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Get up to date on local events. Page 14

Installing Class of Immigrant Parents

District 9 City Council race: Candidates share their views

By IFF CLEMENTSON | College Times Courier

California’s primary election will be held on March 1. One of the more important elections to College Area and Rolando neighborhoods is the District 9 City Council race, which became more competitive when incumbent Georgette Gomez decided to abdicate her council seat in order to run for the 3rd Congressional seat, currently held by Rep. Susan Davis who announced her retirement in September of last year.

There are currently seven candidates running to replace Gomez on the council — Kelvin Barrios, Sam Bedwell, Sean Elo, Andrew Gade, Alex Soto, Ross Naismith and Johnny Lee Dang. The March 1 primary will decide the top two candidates to run against each other in November.

The College Times Courier sent a questionnaire to all the candidates and received answer from all but one — Johnny Lee Dang. For information about Dang, visit johnnylee2020.com.

Responses from the rest of the candidates on some key issues facing the city are below:

Kelvin Barrios
Kelvin Barrios was raised in the District 9 community by working-class immigrant parents.

“We didn’t have a park near our apartment, so we played soccer in the street,” he said. “My family only had one car, so public transit was my main form of transportation.

Barrios worked as a cook, mechanic, and hotel worker for several years to finally afford a car. “My mother taught me that we must get back up when we fall and to always give back to our community. As a housekeeper, she was overworked and underpaid and taken advantage of because she was a struggling immigrant.”

Barrios’ mother took classes to learn English and eventually started her own small business – all while still volunteering at Kelvin’s school PTA.

Barrios’ own volunteer work includes serving as vice president of his local town council, as a member of the planning group, as a policy advisor for City Council President Georgette Gomez, and as director of community outreach for Laborers Local 89.

“I am running for San Diego City Council because we need to do better. We deserve responsive, accessible leadership that comes from our community,” Barrios said.

Here are his views on the issues:

HOUSING
If elected, I will introduce a housing action plan that will have three main areas of focus:

• Cutting bureaucratic red tape to ensure that we are building more local housing that is affordable for our working families.

• Increasing affordable housing options by preserving existing units and identifying city-owned properties that are suitable for building new affordable homes.

• Tackle the mini-dorm issue that is affecting College Area and encourage the building of more student housing close to San Diego State University.

HOMELESSNESS
This is one of the largest issues affecting our neighborhoods and it is going to require a holistic approach. I think it’s important that we partner with health care leaders and law enforcement to better coordinate mental health services for those on the streets.

In addition, we need to ensure that we have rapid response and re-housing so that we can get people off the streets as soon as possible.

Candidates for various local, statewide and national offices shared their political stances and personal backstories at a forum hosted by the College Area Community Council (CACC) and the College Area Community Planning Board on Jan. 24 at the Faith Presbyterian Church on Campanile Drive near San Diego State University.

Although attendance was light for the Friday evening forum — with a large portion of the estimated 50 attendees either candidates, their staff or CACC board members — two audience members shared why they came out.

“I’m here to learn about the candidates for mayor,” said Leonard Farello of North Park. “I’m here to meet the people behind the faces,” said El Cerrito resident Ellen Banks.

At the forum, CACC chair Jose Reynoso noted that candidates or their representatives from races for San Diego City Council District 9, state Senate, Congress, mayor, and city attorney were invited to the forum.

“Candidates in all races whose district covers the College Area were invited,” Reynoso said. “One candidate for city attorney could not attend because of the death of his father, another was scheduled to tend because of the death of his father, another was invited but did not appear. Two candidates for mayor did not show up, and the third, who was not able to make it, managed to squeeze her schedule and did appear. Two candidates for mayor spoke and the other top three were scheduled but didn’t arrive. We had one congressional candidate but two had committed.”

Category and the third, who was not able to make it, managed to squeeze her schedule and did appear. Two candidates for mayor spoke and the other top three were scheduled but didn’t arrive. We had one congressional candidate but two had committed.”

