San Diego History Center honors city's Black heroes

By KAREN SCANLON

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By JEFF CLEMETSON

Fighting COVID in El Centro, America's hardest hit city

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In 1913, Henrietta Goodwin became the first African American graduate from the State Normal School.
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of San Diego (now San Diego State University). Goodwin was not listed on the school’s roster of 15 graduates, which is likely why San Diego Union excluded her in its announcement. Let it be known, however, that both an attendance ledger and registration record indicated that this young Black woman entered the school in 1908 and graduated in January 1913.

The Colored Voters Political Club was the first Black bureaucratic organization in San Diego. By the early 1900s, the city’s Black population swelled dramatically, though still less than one percent of the populace. With this increase, they formed groups to express themselves in ways not permitted in a predominately White setting.

In 1887, Solomon and Cordelia Johnson were instrumental in the formation of the Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church. The congregation met in the Johnson home at F and Union streets until funds were raised to secure a church site at 3647 Front St.

Remembering San Diego’s 1905 naval disaster brings attention to John Henry Turpin, one of only a few Black sailors in the U.S. Navy at the time. Born in New Jersey in 1876, Turpin enlisted in the Navy in 1896. In 1917 he was promoted to the Navy’s first African American chief petty officers.

During Turpin’s 29-year naval career, he survived two shipboard explosions: the first in 1898 on the battleship USS Maine, Havana Harbor, Cuba. The explosion, which contributed to the outbreak of the Spanish-American War, killed 260 seamen. A second explosion, took place in San Diego when two boilers let loose aboard the Navy gunboat, USS Remington, in July 1905. One officer and 65 sailors died.

In both incidents, a stunned Turpin rescued a number of injured and dying shipmates, swimming them to shore one by one. Eleven of Bennington’s crew, for similar actions taken, received the Navy’s highest service award, the Medal of Honor. Turpin did not.

Our hero transferred to the Fleet Reserve in 1919, also qualified as a master diver, and retired from the U.S. Navy in 1945 to Bremerton, Wash.

Jamaican born Turpin fought for a country that never fully recognized him, until now. (President John Kennedy approved his Medal of Honor nomination for posthumous award in the 1960s, but it went to the government’s back burner. Current efforts are underway.)

In September 2020, the U.S. House of Representatives unanimously passed legislation to rename Washington’s Bremerton Post Office to honor John Henry Turpin.

Let’s all salute San Diego’s Black history, citizens that lived in, and stepped out of, the shadow of what was rightfully theirs.

—Karen Scamlon is a local writer of history and co-author of “Lighthouses of San Diego.”

News briefs

Speakers included Newsom, County Board of Supervisors Chair Nathan Fletcher; Mayor Todd Gloria; Wilma J. Wooten, M.D., M.P.H.; County public health officer; and Erik Greupner, CEO, San Diego Padres.

SUPERS CALL FOR $30 MILLION FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

Supervisors Terra Lawson-Remer and Joel Anderson held a press conference on Feb. 8 calling for the County to be prepared to implement $30 million in support for small business stimulus relief as soon as federal or state stimulus dollars are received.

“While Supervisor Lawson-Remer and I have different political philosophies and represent vastly different districts, we share the common goal of helping the tens of thousands of our fellow residents that are hurting,” said Supervisor Anderson. “Business owners are struggling to keep their doors open and their employees working. While this $30 million stimulus won’t solve all the problems, this is another step towards a better future, and I am committed to working together for common solutions that lift everyone in our community.”

“Our message to San Diego County’s small businesses is clear: we hear you, we’re with you, and more help is on the way,” said Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer.

Joining Supervisors Lawson-Remer and Anderson were Joe Paraoso, owner of Brew Coffee Sport in La Mesa, as well as Fernando Hoyos, owner of Club Pilates in Poway. Both hard-working business owners outlined how COVID has...
**Water Authority exploring new aqueduct plan**

Addressing the San Diego region’s limited local water supplies with innovative ideas is something the San Diego County Water Authority has become known for. Using expertise gained from decades of successful planning and projects, the Water Authority is developing strategies to reduce the future cost of water that sustains the economy and quality of life across the county.

Those efforts are ramping up in early 2021, following a Water Authority Board decision to continue assessing the potential for a new aqueduct to transport San Diego’s low-cost, high-priority water supplies from the Colorado River to San Diego County. About 50 percent of the region’s current water supplies are from this independent source, and it is the region’s lowest base-cost supply.

The water conveyance project would only be implemented if it’s more cost-effective than the current system, which requires paying the Los Angeles-based Metropolitan Water District of Southern California to deliver San Diego County’s independent water supplies. A viable project would reduce the cost of water and increase supply reliability, improving affordability of clean, clear water for San Diego County residents. Plus, in the long-term, it would give San Diego ratepayers more control over costs.

The Water Authority is the long-term water planning agency for metropolitan San Diego County and the region’s wholesale water provider, serving 3.3 million people and a $245 billion economy in partnership with its 24 retail member agencies, which provide supplies to homes and businesses across the region.

The first phase of the Regional Conveyance System Study demonstrated the technical viability and economic competitiveness of two routes for an aqueduct to transport the Water Authority’s high-priority Colorado River water to the county.

The second phase focuses on a detailed economic analysis of the two water conveyance route alternatives and further exploring partnerships that could provide significant benefits to an array of stakeholders and potentially reduce the cost of project development. At the end of Phase B, the agency’s 36-member Board – representing all 24 member water agencies – will decide whether to continue with regional conveyance planning.

“These issues are complex and the decisions never easy, but the Board chose to keep all water supply and delivery options on the table in light of future uncertainties,” said Gary Croucher, chair of the Water Authority’s Board of Directors. “I look forward to learning from Phase B and working with the Board to decide when that study phase is done.”

Today, half of the San Diego region’s water supplies are from two landmark 2003 water conservation agreements known as the Colorado River Quantification Settlement Agreement. Conserved water from the QSA is transferred to San Diego County from Imperial Valley using a pipeline that is owned by MWD, which owns the only facilities available to transport Colorado River water to San Diego County. The cost of using MWD facilities to deliver San Diego’s QSA water has increased 30% over the past five years, so water leaders are looking to save costs on delivering this critical water supply.

The Water Authority’s agreement with MWD to deliver the water lasts until 2047, so the Water Authority is working to develop conveyance alternatives that manage future cost and risks. “While 2047 may seem distant, major water infrastructure projects take decades to develop, plan and build,” said Croucher. “By advancing to Phase B of the conveyance study, the Water Authority is taking prudent steps to ensure long-term water supply reliability for the region.”

Phase B will help address questions about mitigating short-term rate impacts of a project, the benefits of potential partnerships and funding opportunities, developing a finance plan and the requirements of existing agreements, as well as explore with MWD options for long-term water deliveries to the San Diego region using MWD facilities.

Water Authority staff will also begin the process of engaging more formally with stakeholders on potential mutually beneficial partnership projects identified in Phase A, including joint-use projects in the Imperial Valley, public-private partnerships, bi-national projects, renewable energy projects, regional operational storage projects, Salton Sea-related projects, and partnerships with tribes, federal and state governments, and member agencies. For more information, visit sdwca.org/colorado-river-supplies-management.

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they got parking lots full of tents with people in them and they’re just trying to find a way to help this community.”

The MAB program that EBW. Raby and his partner Jose Valdez filmed was started by Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR). Dr. Robert Kadlec and is carried out by IHS and the El Centro Regional Medical Center, a UCSD hospital. The team’s role was to inform the public about the program, help alleviate fears and fight misinformation about the new treatment.

IMPROVING COMMUNICATION OF COVID TREATMENTS

Women make 80% of health care decisions in the United States, according to Department of Labor statistics, so gaining the trust of women was critical in galvanizing support for the program.

