lounge, and refreshments from Café X — all tenants who operate businesses in the event center building.

The idea was that the event venue will not be used every day, so why not just bring in some people who can utilize it every day without having to pay the storefront price,” Williams said. “As a business owner already, we realized that there are not a lot of commercial properties that are affordable rates for people to set up businesses. There are so many people that have businesses but can’t really find a location because its either too much or they couldn’t afford it.” In addition to providing affordable spaces for Twynot, Yoga Nest and Café X, M.L. Legacy Center also opens its doors to local cottage industry startups during its Business Market Saturdays events.

“We do it the third Saturday of every month, allow different businesses to come in and be able to showcase their items — kind of like a farmers market but not a farmers market, just a place for businesses to come in.” The free and open to the public grand opening party for M.L. Legacy Center will be held noon-3 p.m. at 7220 El Cajon Blvd. For more information, visit millegac
center.org.

—Reach editor Jeff Clemenson at jeff@sdnews.com.

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—Reach editor Jeff Clemenson at jeff@sdnews.com.
Patrick Henry High School news

By ELIZABETH GILLINGHAM

SIGNING DAY
Olivia Tracey, Max Jones, Marano Medina, allic, and Lauren Nett are all recognized and awarded athletic scholarships to their respective colleges. Each student signed a letter of intent to study and play in a sport. Olivia signed to go to Loyola Maryland to play Division 1 tennis. Max is going to University of San Francisco to play Division 3 baseball as a pitcher. Mateo is a baseball center fielder on his way to the San Francisco State University and Lauren is playing at Boston University as a softball utility player.

We are proud to have these students recognized by their coaches and future universities and wish them well next year!

PHOTOGRAPHY STUDENTS IN THE COMMUNITY

Photography students Tessa Gervase (Class of 2021) and Marlenca Bunch (Class of 2022) were selected to be photogarus at the Blue Tech Gala during Blue Tech Week. This local convention was devoted to exciting businesses with renewable and sustainable resources. It was held at the Sheraton Bay Tower Hotel and Marina on the Coronado Island in San Diego.

Photography teacher, Mr. Thom Hunt, attended the conference and went to see them share their talents with others in this professional setting.

In addition, Malia Daft (Class of 2021) had her photo selected to be used for the cover of the hol-iday cat for San Diego Unified School District Superintendent Cindy Marten. It is the second year in a row that a Patrick Henry photography student has been honored to be featured on the annual gift cards given out by Mrs. Marten.

PHHS MARCHING BAND ROCKS
Last month, PHHS Spirit of 76 Marching Band was seen all around San Diego County perform- ing and showing off their talents both on the football field for our fans and on the streets competing against other bands.

The Marching Patriots performed a near-sweep at the Mira Mesa Field Tournament and Band Review, winning firstplace awards in our division in Field Show for both Band and Color Guard and a second-place finish for our percussion team. We also took first place in our division for Parade Review. This is an exciting conclusion to our field tournament season.

The band also participated in the annual Veterans Day Parade for the community and participated in the Arcadia Festival of Bands that took place on Saturday, Nov. 23, where they marched in a Parade Review.

—Elizabeth Gillingham is prin-cipal of Patrick Henry High School.

Patrick Henry High School news

St. Katharine Drexel Academy news

By KELLY DODGE

These winter months are the beginning of our enrollment season at St. Katharine Drexel Academy.

On Sunday, Jan. 26, we are hosting an open house to kick off Catholic Schools Week! All are welcome! This same step by the SKDA campus to learn more about our school and enroll our child. The open house will be from 9 a.m. to noon. Please join us and learn more about our school and support us in our mission to provide affordable and accessible Catholic education for all students.

If you would like to schedule a tour, please reach out through the main office at 619-582-3862 or email mainoffice@sk-da.org.

2019 ANNUAL GALA
On Saturday, Feb. 22, we are holding our annual fundraising gala at Kitchens for Good at the Jacobs Center. The event runs from 6 to 11 p.m. and includes a plated dinner, silent auction, live auction and dancing. The theme is “Roaring ’20s and Beyond.”

Tickets are $100 per seat and proceeds go directly toward our school programs. Please consid-er attending and supporting our school! St. Katharine Drexel Academy is a proud partner of the IDEAL Institute at Loyola Marymount University. During the next few years, Drexel teachers are training to earn schoolwide certifi-cation as a Blended Learning Next Generation Science & Technology Catholic School. At Drexel, NGSS (Next Generation Science Standards) form the foundation of our project-based, integrated curriculum. With the assistance of online resources, teachers personalize instruction and assessment to meet each student’s learning needs in a sta-tion rotation, blended learning environment.