The candidates that did appear were:

• Congress CA 53 district: Sara Jacobs
• State Senate 39th district: Toni Atkins — unable

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SEE CACC FORUM, Page 3

By REBECCA J. WILLIAMSON | College Times Courier

By REBECCA J. WILLIAMSON | College Times Courier

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By REBECCA J. WILLIAMSON | College Times Courier
Support College Area Community Council’s Community Plan Update?

Yes, I’m currently advocating for the work that the College Area Planning Group has done. I believe this is the template our city should use as it’s updating the College Area’s community plan. This can speed up the process and the planning group’s efforts can count toward research and community feedback.

I commit to holding regular meetings with the leadership of our community planning groups to ensure that the voices of our neighborhoods are amplified at City Hall.

Other Issues on Your Platform

No matter what part of District 9 you live in, we all suffer from the realities of potholes and broken sidewalks. We must ensure that we are not only tackling our back-log of much-needed improvements but ensuring that they are being done right the first time. We must address community concerns and go after bad contractors that keep failing to meet standards.

I will also advocate for our Police and Fire Department to be properly paid for their service and sacrifices to our community. There is a broken system and strong leadership is needed to fix it.

For more information about Kelvin Barrios, visit his campaign website at kelvinbarrios.com.

Sam Bedwell

Sam Bedwell grew up in a military family traveling the world, starting in Africa then Maryland, Belgium, Italy and Germany. He speaks fluent Italian and Spanish.

“I have seen much of the world, and very little compares to San Diego, and the communities of District 9,” he said, adding for the last 10 years he’s lived in Kensington, Rolando and College Area while attending SDSU to earn a degree in biology. He also holds a law degree from California Western School of Law.

“Working and volunteering throughout the district has given me the opportunity to meet and help so many diverse groups, businesses and individuals,” he said.

Bedwell is endorsed by Assembly member Dr. Shirley Weber and the San Diego Union Tribune. Here are his views on the issues:

Housing

Home ownership is the backbone of our community and economy. However, it is increasingly out of reach for many San Diegans who have worked and sacrificed in order to buy a home and have a stake in their communities only to see their children locked out of home ownership in the city they helped build.

We can no longer afford a city that leaves no place for working-class families. Unaffordable housing makes San Diego increasingly uncompetitive in attracting and retaining both small and large employers and their employees including military service members, police, firefighters, teachers, service workers and students.

While housing and homelessness has been deemed an emergency by past city councils, no meaningful movement has been made to tackle this growing emergency. San Diegans cannot afford the status quo. As your council member, housing will be a top priority for me. Our veterans, families with children and students should not have to wait any longer for meaningful solutions, and I will not pass this issue off for another year or another council. This moral and economic crisis can be solved sooner with bold ideas and thoughtful leadership.

Homelessness

Firstly, I support the Housing Federation’s ballot initiative to build truly affordable housing. I also believe the city can do better by leveraging assets they already have and working closer with the county and state and federal government. We can also immediately do the following:

Establish a regional comprehensive land-use program: identify, catalog and value all public lands and structures within the San Diego region in order to support affordable workforce housing and new business start-ups. This commission will be modeled after the Federal BRAC (Base Realignment Commission) and provide incentives toward home ownership.

Implement targeted supportive housing program for veterans: Given established/earmarked targeted funding sources, we will provide all homeless veterans, homeless single parents with children and full-time enrolled homeless students and seniors on fixed income with permanent supportive housing.

Support College Area Community Council’s Community Plan Update?

Yes, absolutely. I think community planning groups should always be the first line of planning and first line of defense when it comes to changing or keeping a community’s nature and character.

Other Issues on Your Platform

I am also working and supporting a number of initiatives that our campaign will be unveiling very shortly. I am very interested in perfecting these initial policy initiatives with input from many stakeholder organizations including planning and community groups from all over District 9.

I am interested in improving: public safety, public transportation infrastructure and making sure the SDSU Mission Valley project is done well and with input from the community.

Sean Elo

Sean Elo says he has been personally impacted by key issues facing the District 9 community, including housing and homelessness.

“I’ve experienced homelessness when I spent a month living out of my car as a law student and have seen my parents displaced when their rent doubled over the course of a year.”