“There is a lot of messaging out there that has made this virus and this pandemic even more tragic,” Dr. Edward said. “Using EBW to engage the women in this community and say ‘We have something that will help you, don’t be afraid to go get a test, don’t be afraid to go to the hospital, there are resources there that will help you,’ was an important part of this.”

Raby recalled one woman who tested positive for COVID-19. She was a general manager at electrical cooperative, who shared that one of her employees called in to say that she was not feeling well. Laura encouraged her to get tested.

“She also told her, because now she was aware of this, that she should ask her doctor if she meets the requirements for monoclonal antibody treatment. Two hours later she was getting the monoclonal agent, and that’s the power of sharing the story.”

Another success story was the El Centro fire chief, Cedric Cesena, who had severe symptoms from COVID.

“Within 48 hours after the monoclonal treatment, I was at 80% back to normal,” Cesena said. “My wife’s life was also saved by the infusion. She’s got bronchitis and developed a pneumonia, and without the infusion she probably would have died.”

But educating the public about MABs wasn’t the only issue facing the EBW team.

“Our roll in El Centro started with how we galvanize people around knowing about the antibodies,” said EBW founder and CEO Ingrid Vanderveldt. “It has morphed into something far greater than that. How do we simplify for the American public COVID’s five-step progression?”

“After that, things start to rapidly go downhill,” she said. “Stage four is you’re in the hospital, which is a healthier story. But death means a better outcome for the patient, which is a healthier story.”

Dr. Edward estimates that one ICU bed is freed up for every 10 patients treated with a MAB infusion. Pre-COVID, the El Centro Regional Medical Center had only 12 ICU beds, but has now expanded to over 60 in the hospital and even in outside tents.

THE FRONTLINES OF A PANDEMIC

As Raby, Valdez and Vanderveldt interviewed local community leaders, healthcare professionals and citizens who shared their stories about the successes of the infusion centers, their backdrop was often the COVID-positive tents where the filmmakers witnessed the around-the-clock battle healthcare workers were engaged in to save lives.

“It felt like we were in a war zone,” Raby said. “People weren’t shooting at us but there was the effect of the bodies that were lined up outside the hospital ward because they had nowhere to put the deceased. We had that view. And it was powerful. It was heartbreaking. It was tragic.”

Dr. Edwards described the situation in El Centro as “a fearful fact. That is the reality here.”

“We’ve been on the New York Times list of bad places with very high concentrations of COVID positives. We’ve been ranked number 1 for 10 weeks, although we’re down to three or four right now, but that’s one of those lists you don’t want to be on,” he said.

After the team finished filming in El Centro, they realized they had documented more than just a government program.

“The emotions of what I experienced over the last six days hit me and I was just trying to pour it down my face,” he said. “Because what we were witnessing wasn’t just something about COVID-19, it was about a community. It was about people. It was about a history of the land.

“This was once a desert and because of water it has turned into the fruit and vegetable basket of our country in the winter months. Along with that comes people who’ve been affected by this pandemic more than most places in the county. I think their positive rate was at 37%.

The high rate of infection comes from a variety of factors in El Centro, where a sizable portion of the population are migrant workers exposed to environmental pollutants like pesticides and many families live in multi-generational households with little to no ability to quarantine at home.

“These people have been affected for a long period of time and their health is at risk. COVID-19 picks on people who have those kinds of health issues and it doesn’t allow them up,” Raby said. “And now, hopefully, the people that were there — IHS, certainly EBW, as well as the Department of Defense that is doing this Operation Warp Speed — they will see this community needs the help. And if we can help this community, we can take this program and help the entire country.”

A STRATEGY EMERGES

As the COVID vaccine becomes more available, the EBW team, as well as the doctors at El Centro Medical Center, envision a new tactic to fight the surge by pairing vaccination stations with infusion centers.

“When EBW first visited here, I encouraged that we marry up the infusion and vaccination together because it helps us at the end of the day,” Dr. Edward said. “We’ve been talking about getting more vaccinations down here, it hasn’t happened yet, we’re still waiting for distribution. But avoiding hospitalization, avoiding an ICU bed means a better outcome for the patient, which is a healthier society.”

EBW founder and CEO Ingrid Vanderveldt (left) on the ground in El Centro, meeting with other women leaders (Courtesy photo)
The EBW team and Dr. Edward see the one-two punch of infusion and vaccination center as a chance to educate the public about the availability, safety, and efficacy of each treatment no matter where a person is in the five-step process. If a person comes into the tent to get a vaccine, he/she can be educated on the MAB treatment and then go and encourage family and friends to get the treatment if they get a positive test. If someone comes in for a treatment, he/she will find out about the availability of vaccines. Dr. Edward thinks that for every 100,000 vaccines administered at an infusion center, they will find 500 at-risk people with COVID to get treated with anti- bodies. According to San Diego’s El Centro Medical Center 50 hospital beds in the process.

VanderVelt also points out that right now it seems unlikely that the surge will be stopped by vaccines alone.

“Rolling out vaccine distribution and antibody distribution at the same time is a problem because there are not enough vaccines out there,” she said. “Plus, there is still too much doubt about vaccine safety and so the adoption rate may not be enough to reach herd immunity.”

This is not a plan that will take months to see results. According to Dr. Edward, if the community gets vaccines and their distribution is paired with infusion centers, El Centro could start to turn around in three days.

In the meantime, spreading the word about the MAB infusion treatment is underway. EBW has launched a communications campaign using the Rady’s film images on billboards, flyers to hang on doors in English and Spanish, social media and short-form pod-cast, type interviews to educate community members about the MAB program.

EBW and Rady hope the next phase is to tell this story in a documentary form, possibly a series. That documentary or series, the one-two punch, is the one-two punch.

News briefs

Adversely affected their business and expressed their support for the Supervisors’ efforts to have additional stimulus grants available for San Diego’s qualified businesses.

“We’re thankful that there are people in our local government that are doing their best to help us, and we are truly appreciative,” said Mr. Paraiso. “Any help we can get would definitely allow us to stay in business.”

The bipartisan effort to further support the region’s economy is dependent upon Congress passing a federal stimulus package, as well as the Board approving a joint Board Letter being offered by Supervisors Lawson-Reemer and Anderson tomorrow to prepare for the federal support.

STATE ISSUES $45.5 MILLION IN RENT RELIEF FOR SAN DIEGO

On the heels of announcing federal rental assistance in late January, Mayor Todd Gloria announced on Feb. 5 that the state will provide more than $45.5 million in assistance for San Diego residents unable to pay rent due to the impacts of COVID-19.

Together, this week’s funding and the direct federal funding announced previously amounts to nearly $87.9 million in relief for families and individuals who’ve been devastated financially by the pandemic. This is on top of $13.75 million in emergency rental assistance that helped 3,717 San Diego households in 2020.

“Gov. Gavin Newsom, Senate President pro Tem Toni Atkins, Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon and the California Legislature really came through for tenants and landlords in our city and across California who have had an incredibly hard time throughout this crisis,” Gloria said. “I will work to get these rent relief dollars out for the benefit of our renters as soon as possible.”

The funding comes as part of Senate Bill 91, which distributes to local agencies funds the state received from the federal government. SB 91 also established a statewide moratorium on evictions of residential tenants unable to pay rent due to the effects of COVID-19. The moratorium is now effective through June 30. On Oct. 26, the San Diego City Council approved Gloria’s proposal to extend pandemic-related ban on both residential and commercial evictions. The state’s law supersedes San Diego’s residential eviction moratorium.

Because San Diego’s moratorium on residential evictions will last until June 30 after the City’s
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And trust me, while newspapers pay all those people, none of the employees are getting rich. If community newspapers were to go out of business, the first losers will be those who make a liv- ing there. But the biggest losers will be our communities, which will lose something impossible to replace.