—Kelly Bonds is principal of St. Katharine Drexel Academy. Follow @drexel or on Facebook at St. Katharine Drexel Academy.

Tubman girls volleyball wins MSPAL championship

By RYAN WOODARD

Tubman's 2019 volleyball team had a very successful sea-son. This year, we were placed in A Division with the San Diego YMCA's MASPAL League. The league had over 20 competitive schools around San Diego County. This included both char-ter and traditional middle schools.

The girls' volleyball team prac-ticed on average four to five days a week after school and even at- tended the club volleyball winter ball game as a team. With hard work and dedication, our girls' volleyball team were able to go undefeated this season winning nine consecutive matches.

In the playoffs, Tubman was able to win the semifinal match against Albert Einstein Academy. Led by seventh-grades Lyric McKinney and Miah Cardenas, the Lady Tigers overpowered Albert

EBHC STEMM Foundation news

By LV WILSON

On Nov. 8, the EBHC STEMM Foundation sponsored 23 Cabrillo College students, including Patrick Henry High School and their teacher Craig Olson as partici-pants in the annual SDSU STEM Exploration Day. This annual event includes students from a number of high schools through-out San Diego County. The event was hosted at SDSU’s Pathways Office and the College of Extended Education, which promotes college access and completion for underserved students through excellence and innovation in education. This was an opportunity for SDSU to demonstrate the opportunities available to students in the field of science and engineering.

Last year, the EBHC STEMM Foundation was asked by Dr. Cynthia Park, the executive di-rector of the Pre-College Institute, to sponsor students from Patrick Henry, and we were asked to par-ticipate again this year. Working again with Olson, an outstand-ing staff member of the engineer-ing department at Patrick Henry, an orientation meeting was held in his classroom for interested students. All who attended the orientation participated in this year’s STEM Exploration Day at SDSU. The students attended three sessions.

In the first session, employees from Illumina, the San Diego firm specializing in sequencing and array-based solutions for analysis of genetic variation and function in fields ranging from cancer research to agriculture, gave an overview of the compa-ny’s applications and its impact it is having on genetic research. Our students were also able to go through the process of extracting their own DNA and preparing it for processing.

In the second session, Dr. Eric Frost met our students in the SDSU Visualization Lab and gave a visual example of using near-re-al-time data for challenges such as predicting weather, paths of wild-land fires, hurricanes and pollu-tion to assist people in making decisions much faster and more efficiently than ever before. He also raised the deep privacy con-cerns of popular applications like TikTok and facial recognition and artificial intelligence.

The third presentation was in mechanical engineering with professor George Youssef. The students participated in several interactive experiments, which included dropping rubber balls in-to liquid nitrogen and measuring how far they would bounce when thoroughly frozen.

“The students had a great day,” Olson said. “They really enjoyed the STEM-related activities. I am looking forward to participating in next year’s event with a new group of motivated students.”

—Jay Wilson is a board mem-ber of the Henry Cluster STEMM Foundation.

Tubman girls volleyball team

By JAY WILSON

Tubman’s girls volleyball team was an exciting conclusion to our Marching Patriots per-formance rotation, blended learning as a Blended Learning Catholic School. At Drexel, teachers personalize instruction and meet each student’s learning needs in a sta-tion rotation, blended learning environment. They were part of the Henry Cluster STEMM Foundation.

By RYAN WOODARD

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There’s more to Dirty Birds than chicken wings. Although a steady flap has persisted for its sauced appendages ever since the locally owned eatery debuted in Pacific Beach 11 years ago.

At the College Area location alone, which opened in 2013, the kitchen cranks out nearly 12,000 wings per week, according to regional director of training, Michael Feldman. The company’s other outposts in Liberty Station, Ocean Beach and Pacific Beach do almost as well.

With more than two dozen flat-screens, a full bar, and a lengthy menu that includes 40 flavors of wings, plus burgers, tacos and other booze-friendly grub — the El Cajon Boulevard location is a magnet for SDSU students and neighborhood residents alike.

Dirty Birds’ wings come out remarkably fast. That’s because they are pre-baked and then flash-fried to order. They’re adequately crispy, although not like those in my native Buffalo, New York, where they often cast audible crunches when biting into them. But that requires a robust sieve in the deep fryer for about 15 minutes — and patrons who are willing to wait. Here, if you want them extra-crispy, just ask.