Keep supporting things that matter. Local businesses and service which depend on the door-to-door distribution this and other community newspa- per support.

Fighting to save San Diego’s utility undergrounding program

By MARA W. ELLETT

For years, the City of San Diego has been working to remove tangles of unsight- ly overhead power lines, which was a goal of beautifying neighborhoods, increasing walkability, and protecting the public from exposed infrastructure.

These widely-supported efforts were nearly derailed by a recent lawsuit. That’s why I’ve dispatched my office’s highly skilled litiga- tors to defend San Diego’s undergrounding program and ensure uninterrupted continuation.

The party bringing the lawsuit is seeking a multi- million dollar payout from a fund specifically set aside to pay for undergrounding overhead lines.

SDG&E ratepayers are likely unaware of the drama playing out in court. Yet it’s at times like this that I am most proud of the quiet work our office does to protect San Diego taxpayers.

Most neighborhoods in San Diego were built when overhead power lines ran along the streets, often web- bing through the trees. It wasn’t aesthetically pleas- ing, and the frequent pow- er outages made it hard for those using wheelchairs or pushing strollers.

Overhead power lines al- so create a significant public safety hazard, especially in wildfire-prone areas of the city, where a power line de- tached by high winds can quickly lead to an out-of- control fire, resulting in ter- rible loss of lives and prop- erty. Even without the threat of fire, a downed power line can be extraordinarily dan- gerous to motorists and pedestrians.

For decades, we all have been paying a surcharge on our SDG&E bills to have these power lines moved underground. But in 2015 a lawsuit was filed saying this charge was actually an illegal tax and needed to be approved by voters. That isn’t what the law says, however. Our attorneys proved to a San Diego Superior Court Judge that years of underground- ing in San Diego neighbor- hoods was done properly and legally and there was no reason to shut down the fund or give any of its money to the lawyers who filed the lawsuit.

An appeal was filed and in November the Fourth District Court of Appeal affirmed the Superior Court’s ruling, and the City once again prevailed. The complainers have now petitioned the California Supreme Court to review their case.

Our goal is to ensure the vital work to underground overhead utility lines throughout San Diego can continue, rather than spend- ing years bogged down in costly litigation.

The City Attorney’s Office stands ready to protect our City from those who aim to stop progress in its tracks. I consider it our duty to defend taxpayers against baseless lawsuits that waste resour- ces and interfere with important projects that enhance our quality of life.

The ability to go outside to take in the lovely views of our ocean, sunsets, moun- tains, and canyons has nev- er been more important as we find ways to mitigate the challenges of this lengthy global pandemic. And now, more San Diegans can look forward to a future without the blind of power poles and overhead utility lines in the picture.

To learn about the utility undergrounding pro- cess in your neighbor- hood, visit sandiego.gov/ undergrounding.

—Mara W. Elliot is the San Diego City Attorney.

It’s time to recall Gov. Newsom

By LAURA CRIVELLO

As we approach the one-year anniver- sar y of a warning to Newsom, the public is finally seeing some light at the end of the tunnel. Seniors and front line workers are being vaccinated and hopefully, very soon, anyone that would like to receive the vaccine will be able to get one.

March will see the end of the 10-month long effort to collect signatures for the recall of Gov. Gavin Newsom. As of this writing, we have 1.4 million verified signatures of the 1.5 million needed for a special election. We never could have imagined the response from Democrats and Republicans alike. Newsom has proven to be a horrible leader of our state.

Here are the top eight most egregious of- fenses of Newsom’s reign:

The self-imposed energy crisis: California has abundant energy. Yet California cannot reliably provide ener- gy to the tens of millions of Californians and their businesses. Power outages are a regular part of life and its biggest energy provider, PG&E has warned shut downs will be a fact of life for a decade. It is so bad that in 2019 the tech industry sent a warning to Newsom that they will join the many other businesses leaving the state.

Newsom is nowhere with an effort to have industry leaders from the country get together to solve this problem that has caused so many jobs. Instead, Newsom blames others.

Wildfire danger: One of the reason for power outages is the wildfire danger caused by decades of a lack of force management and bowing to envi- ronmentalists by Newsom and others. Finally, after deaths and mass destruc- tion, California is putting serious mon- ey toward clearing brush. A serious governor would have acted before the tragedies.
At the February meeting of the La Mesa Foothills Democratic Club, members were fortunate to have a chance to hear from a sitting U.S. representative, Sara Jacobs (CA-50), and from an internationally renowned epidemiologist, Rebecca Fielding-Miller, Ph.D.

Rep. Jacobs described for members her harrowing experience when Trump tantrums, while superstitious and organized seditionists storm the United States Capitol building. She and other representatives were trapped behind their seats, and were instructed to don their evacuation hoods, to prevent against airborne chemical toxins. Despite experiencing first-hand a terrifying as-sault on our government and our democracy, Jacobs acknowledged that some Republican representatives, such as Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, did not—due to traffic in the lie, conspiracy theories and fascist rhetoric that fomented and precipitated the insurrection. In addition to voting to strip her of her committee assignments, Jacobs supports an investigation by the evenly-bi partisan Ethics Committee, so that Americans can learn which members of Congress participate in the preparation and execution of the violent attack on our government.

That need for accountability notwithstanding, Jacobs continues to look for opportunities to accomplish legislative achievement. In fact, she singled out Republican representatives Peter Meijer (MI-3) and Blake Moore (UT-1) as examples of the group of thoughtful leaders, who act in good faith on behalf of their constituents, and who are willing to challenge the dangerous, anti-democratic destructionist elements in the Republican caucus.

But with regard to the COVID relief bill, Jacobs made it clear that Democrats cannot and will not wait for Republicans to agree to sensible legislative action; the needs of the American people at this time are too great and too urgent to delay simply to appease members of the minority party.

The main thing the Democrats can do with the mandate they have received from the American people, said Jacobs, is to pass legislation that makes a difference in the lives of Americans, so many of whom are suffering from the nonfeasance and malfeasance of the previous presidential administration, and of the previous congress. Every American will need a COVID vaccine, and millions of individuals, especially on smaller businesses, desperately need economic relief. These are the priorities that the Congresswoman maintains will animate the Democrats’ first meeting in the next congress.

On the topic of COVID vaccinations, Jacobs pointed out that Congress has oversight of the use of federal funds to try to stimulate the vaccine America. If any folks in her district are having trouble getting information or assistance from state or county officials, the Congresswoman invites constituents to contact her office.

This offer of assistance from Rep. Jacobs dovetailed neatly with the urging of independent epidemiologist Rebecca Fielding-Miller, of UCSD’s Division of Infectious Disease and Global Public Health. In this interview, she explained in detail to members the innumerable challenges of standing up not just a nationwide vaccination program, but a broader initiative to vaccinate most everyone on Earth.

She elaborated that the first two approved vaccines, from Pfizer and Moderna, are stunningly effective. The vaccine requires two doses, given weeks apart, and the vaccines themselves must be maintained at extremely cold temperatures. These logistical elements would complicate even the most efficient vaccination rollout.

Dr. Fielding-Miller spoke hopefully about the soon-to-be-authorised Johnson & Johnson vaccine. It is only one dose, and the vaccine does not require cold storage. While its clinical efficacy rate was proven to be 72% in the U.S., compared to 90% for Pfizer and Moderna, Dr. Fielding-Miller speculates that the Johnson & Johnson vaccine may well prove to have the largest beneficial impact on public health, noting that in its clinical trials, there were zero instances of death or serious illness.

Dr. Fielding-Miller pointed out the critical importance of distributing all vaccines equitably, among various communities. COVID-19 is a highly contagious, airborne virus, so whenever any members of our community remain vulnerable to infection, we are all vulnerable; none of us may feel secure until we achieve a population-wide level of immunity of ~70%. Dr. Fielding-Miller explained that even those who have been infected with COVID still need to be vaccinated, as we do not know how long natural immunity lasts, or how protective it is for any individual.

The epidemiologist acknowledged that many folks remain skeptical of vaccines. She sensitively counseled that people are more likely to change their minds, when they are listened to, not when they are berated or yelled at. She herself has listened patiently, and explained calmly, to individuals who are vaccine-hesitant, pointing out to them, for example, that the vaccine does not effect fertility, and that it is impossible to deliver a microchip through the tiny aperture in a hypodermic needle.

In the months ahead, until we achieve herd immunity, Dr. Fielding-Miller reminds us of some basic things we can all do for each other: wear a mask; meeting outside is better than inside: seeing fewer people is better than more people; wash your hands; and help your friends get vaccinated.

Important guests and useful information are standard features of the La Mesa Foothills Democratic Club’s monthly meetings. At our next meeting, March 3 at 7 p.m., we will feature a candidate forum of all Democratic contenders for the State Assembly’s 79th District special election. To join the meeting by Zoom, simply follow the invite link on our club’s website, Idems.com.

Sean Quintal writes on behalf of the La Mesa Foothills Democratic Club.
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FOOD TRUCKS

sdnews.com
A BAD PROJECT
Re: “Health center proposes housing project in El Cerrito” [Volume 2, Issue 1 or bit.ly/3p4nBzf]

I have read your article on the Family Heath Centers San Diego (FHCSD).

As an El Cerrito resident we are very concerned about the planned eight-story building the FHCSD is planning to build in our neighborhood. The College Area Planning Board isn’t allowed to give input into the project and the residents are not getting to hear the full proposal. We do not know if it will be low-income or homeless shelter. Also, there is nothing like this eight-story building along El Cajon Boulevard. FHCSD didn’t give specifics to the last community meeting.

As a community we don’t know where to next go to complain or get action. Our Council member Sean Elo-Rivera doesn’t know El Cerrito and the type of community it is. This project will change that forever. Many people are beginning to sell pending this project.

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When Peggy Shannon, dean of the College of Professional Studies and Fine Arts, arrived at SDSU in August 2019, she voiced her desire to “create a high school academy that could grow into something spectacular not only for the college but for all of SDSU.”

Working with a team of consultants and on-campus colleagues in the College of Professional Studies and Fine Arts Dean’s Office, Global Campus, Housing, and Admissions, Shannon and the team collected data on summer academies taking place globally to build a framework for the CMA.

“We worked in three time zones, three mornings a week, to build the academy’s academic footprint, its digital content, music, marketing plan, and brand,” Shannon said.

CMA Director and SDSU professor Kurt Lindemann developed the framework of the program with special emphases to create courses and workshops that the CMA team believes will appeal to high school students.

SEE CREATIVE MIND, Page 12

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SEE CREATIVE MIND, Page 12

SDSU launches Creative Mind Academy

In an effort to provide innovative programming and experiential opportunities to high school students interested in creative pursuits, San Diego State University has launched a four-week summer institute, Creative Mind Academy, in which students can complete six college credits at the university.

Creative Mind Academy (CMA) students take two three-unit SDSU classes from eight core tracks. Space is capped at 40 students maximum in each of the eight core areas. The Creative Mind Academy runs July 5-31. Registration opens in March.

The core tracks offer unique opportunities for students to catapult their experience in the following fields:

• Acting
• Musical theatre
• Leadership and debate
• Comics and graphic novels
• Music production
• Coding for creatives
• Film
• Social media and digital entrepreneurship

Prospective students will be asked to select one core track, while may require supplemental information such as a portfolio submission, an audition reel upload or other materials that will help the CMA admissions team decide where students are placed.

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SEE CREATIVE MIND, Page 12
Meet your new District 9 representative

by JEFF CLEMSON / College Times Courier

As newly-elected District 9 Council member Sean Elo-Rivera's Deputy Chief of Staff and Director of Policy, Maya Rosas said it is no accident she was also given the job of community representative for the College Area.

"I am the only one on our staff with a city planning degree and the community is in a community plan update process, which is exactly the type of work city planners love to be involved in," she said. "Also, as the policy person, I think College Area has a very unique position in the policy realm with the land use issues that arise from a single-family zoning neighborhood being right next to a school and with student housing, aka mini-dorms, being in there I think it makes a ton of sense for me to be working in the College Area and I am very happy to do that." In addition to her city planning degree, Rosas' background also informs her thoughts on development and policy. She grew up in Santa Monica before attending college in Claremont, California where she studied anthropology and Spanish.

"I was very interested in understanding culture and how it impacts humans today," she said. After college, she went to Mexico and then to the Basque region of Spain on a Fulbright Scholarship to teach English for a year.

"I fell in love with the Spanish Colonial city design, city planning, urban planning," she said. "For example the mixed-use storefronts with apartments on top, the plazas, the parks with the beautiful trees in the middle and benches for everyone to sit around and just enjoy the outdoors." After her year abroad, Rosas moved to North Park. She wasn’t sure what to do with an anthropology degree, and was working “random jobs answering calls” and occasionally teaching ESL classes when she decided to study city planning at SDSU for a Masters degree and try and bring to fruition the examples of cities she was inspired by during her travels.

"That was the beginning of me starting this career path that led me towards city planning, advocacy and ultimately local government," she said. "My interest in making the larger region of Southern California and my new adopted home San Diego into a region that provides all sorts of opportunities like walkability and the conveniences I experienced when I was abroad." After her first year in the city planning Masters program, Rosas was offered a paid summer internship at Walk San Diego, the organization that is now Circulate San Diego.

"It's really important that we're opening up government for everyone to be able to learn about what we're doing and access services," she said. "Community empowerment isn't just a phrase. It is what drives Sean and it's why our office has a director of community empowerment instead of a directory of community outreach." For her Masters thesis, she focused on pedestrian safety and risk factors in San Diego and at the same time she was working at Circulate San Diego when the city adopted the Vision Zero plan to eliminate the city's pedestrian fatalities. Watching the process of getting a plan like Vision Zero adopted by government made Rosas realize that much of how to accomplish making better, safer cities rests in City Hall.

"I was inspired by Sean. His mentorship meant a lot," Rosas said. When Georgette Gomez decided to make a run for congress and vacate her seat on City Council, Elo-Rivera ran for and was elected.

RAIN, WIND, AND FIRE

“The three menaces to any chimney, fireplace, or stove.”

Every year there are over twenty thousand chimney / fireplace related house fires in the US alone. Losses to homes as a result of chimney fires, leaks, and wind damage exceeds one hundred million dollars annually in the US.
Rosas

CONTINUED FROM Page 12

“I am the director of policy for the office and tradition-ally someone with that role would not normally be also a community rep and the same time but I want to be working with the communi-ty and not be detached form the needs of the community in District 9,” she continued.

Rosas said that although she hasn’t had the opportu-nity to attend a community plan update meeting, she is well aware of the plan.

“Community members should be at the forefront of driving the futures of their community,” she said. “People in College Area know what the resi-dents of College Area need the most. So I think it’s our role to listen; to facilitate as needed between the resi-dents and city staff in the Planning Department; and ultimately support what is best for the community in College Area and the city as a whole.”

To reach Maya Rosas about any College Area need, she said the best way currently is through email at RosasM@sandiego.gov.

—Reach editor Jeff Clemenson at jeff@sd-news.com.

College Area planning board election info

By JOSE REYNOS

The College Area Community Planning Board and Council holds its board elections every March. Because of the pandemic, normal in-person elections are not possible. The city has provided guidance to planning groups with several options. These include mail-in ballots, ballot drop-offs, online voting or postponing the elections until the state of emergency is lifted by the state.