Dropping in for lunch as a two-some at this rooomy location, we ordered 15 wings. (They’re sold in multiples of five, 10 and 20). We had them equally divided into three flavors.

The “dirty ranch” is basically Buffalo sauce toned down by ranch dressing. It’s perfect for those whose palates and sinuses feel assaulted by the classic cayenne-vinegar base of Buffalo hot sauce. We found it too safe.

My companion was drawn to the “Bangkawk BBQ” wings, which offered a deep chili flavor and semi-spicy edge fueled likely by some type of mustard. A glass of cold Coronado Orange Avenue Wit from the taps proved an ideal match.

But it was the apple-bourbon-chipotle wings that stole my heart. The sauce tasted concurrently tangy, sweet and spicy — less viscous on the tongue and highly lickable off the fingers.

In visits to the other locations, I’ve gravitated mostly to traditional Buffalo wings, although I’ve sometimes added into the mix five wings coated in diablo sauce. Vibrant red in color, it’s made with three types of chilies and tastes a notch above “medium” in heat level.

It wasn’t until this recent visit that I supplemented my wing intake with a couple of other noshers. We shared the honey-mustard chicken salad, which offered a substantial amount of romaine lettuce and modest measures of smokey bacon crumbles, shredded cheese, and grilled chicken strips. The house-made dressing gave equal play to the honey and the mustard.

The most curious item on the menu (and a top seller) is the “fried cheese cheeseburger.” Feldman said that co-owner Adam Jacoby put it on the menu as a nod to his New England roots.

Invented supposedly in Connecticut, it involves a griddled hamburger christened with a floppy square of fried cheese — in this case American cheese that is past melted on the top. Most of it protrudes from the bun in all directions. It’s fun, kooky and quite tasty.

Other menu items include burgers in classic, turkey and Beyond Meat form. There’s also assorted sliders, sandwiches and tacos, and a few desserts such as the “dirty delight” involving a house-made brownie capped with ice cream, fudge sauce and crushed Reese’s Peanut Butter Cups.

Happy hour rings in some deep price breaks. Held from 3 to 6 p.m. on weekdays (all day on Tuesdays), wings and select pitchers of beer are half-price. Or for those who can polish off a chicken coop’s worth of wings, Mondays herald unlimited wing consumption for $15.99 per person.

The success of Dirty Birds has allowed the ownership to give back to the community on several fronts, including sending 75 young cancer patients from Rady Children’s Hospital to Disneyland each year. In addition, proceeds from certain highlighted menu items go to organizations such as The Big Josh Foundation (bigjoshfoundation.org) and Somblab (facebook.com/somblab/).

—Frank Sabatini Jr. is the author of Secret San Diego (ECW Press) and began his local writing career more than two decades ago as a staffer for the former San Diego Tribune. You can reach him at fsabatini@san.rr.com.
New book recounts the birth of skate in San Diego

LUCIA VITI | College Times Courier

Did you ever wonder what catalyzed skateboard-ing’s popularity into the stratosphere? Does history of a “sport,” born and bred along the coast of Southern California, coincide with your love of surfing? Are you “stoked” to know that skateboarding will be featured in Tokyo for the 2020 Summer Olympics?

If you’ve answered yes to any of the above questions, John O’Malley’s new book, “Urethane Revolution: The Birth of Skate-San Diego 1975,” is a must read. The always interesting, sometimes shocking, off-color page-turner dialogues the history of skateboarding from one of its founding fathers, John O’Malley.

Dubbed the “greatest story never told in extreme sports history,” O’Malley retraces his steps as a member of the original Skunkworks crew to creating his own skate parks. Photographs — sure to make everyone reminisce about the good old days — accompany stories from the underground.

“Around 1973, a guy named Frank Nasworthy discovered these urethane training wheels that were used on beginners’ roller skates,” he notes. “They were gripper than the unforgiving composite clay wheels of the day. Frank bolted them on his skateboard and bingo! Suction-cup traction like no one had ever imagined possible. It’s in that instant that the skateboard went from toy with feet of clay to a wall-climbing UFO, screaming at warp speed to the 2020 Olympics.”

According to O’Malley, a perfect storm of “ill winds” that began with a historic drought fueled the Revolution. “The drought uncovered insanely fun new skating forms like the reservoirs and drainage ditches while recession-vacant homes had their swimming pools drained and skated,” he pens.