At the February meeting, the board will decide which option to follow. Once decided, the information for each planning group will be post-ed on the city website and the city will publicize the procedures via its social media channels. The planning groups must post the procedures on their websites and disseminate the information by whatever other means it has available to it. In the case of the College Area, we also use Constant Contact and will send out the information accordingly.

Especially now that the College Area is in the process of putting to-gether a community plan update, we encourage community members to get involved and maybe consider joining the board. You must be an eligible member of the community — either a resident (including rent-er), property owner, or a business owner (or representative of a busi-ness, including non-profits). You must be 18 years old and have at-tended two complete board meet-ings in the 12 months prior to the election, by the January prior to the election which is in March.

Stay tuned for what procedure the board selects for this year. If you are interested, please submit an application. It can be found on the CAPBC’s website at college-area.org under the membership tab. All requirements, guidelines and details are listed there as well.

On election day, as support is around the corner, thanks to the generosity of the College Area Residents Association (CARA), two projects are in the works to plant trees at Tubman Charter School and Hardy Elementary. The plan is to plant trees along the fence surrounding the new joint-use field and possibly a few inside the campus. The trees at Hardy will be planted at the top of the slope facing Montezuma Road and along the eastern edge of the entry driveway.

Two small trees will be planted in the kindergarten yard to replace some very large, very old trees that had to be removed because of root damage and other hazards.

As of this writing, we are awaiting final approvals from SDUSD and then planting can be scheduled. These will be great additions to our community that will, hopefully, inspire residents to get on the bandwagon and plant more trees. If you would like a free tree for your yard or street parkway, CARA still has some available. Contact our local neighborhood tree lady champion, Troy Murphy at troysandiego@gmail.com. Many thanks to CARA for their generosity.

Don’t forget to support our local businesses during these difficult days. Order in some food or get all your other needs met by our lo-cal merchants. Let’s support each other. Stay safe and stay well!

—Jose Reynoso is chair of the College Area Community Council/ Planning Board.

Cox Contour's Valentine's Day Movie Collection perfect for at-home date night

With Valentine’s Day in the air in February, many people are already planning a fun, stress-free date night at home this year, and movies have a magical way of bringing us closer.

Whether you’re married, single or in a relationship, Cox Contour’s Valentine’s Day Movie Collection has something for everyone to help them celebrate love and romance. Pull up a cozy blanket to curl up with some rom-coms and Black Love (in honor of Black History Month).

Just say “Valentine’s Day” into your Contour voice remote and go to the On Demand library to see all the date-night choices available at your fingertips with your Contour service.

Cox Contour’s Valentine’s Day Movie Collection categories (available through Feb. 19) include:

- Classic Romance – Light some candles and grab a cozy blanket as you settle down to a classic from the golden age of Hollywood (think “Casablanca,” “Roman Holiday” and “From Here to Eternity”), a modern-day favorite like “Titanic” or 1980s hits like “Sixteen Candles,” “Dirty Dancing” and “Say Anything.”

- Galentine’s Goodies – Zoom with gals while enjoying a glass of wine and some laughs before everyone selects a movie to watch then discuss virtually afterward. Enjoy “Clueless” or “Bridget Jones’s Diary,” or make it a Sarah Jessica Parker double feature with “Girls Just Want to Have Fun” and “Sex and the City: The Movie.”

- Love Seriously – Don’t forget to grab some tissues before watching movies like “A Walk to Remember,” “Ghost” and “The Kingfisher Patient.”

- Love Laughs – You might want to hold on to those tissues as you laugh so hard you’ll cry with the Marilynn Monroe classic “Some Like It Hot,” which was filmed at San Diego’s very own Hotel del Coronado, or Eddie Murphy in “Coming to America.”

- Love Is Love – Make your favorite drink, grab your Valentine’s chocolates and watch a movie that celebrates love, whether it’s the award-winning “Brokeback Mountain,” a love story between two cowboys, or “Lady Bird,” which focuses on a complicated mother-daughter relationship.

- Black Love – February is Black History Month, so celebrate diversity with popular movies such as “How Stella Got Her Groove Back,” “The Bodyguard,” “Love Jones” or the Hallie Berry/Eddie Murphy romantic comedy “Boomerang.”

- Nancy & Nora – This category features movies written, directed or produced by filmmakers Nancy Meyers and Nora Ephron, who are responsible for some of the most beloved romantic movies. Check out Ephron classics like “Sleepless in Seattle,” “When Harry Met Sally” and “You’ve Got Mail” or Meyers films like “Father of the Bride,” “The Parent Trap” and “It’s Complicated.”

- Bloody Valentine – You may not want to dim the lights when watching “Carrie” or “House at the End of the Street.” Or maybe a scary movie on Valentine’s Day will bring you closer — literally.

With so many choices through Cox Contour to watch a movie on demand or stream via Cox High Speed internet and your Contour apps, Valentine’s Day is the perfect time to stay in and enjoy a good movie — whether you’re pampering yourself or watching with a loved one. For more information, visit cox.com.
2021 economic outlook for San Diego

by LYNN RADEN

The coronavirus continues to pummel San Diego’s residents and its economy. As vaccines slowly move through the County, how much scarring will remain? How fast will confidence and spending resume? How quickly will businesses respond by hiring back former or new workers?

Economic toll of 2020: San Diego’s economy ended 2020 on a somber note. After a few months of improvement, companies cut payrolls again in December and the jobless rate jumped. For the year as a whole, the region lost more than 100,000 jobs. This widely surpassed the 60,000 jobs lost during 2009 at the height of the last recession. The unemployment rate stands at 8.0%, compared with close to 3.0% just a year ago.

Many businesses have struggled to survive. Typically, 20% of new businesses fail in their first year and 50% in their fifth year of operation. The strains from “stop-start” operations as infection rates waxed and waned probably accelerated these failure rates considerably. For new businesses just starting in 2019, some 40% of them could have failed in 2020 as they ran out of cash. Even established firms closed as owners decided that it was finally time to shut down and retire.

Bright spots: Even as firms have failed, new ones are being formed. In California, 2020 saw new business applications up by 42% at year-end. The region’s economy is slowly clawing its way back. As of year-end, four major sectors had reached employment levels equal or greater than their pre-pandemic totals: construction, business and professional services, retail (boosted by e-commerce), and utilities.

Housing is booming, spurred by low mortgage rates and people wanting more space. Home prices ended the year up 12% relative to a year ago. Stocks soared in 2020, with the S&P 500 Index ending the year up 16%. Congress passed more COVID relief in December, raising unemployment

SEE ECONOMIC OUTLOOK, Page 23

Family Health Centers’ proposed housing project

by LAURA RIEBAU

In November 2020 and on Jan. 13, 2021, Anthony White, Director of Community & Government Relations for Family Health Centers of San Diego (FHC), David Whiteshantunt, Vice President of Physical Facilities, Family Health Centers of San Diego and Matthew Winters AIA, LEED AP, Director of Mixed-Use Architecture LPA introduced plans FHC has for a mixed-use project on El Cajon Boulevard between Dayton Street and 55th Street.

The plan is for a 10-story building with two floors below ground and about eight floors above. About 100 feet tall from ground level.

The building will have medical offices, some retail space on the main floor, 246 parking places and 142 units of residential housing: 42 units will be for FHC resident doctors, about half of the units will be studios, the other half will be one bedrooms with a handful of two-bedroom units.

We were told the housing would be in the affordable income ranges, but not what that range is or who the target tenant would be – though we did ask. The responses from residents at the meeting varied from liking the new development to concerns about the use of the building and that the building is too tall for the surrounding single family housing community. For perspective, the student housing near SDSU on College Avenue is six stories tall. You can look at the heights at sjpa.com/projects/ sdubusouth-campus-plaza.

Family Health Centers of San Diego is one of the nation’s 30 largest Federally Qualified Health Centers. It operates 49 sites across San Diego County, providing care to over 200,000 patients each year, of whom 91% are low income and 29% are uninsured. You can read more about FHCSD at fhcsd.org.

—Laura Riebau writes on behalf of the El Cerrito Community Council.

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Alvarado Hospital has a number of health and fitness programs ideal for seniors to help keep you fit in both body and mind!

Under our PALS community programs, we offer classes such as our Senior Fitness Class, our Alvarado Balance Class, and the “Back Nine” Senior Golf Program, which is led by a PGA professional and licensed recreation and physical therapists. All are designed to sharpen your motor skills and strengthen your body.

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greens fees apply to the Back Nine program.

Alvarado Hospital Medical Center
San Diego Rehabilitation Institute
Member of Prime Healthcare

OVERVIEW OF REVIEW PROCESS

Family Health Center Housing project:
• Project Location: 5482 El Cajon Blvd.
• East of 54th Street and north of El Cajon Blvd
• In the parking lot east of the Family Health Center Building
• College Community Planning Committee
• Project is subject to the College Area Community Plan, ECCC North is a sub-set to the CACPC
• ECCC North Covers Properties north of Mid-City up to Baja Street, East of 54th Street to College Avenue.
• Community Plan was approved in 1989 (25 yrs.) Community plan update is currently underway

Community Plan and Zoning
• Existing Community Plan encourages multi-family growth along El Cajon Blvd.
• Zoning for this project is CUPD-CU-2-4.
• Central Urbanized Planning District: Commercial Uses & MF.
• Zoning: CUPD-CU-2-4
• CUPD means Central Urbanized Planning District.
• CU-2-4 allows Commercial Uses & Multiple Family Housing.
• First 30 feet of structure must contain a commercial element.
• Density is 5 units for every 600 square feet of lot space.
• No maximum height limitation; but Floor Area Ratio is 2.0.
• CPFAG and Community Groups can form feedback for staff.
• Community Plan allows mixed use project.
• FHC project is consistent with land use designation and zoning.
• Where Community Plan and Municipal Code are in conflict, the Municipal Code takes precedence.
• Project complies with community plan and use designation; but community plan also says:
• Projects must provide a harmonious transition between the proposed use and the existing land uses.

Approval Process
• When a proposed project conforms to the community plan and zoning it is allowed “By Right.”
• Approval will be ministerial; that is, done by City of San Diego Planning Staff.
• Community Planning Groups do not have a codified role to offer input.

Ministerial Staff Review
• Development Services Division will provide in-house review.
• CEQA planners (from City of SD) will also have opportunity to review proposed project and comment.
• Entirely appropriate for ECCC to provide comments.
• Emphasis should be on community character, traffic impacts, transition between existing land uses.
• You can also review the City of San Diego Municipal Code for College Area and MCD at docs.sandiego.gov/ municode/MuniCodeChapter115/ Ch15A1600/Divisions02.pdf
San Diego’s ban on commercial evictions will last until June 30, or 60 days after the City’s emergency declaration is lifted, whichever comes first. Gloria announced on Jan. 21 that the City had received more than $42.3 million in direct federal funding for rent and utility payment assistance.

An online portal is available now on the San Diego Housing Commission’s website for city residents interested in receiving information about the application process for the upcoming program. Those interested should visit bit.ly/3p8Hwgf. Signing up to receive information is not an application for the program and will not affect any determinations of eligibility for the program.

VACCINATION STATION NEEDS VOLUNTEERS
UC San Diego Health is partnering with San Diego County and the San Diego Padres to operate the Vaccination Super Station near Petco Park. The partnership welcomes community support and volunteers. Details on the types of volunteers that are currently needed can be found at health.ucsd.edu/vaccine-volunteer.

NEWS BRIEFS, Page 20

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WHAT'S NEXT FROM SDNEWS.COM

CONTINUED FROM Page 7

emergency declaration is lifted, it will become effective on July 1 if the City is still under a state of emergency. The state legislation does not protect commercial tenants. San Diego’s ban on commercial evictions will last until June 30, or 60 days after the City’s emergency declaration is lifted, whichever comes first.

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VACCINATION STATION NEEDS VOLUNTEERS
UC San Diego Health is partnering with San Diego County and the San Diego Padres to operate the Vaccination Super Station near Petco Park. The partnership welcomes community support and volunteers. Details on the types of volunteers that are currently needed can be found at health.ucsd.edu/vaccine-volunteer.

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New BBQ joint on Lake Murray Blvd.

By ROBIN DORHN-SIMPSON

Why open a new restaurant in the middle of a pandemic? Because we need comfort. Comfort food calms the soul.

We have all been driving by this restaurant for months wondering what is going on behind the canvas walls. Now we know! Smokey and the Brisket has moved into the neighborhood and we are lucky.

BBQ is an art form and art takes time. No one knows that better than neighborhood and we are lucky. Smokey & The Brisket is all about feeding La Mesa residents good food.

Chef/owner Alberto Morreale, from Bottega, is all about feeding La Mesa residents good food.

He is busy smoking all the tradition meats that all of you gear heads have known and loves brisket, pulled pork and beef spare ribs and Texas smoked sausage links. If you just can’t live without a hamburger, you’re in luck — and it is good.

If you want a whole or half chicken, they have three different options: herb, habanero and Alabama chicken with a white Alabama BBQ sauce. Lest you think the menu is all meat, there is a nice selection of salads such as Burnt Carrots and Cauliflower Salad with Arugula, goat cheese and cilantro-lime vinaigrette and a Smoked Pulled Chicken Salad topped with Fritos.

The menu also includes an “Ooey Gooey” jalapeno mac ’n cheese featuring brisket burnt ends. Try some of the delicious side dishes like Brussels sprouts, cowboy caviar, mashed potatoes and cornbread. They offer four different flatbreads with handcrafted 48-hour rising dough.

Kids love BBQ too and they are not forgotten with cheeseburgers, chicken tenders, and other sandwiches with fries. If you are feeding an army, they offer a meal for four to six and another for 12 to 14.

Currently all orders are to go, but you can sit on the patio and eat your food. When we are able to eat indoors again, you can enjoy televised motorsports such as NASCAR, motocross and monster truck events.

Smokey and the Brisket is open for lunch and dinner, Tuesday through Sunday from 11 a.m. until 9 p.m. or sold out, whichever comes first. Don’t delay in ordering as they sell out quickly.

You will find them at 5465 Lake Murray Blvd. Call to order food for pick up 619-439-6544. Check out their menu and order online at smokeyandthebrisketsd.com.

—Robin Dohrn-Simpson is a San Diego-based freelance travel and food writer.
Coach Dura (right) teaching some stick techniques. (Courtesy photo)

Lacrosse club starts women’s league

By LAURIE ALFARO

There is a wide range of youth male lacrosse programs available to young athletes across San Diego County. But, did you know that youth female lacrosse programs are relatively new? Despite the pandemic and its regulations, Mission Trails Lacrosse Club will be starting its first female lacrosse program, led and coached by Alicia Durante.

Practices are scheduled to start end of February and conclude in May/June, while game schedules are “to be determined” at the moment. It is valid to question how sports operate in a pandemic, let alone in a completely brand new program. Coach Durante, however, is confident that there is a need in the community for this program.

Durante shared from her personal involvement in the sport as an experienced lacrosse player, coach, and parent that the resources for female lacrosse players have historically been limited. There are currently no girls programs serving the communities in Navajo neighborhoods, and surrounding areas (other than high school level athletics).

As a parent of a lacrosse player, Durante said, “I have been looking for options for my daughter to play the game for years. We have had to look in neighborhoods outside of our own to find a program,” and, “most of the girls I worked with and coached didn’t play in San Diego.”