“Around 1973” was also the time when Frank Nasworthy discovered these urethane training wheels. “Our eyes spoked an urban landscape lit up with a million reservoirs and drain- age ditches while recession-vacant homes had their swimming pools drained and skated,” he writes. O’Malley. “Adrenaline rushing up your road, serotonin dripping down the drive. And the scales fell from our eyes: Any paved sur- face could be ridden. And the call went out: The rift has opened, God is great, spread the word.”

And if you need a place to play, check out Robb Field — San Diego’s first skateboard park constructed and operat-ed by the city at 2525 Bacon St. Designed with input from the legendary Tony Hawk, the 40,000-square-foot concrete park is suitable for all ages and skill levels. Sidling the San Diego River Bike Path at the onset of Ocean Beach, the “street course” features a combination bowl, handrails, ledges, blocks, a pump bump and an octagon volcano.

—Lucia Viti can be reached at luciaviti@roadrunner.com.
**Ongoing Events**

**A Christmas Past**
Through Dec. 15
Lamplighters Community Theatre presents “A Christmas Past,” featuring two one-act plays. “The Long Christmas Dinner” showcases the lives of the Bayard family over nine generations. In this funny and poignant one-act play, characters age from children to seniors in one continuous ribbon. The second play, “A Child’s Christmas in Wales,” is a dramatization of Dylan Thomas’ wonderful, nostalgic look at memories of his childhood. Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. at Lamplighters Community Theatre, 5915 Sevention Drive. Cost is $23 adult, $20 for seniors, students and active military. Tickets and information available at lamplighterslamaesa.com.

**Featured Events**

**Editor’s Pick**

**Sudoku**

**Holiday in the Village**
Through Dec. 14
The La Mesa Village Association’s Holiday in the Village returns to downtown La Mesa. This free, family-friendly event will feature a wonderful slate of holiday music and dance, food, children’s activities, shopping and more. Friday, Dec. 13, 4-9 p.m. and Saturday, Dec. 14, 10 a.m.-9 p.m. in the downtown village. Visit lamesavillageassociation.org for more information.

**Christmas City Tree Lighting**
Through Dec. 22
The inaugural Christmas city tree-lighting ceremony at Legacy Intercontinental is a family-friendly evening that will include the lighting of a 52-foot, LED-lit tree that will ‘dance’ to the nearby 30-head, 40-foot fountain show. The evening will include food from the center’s new cafe, hot cocoa, holiday shopping, scavenger hunts, performances from local choirs and pictures with Santa Claus. Legacy Intercontinental Center has partnered with Operation Homefront, designed to raise in-kind gifts to assist with military families who need it the most. This will be the first of four Christmas City nights including Dec. 15 and 22 at 6 p.m. at Legacy Intercontinental Center, 875 Park Boulevard. Free admission.

**Editor’s Pick**

**The Coming Storm**
San Diego State University’s Wind Symphony and Symphony Orchestra will come together for “The Coming Storm,” a concert focusing on life on Earth and trouble that awaits the human race if we continue to treat our planet poorly. The concert will consist of pieces such as “Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage” composed by Felix Mendelssohn, “The Automatic Earth” composed by Ste- ven Bryant, and the third movement of Karel Husa’s “Apocalypse of This Earth.” The concert will also feature the West Coast premiere of “Feast During a Plague” composed by Sofia Gubaidulina. 3 p.m. in the PHAME Performing Arts Center at Patrick Henry High School, 6702 Waverlymore Drive, San Diego. Tickets $10 – $20 at music.sdsu.edu.

**Emerging Filmmakers Showcase**
Through Dec. 18
This showcase of outstanding short film and documentary films is the culmination of work completed each semester. In a competitive selection process, a faculty jury chooses the best six to eight hours of student film submissions. No film is longer than 11 minutes, and all films are created by students of SDSU’s acclaimed Television, Film, and New Media program. Don Powell Theatre, 5500 Campanile Drive. Tickets $10 at music.sdsu.edu.