They were finding unique ways to play through travel club teams or out of state. Mission Trails Lacrosse Club wants to end the search for female programs and make the sport more accessible for every lacrosse player. When asked why it is the right time to pilot this program Andrew O’Neill, president of the Mission Trails Lacrosse Club, explained, “Our girls program has been something we’ve wanted to do for several years. The boys’ game and girls’ game are similar, but different sports. One of the barriers we’ve always had is finding the right person to come in and lead the girls program and we believe we have right person with Alicia Durante.”

Despite having the right coach, the setbacks of the pandemic also had to be reckoned with. O’Neill explained, “2020 was tough on a lot of players. We had a few strong teams that felt they had finally worked to get to a better competition level and staying motivated for the next unknown opportunity is difficult.”

But in taking steps to move forward with reopening the boys program and kickstarting the female program, coaches remain hopeful for the future of the lacrosse programs at the Mission Trails Lacrosse Club. “Over the last few years we’ve had tremendous growth and adding a girls program continues to show American students to learn to code and inspiring them to pursue careers in computer science.”

“Urging students to pursue these careers is important not only because of the COVID-19 crisis, but because we are also facing a larger competitive and retention crisis in America” said Rep. Suzan DelBene (WA-01) and Rep. French Hill (AR-02) in a joint statement. “The Congressional App Challenge inspires students and workers to pursue these technology careers.”

Benjamin will receive official recognition from our member of Congress, and his app will be displayed in the U.S. Capitol for one year.

Patrick Henry High School sophomore Audrey Freeman has been elected next Lieutenant Governor of Key Club District 21. “It is the right time to make the key club a point of conversation, Audrey called upon her Key Club peers to take the time to understand others, including children who face challenges unique to their situation, and those who may be questioning their gender identity or transitioning to a new lifestyle,”

In now her second year as a member of Key Club, Freeman spent the last year as Patrick Henry’s Kiwanis Finance chair, focusing mainly on outreach to her club’s service partners in the SD1 Circle K club and the Grossmont-Arler-Gardens Kiwanis Club. She also served as the Division Spirit Coordinator for the 2020-21 term.

As Lieutenant Governor next year, she will be responsible for the oversight of 13 Key Clubs from Point Loma to Patrick Henry, ranging as far north as La Jolla, Mira Mesa, and Scripps Ranch.

Patrick Henry High School sophomore Linh Truong was elected last month to serve as the 2021-22 President of the PHHS Key Club. She will officially take office on April 11, upon the conclusion of the California-Nevada-Hawaii District Key Club Convention.

Linh has served for the last year as the club’s Fundraising Chair, and has been attending most of the club’s projects and activities since joining in 2019. She cites the “Trunk or Treat” event at Palisades Presbyterian Church as her favorite Key Club service project so far.

There are five Patrick Henry seniors who are being recognized on San Diego County’s 2021-22 American Legion O’Farrell’s website for Career Technical Engineering month. They are Ainslie Mellinger, Chloe Klein, Olivia Van Houten, Alexander Renard and Evan Patocka.

Our students completed an engineering project called “Architectures for All,” in which they redesigned our San Diego airport terminal 1 to be more inclusive, particularly considering the following groups: people with disabilities, people who are transgender, non-gender binary or otherwise non-cisgender, and caretakers of the young and elderly. Please visit the SDCOE website to read about our students’ project at cleartechmonth.org/techmonth.html

Please remember to visit the Patrick Henry website for up to date information about our school and district at patrickhenrys.net. On behalf of the Patrick Henry High School Faculty, we want to thank you for being our partner in education so we can ensure all students graduate with integrity, purpose, and options.

—Michelle Irwin is principal of Patrick Henry High School.

Standout Patriots acknowledged

By MICHELLE ROWN

Due to the current situation with COVID-19 cases, our district has delayed the reopening of our schools for Phase 2. In a few weeks, we may have more information in allowing more students to return to school under Phase 1. There are many factors to reopen which include the utmost safety conditions, agreements between our district and our employee unions and implementation of PPE equipment at every school.

Later this month, principals will be reaching out to our school communities to get feedback and input on the 2021-22 school budget. We will seek your input and advice on how to invest our school funding to support the children who attend our Henry Clusters schools.

“Even though we are doing online learning and we haven’t been able to engage with our students on campus, several of our students are being acknowledged for their dedication to our community and hard work with their academics. I’m very proud of these students,”

Donte Wyatt, a Henry sophomore, was selected to participate in the Youth Ambassador/Jacobs Community Scholar Program in San Diego. The Youth Ambassador/ Scholar Program is a year-long initiative designed to train local 10th and 11th graders in the best practices of community oversight of law enforcement: to plan outreach and engagement events within the Scholar’s own communities; and to collaborate on policy proposals aimed to improve public safety for all community members in San Diego. We are so proud of Donte’s dedication to our community!

Benjamin Broudy, a Henry sophomore, won the 2020 Code.org Challenge — the official student coding competition of the U.S. House of Representatives — is an initiative encouraging students graduate with integrity, purpose, and options.

By LAINIE ALFARO

Feb. 12 – March 11, 2021

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Established in early 2018, Joan Brooks (UCSD Graduate) and Todd Brooks (UFC Veteran, US Air Force Academy Graduate) wanted to develop better assisted Living Care Homes and Services for seniors of all financial capabilities. Right Choice Senior Living is nestled in highly desirable neighborhoods close to UCSD, La Jolla, Pacific Beach, Clairemont (Mount Street Area), La Mesa, Del Cerro. See our story before making your final choice. Make the Right Choice Today.

We are excited to announce that Silverlight Homes of La Mesa will be joining the Right Choice Senior Living network of Assisted Living Community Homes.

Tina Wells is a 12-year resident of La Mesa.

“Ashleigh and I have known each other since joining the Right Choice Senior Living network of Assisted Living Community Homes.

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We are excited to announce that Silverlight Homes of a Mesa will be joining the Right Choice Senior Living network of Assisted Living Community Homes.

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 sdnews.com
Family Health Centers of San Diego is the #1 enrollment entity for Covered California in San Diego County.

For free enrollment help, call (619) 515-2363.

For 50 years, Family Health Centers of San Diego (FHCS) has provided caring, affordable, high-quality health care and supportive services to everyone, with a special commitment to uninsured, low-income and medically underserved persons,

With over 23 primary care clinics around San Diego County, FHCS provides care to over 227,000 patients each year. With a wide-range of health care services throughout the region, the organization also includes 10 behavioral health facilities, eight dental clinics, two mobile counseling centers, three mobile medical units, three vision clinics, a physical rehabilitation department, a pharmacy and an outpatient substance use treatment program. As part of their ongoing dedication to ensuring everyone who needs health care receives it, FHCS offers free Covered California enrollment assistance.

Covered California is a private health insurance exchange that was established through Affordable Care Act legislation for individuals and families not eligible for Medi-Cal. The program allows California residents to purchase quality health insurance plans to fit individual and family needs. The cost of each insurance plan is based on certain factors, including family size and income.

Covered California has extended its Special Enrollment Period from February 1 to May 15, 2021 without a qualifying life event.

Health Plan Benefits
All Covered California health insurance plans provide comprehensive services, including:

1. Preventive, wellness and chronic disease management services
2. Pregnancy, maternity and newborn care (both before and after birth)
3. Pediatric services, including oral and vision care
4. Mental health and substance use disorder services, including behavioral health treatment (this includes counseling and psychotherapy)
5. Rehabilitative and habilitative services and devices (services and devices to help people with injuries, disabilities, or chronic conditions gain or recover mental and physical skills)
6. Prescription drugs
7. Ambulatory and emergency services
8. Laboratory services and hospitalization (surgery and overnight stays)

For free enrollment help, call (619) 515-2363 or visit fhcsd.org/covered-california.
The heart of MLK

On Sunday, Jan. 17, Lea Noguer, a 7th grader at Pershing Middle School, created a large heart with the words “I HAVE A DREAM.” She and her friends painted the letters in black and then Mrs. Levy, the principal, Mrs. Robe, an English teacher, Mr. Bowman, a math teacher, and a few other parents and students helped tie the letters inside the heart.

The goal was to have people unite a ribbon from the outside of the heart, write a word that symbolized Martin Luther King Jr’s life on the red ribbon, and tie it inside the heart.

“Our hope was that by the end of the week the heart would be come filled with red ribbons,” Lea said.

A student at Pershing Middle School honored civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. with words from his most famous speech and red ribbons in the shape of a heart. (Photo by Jay Wilson)

When this article was submitted, there were 150 red ribbons inside the heart—all with words symbolizing Dr. King.

—Submitted by Lea Noguer
Are you caring for someone with memory loss, dementia, or Alzheimer's? Then the REACH2CAREGIVERS program is for you! This series is offered FREE and virtually to family caregivers to better understand memory loss, develop communication skills, learn stress management techniques and how to better care for yourself and your loved one. You don’t have to do caregiving alone! Sign up today for our REACH2CAREGIVERS online class at https://bit.ly/REACHprogram.

Southern Caregiver Resource Center has been offering services FREE direct services to the community for over 33 years. Our team of highly qualified professional staff supports families through a comprehensive inventory of programs and services.
By SARAH WARD

Rock bottom mortgage rates, a limited supply of available housing, and a surging demand for increased living space in San Diego have all contributed to rapidly rising home prices over the last year in an otherwise drifting and stagnant economy.

The median home price in San Diego for January 2021 was $744,000 a 12% increase year over year from $655,000. Looking at the latest data, the home purchase market is being driven for one by the many renters with stable incomes who have reached the tipping point and suddenly need more space. The data shows these buyers were going to buy anyway over the next few years but have moved up their commitment to the present.

Another factor is the ridiculously low mortgage rates that have dipped below 3% for well qualified buyers. The mortgage payment for a house at the College Area median home price is typically in the range of $2,500 to $3,000 for the mortgage and interest payment. This is some what comparable to rents currently which is more palatable to first time buyers. We just closed on a single-family property with a view of Mount San Miguel the monthly housing payment actually went down for the buyers, although they made a pretty good size down payment.

When looking at the upcoming year, what can we expect? I read lots of different opinions, blogs, economic real estate newsletters and such. Few are expecting this year’s price rises to match last year’s increases of 9% to 14% throughout California. There are a few factors to consider. First, the median home price stayed somewhat steady in the later part of 2020 and even slightly declined in some areas. Another consideration is that the population of San Diego and other parts of Southern California did not increase and in fact dropped slightly in some area. People have started moving out of California to some extent, moving to such places as Arizona, Nevada, Oregon, Colorado, Texas and Florida. In 2020, more people left California than arrived. As a side note, I was recently in the Tampa, Florida area and it was quite beautiful, with a lot of new construction going up and three-bedroom, two-bathroom single-family homes selling in the 100’s. A local realtor told me it’s the fastest growing area in the Southeast.

In addition to population growth subsiding, many are predicting quite a few homes having to be sold later this year by people who are, sadly, in a forbearance program and whose incomes have steadily decreased or dried up completely. However, some experts are saying that the expected increase in housing supply should easily be absorbed by the current crowds of buyers looking to purchase a San Diego property. But it is likely, some say, that effect will keep property prices somewhat steady instead of an-

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How long will home prices continue to rise in San Diego?

CONTINUED FROM Page 14

Economic outlook

benefits and sending out $600 checks to most adults. Mayor Todd Gloria has announced the receipt of $42 million in federal funding for the purpose of rent relief.

What to expect in 2021: Bouits of optimism and pessimism will define the next several months as San Diegans struggle to emerge from the pandemic’s scourge. Following are questions and answers to some of the key issues facing us.

How much further suffer ing? Vaccination rates need to be accelerated well beyond one million per day or it will take until mid-22 before “herd immunity” can be restored. In the meantime, new vaccine-resistant mutations of the virus could appear. Without a major pickup in San Diego’s vacci nate rollouts, the economy will remain substantially shuttered. The first quarter could see further job losses and the second quarter looks like it will at least begin with considerable weakness.

Affects of new administra tion: President Biden wants to provide urgent additional stim ulus, proposing an additional spending total of $1.9 trillion. While Congress may not approve full funding, it may pass more than half of the total. Another $1,400 of direct individual pay ments, more help for the unemployed, and some additional assistance for state and local governments are likely to be included. While some of this money will go into savings accounts, the amount spent will help backstop parts of the region’s economy that are still operating.

Service sector reopen ing? Economic lockdowns have slashed more than one-quarter of payrolls in San Diego’s leisure and hospitality industry. The toll has been severe when you realize that the industry employs nearly one of every seven of the region’s workers. While restaurants recently saw operating rules relaxed, a broad reopening of the entertainment industry is likely to wait until the second half of 2021 or when approximately 75% of the population has been vaccinated.

How will consumers re spond? After more than a year spent primarily in home-confinement, consumers will be eager to return to their pre-pandemic lives. They may retain some of their new habits by working only part-time at the office and con tinuing their streaming subscrip tions. Many may have to start paying for student loans, rent, or mortgages where various for bane programs have been in effect. The release of pent-up de mand will dominate, however, as consumers flock to restaurants, entertainment venues, and even shopping malls. Confidence over a return to “normal” will soar, accompanied by a rebound in spending.

Businesses will need to ramp up hiring to meet the resurgence in demand. Firms may initially rely on temporary or part-time workers until they can assess the demand. Firms may initially rely on temporary or part-time workers until they can assess the demand. Firms may initially rely on temporary or part-time workers until they can assess the demand. Firms may initially rely on temporary or part-time workers until they can assess the demand. Firms may initially rely on temporary or part-time workers until they can assess the demand.

Bottom line: In 2020, the ability to contain infection rates determined the course of the economy. In 2021, vaccination rate speeds hold the key to a vigorous and sustainable economic recovery.

Lynn Reaser, Ph.D., CBE, is chief economist at Fermanian Business & Economic Institute at Point Loma Nazarene University.

other substantial jump this year. I would say the general theme of various experts is that prices will probably increase maybe 1% to 10% in San Diego and Southern California this year.

Looking at single-family homes in the 92115, College Area, the median home price is currently $656,500, up 10% for the year and with only 14 homes for sale. In 92119, San Carlos, the median home price is up 15% year over year to $785,000 and with an extremely low invento rty of only nine homes for sale. And finally, in 92120, Del Cerro and Allied Gardens, the median home price hit $810,000 and with only eight homes for sale currently. As a comparison, there have been times when over 100 properties have been for sale in each of the zip codes. So as you can see the volume of homes for sale is at record lows.

Call me for a no obligation meet-up to discuss any real estate plans you have in the com ing year and to get my opin ion on your various options. 858-411-6043.

—Sarah Ward is a realtor with Fine & Coastal Real Estate. Reach her at sarah@fineandcoastal.com
Ready to find your dream home, but not sure how to maximize the equity in your College Area home?

With this much money on the line, and so many tedious details to keep track of, you’re right to want to approach this carefully.

Understanding your local market is an important part of a successful move. You deserve to get a strong return on investment and with the right information and preparation—you can!

My hands-on approach takes the stress and confusion out of selling your home because I sweat the small stuff—allowing you to stay focused on this move.

From start to finish, I work with you to help prepare your home, attract buyers, and facilitate a successful sale. Thanks to my proven system and passion for real estate, I’ve built a reputation for routinely providing a seamless and successful experience for my clients.