**Handel’s ‘Messiah’**
Bach Collegium San Diego’s performance of “Messiah,” delivered with their mind-bending music and cutting-edge performance. ‘Messiah’ is a dramatization of Dylan Thomas’ wonderful, nostalgic look at memories of his childhood. Friday, Dec. 20

**Saturday, Dec. 21**

**Saturday, Dec. 22**

**Saturday, Dec. 23**

**Saturday, Jan. 4**

**Saturday, Jan. 18**

**Saturday, Jan. 25**

**Getting and Making Events**

**Lighting**
San Diego. Tickets $10 at music.sdsu.edu.

**Sundays Cars & Coffee**
Held on the first Sunday of the month at Chase mansion parking lot, 4627 College Ave., at 10:30 a.m. Bring your favorite car or pet or friend. Socialize with us as we kick tires and spin burnouts. Contact Newell Booth at 619-320-8422.

**Tuesdays Lego Play Lab**
For children kindergarten through fifth grade. 3:30 p.m. at College-Rolando Library, 6600 Montezuma Road.

**Thursdays Comedy Night**
Free comedy show every Thursday, 8-10 p.m. at the Go Lounge, 7123 El Cajon Blvd.

**Fridays Movie @ Your Library**
Free movie at the College-Rolando Library, 6600 Montezuma Road. 4 p.m.

**Satudays Arts & Crafts for Kids**
Fun family-friendly crafts for children of all ages. Noon at the College-Rolando Library, 6600 Montezuma Road.

**Community Meetings**

**College Area Community Council and Planning Board** – Second Wednesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at Faith Presbyterian Church, 5075 Campanile Drive.
El Cerrito Community Council – Third Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. at Blessed Sacrament Catholic Parish Hall, corner of El Cajon Boulevard and El Cerrito Drive.
Eastern Area Planning Commission – Second Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 14, 2020, International, 5450 Lea St.
Mesa College Community Group – Third Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. in the Udomestic Workers Hall, 4833 Seminole Drive.

—Calendar compiled by editor Jeff Clemenson. To submit events for review and possible inclusion in the College Times Courier calendar, email jeff@courier.sdnews.com.
Dealing with property drainage issues

By SARAH WARD

With all this rain, it is probably a good idea to think about your property drainage issues. Over the last few years, I have been involved in many property inspections both on my own and by following around professional inspectors. One of the most common property damage issues involves water intrusion.

I represented a buyer in March on a property with a planter connected to the exterior wall outside the kitchen window. The planter was filled with wood bark but water had collected in the bottom of the planter and caused water damage to the exterior stucco and into the drywall behind the kitchen cabinets. This created a black mold problem and the seller had to offer a buyer-credit for over $20,000 for repairs.

In another instance, I represented a buyer on a home in the College Area where, during a heavy rain, water would actually drain toward the house and seep underneath the house. I use only top-rated property inspectors who are veterans in the industry and can identify these sorts of problems. The inspector took note of a possible slant toward the house and then (with the seller’s permission) used a garden hose to flow water draining towards the house and underneath the house. I then ordered a foundation expert to inspect the posts and piers under the structure. The inspector found several posts that were rotten. The seller then had to offer the buyer a substantial cash-credit to complete the sale. I have additional stories involving water problems as well.

The point I wanted to make this month is that the next time we have a heavy rain in San Diego, I would recommend putting on some boots and grabbing an umbrella to conduct a property inspection of your own. Walk slowly around the property during the heavy downpour noting the drainage patterns. You may find some limited spots where a French drain could be installed or some concrete added to assist the water run off away from your property.

Also look at your flashing such as where the chimney meets the roof. I was involved with a property where the chimney flashing was not secure and rainwater would leak into the house causing mold issues. Also note water runoff from neighbors. Your adjacent property owners have a duty to divert water into the city drainage systems and away from your property. Sometimes rainwater will run from one property down a slight hill to another property.

You may have a legal right to force an adjacent property owner to correct their drainage problems by diverting rainwater away from your property. Chances are that if your own property in College Area, your property is worth between $500,000 and $1 million. You need to protect the value of your asset by regularly inspecting it and maintaining it.

COLLEGE AREA MARKET UPDATE

The local economy remains strong with the demand for housing steady. Although College Area’s November was slightly slower than one year ago, the median sale price for November 2019 was a whopping 16% higher than November 2018. New listings for single-family homes were down 45% from 53 listings in November 2018 to just 29 for this year and the inventory of homes for sale dropped by 39% to just 42 homes for sale in the entire 92115 ZIP code at the end of November! If you are thinking of selling, it may be a good time as prices are significantly up and inventory is down. If you are thinking of buying or selling residential property in San Diego County, give me a call to set up a no pressure consultation on your options and my recommendations.

——Sarah Ward is a Realtor with College Area Realty. Reach her at sarahward021@gmail or at 858-431-6041.

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