In addition to his law degree from California Western School of law, Elo has experience as a teacher and high school coach. He has also served as associate director of the Mid-City Community Advocacy Network. Currently he is executive director of Youth Will, an organization that works with young people to create policy changes they believe important to their future and is a governing board member of the San Diego Community College District.

Elo’s positions on the issues are as follows:

Housing

My preferred approach to the housing crisis is to protect and produce housing we can afford and keep communities intact, keep households in their communities through a series of

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SEAN ELO, Page 3
SUPPORT COLLEGE AREA COMMUNITY COUNCIL’S COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE?

Yes, I think the College Area Planning Group is excellent. I believe planning groups are a very important element of local government. The previous job at Mid-City CAN, I led efforts to encourage participation in planning group elections.

OTHER ISSUES ON YOUR PLATFORM

Our campaign has a unique platform plank with respect to education and economic opportunity. The city can and should play a much more proactive role in supporting education and providing strategic resources to help young people realize their potential by working in partnership with SDUSD, San Diego Community College District, teachers unions and community organizations to ensure students and families have access to necessary resources: increasing access to child care; and creating an Office of Child and Family Success.

We also have released an anti-corruption plan, consisting of the following key elements: public financing of elections; banning officials or their staff from lobbying the city; public disclosure of all campaign contributions and strengthening the Ethics Commission.

For more information about the campaign website at sanecform.com.

Andrew Gade

Andrew Gade describes himself as a “fiscally conservative small business owner with a background in economics.” If he is elected to the District 9 City Council seat, he said his priorities include focusing on infrastructure, the homelessness crisis, and economic growth, while integrating technology to improve government efficiency.

Here are Gade’s views on the issues:

HOUSING

My preferred approach to solving the housing crisis and lower rents is increased density in specific areas while protecting our neighborhoods from over-development.

HOMELESSNESS

The best approach to solving the homelessness problem in San Diego is increased funding and cooperation from the county and city to address individuals suffering from mental health and substance abuse issues.

Focusing on stability rehabilitation for those on the fringe, while offering compassion along with some tough love for able-bodied individuals that need help getting back on their feet.

SUPPORT COLLEGE AREA COMMUNITY COUNCIL’S COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE?

Yes, I fully support the community plan update and believe in maintaining strong local planning.

OTHER ISSUES ON YOUR PLATFORM

Our city departments are struggling to provide adequate levels of service, and our employees morale is at an all-time low. San Diego needs to fundamentally

CACC forum

to but attended her representative, Doug Case, spoke on her behalf.

Mayoral candidate Scott Sherman speaking at the College Area Community Council candidate forum on Jan. 24. (Photo by Rebecca J. Williamson)

CACC forum

Continued from Page 1

protectations, including: enforcing the tenant protections embodied in AB 1482; educating both landlord and tenants about the state and local renter protections; providing resources to ensure that all tenants have representation available to them in any tenancy-related court actions; creating a flexible spending pool for emergency rent subsidies; control rent increases through methods proven effective in first models, such as those mentioned below and increase funding for renter’s protections mentoring; encouraging good jobs that porting so renters earn and build credit without accruing debt; and strengthening tenant protections embodied in AB 1482; educating both landlords and tenants on their standing on SB 50, a statewide housing bill that would allow multi-family housing complexes to be built in single-family neighborhoods. A few days after the forum, the forum was rejected by the state legislature.

The second question was on candidates’ support for the CACC’s effort to produce its own community plan update. The plan will eventually be presented to the city of San Diego’s Planning Department, which will choose the next point of action.

On the plan update, Farello summed up his observation.

"From what I heard, the candidates all seemed to offer support for the plan and one candidate basically said she trusted the community board to make their own decisions," he said.

The CACC forum will be the only one held before the primary, although one after the primary, with the top two contenders in each race, "we could make sense," Reynoso said. "That will be proposed to the board."

"The board is non-partisan and cannot endorse any candidate," continued Reynoso. "But we can take a position on propositions.

We’ve only had one other (forum) four years ago, but I’d like to continue having them because a big part of our mission is to educate and inform the public."

Farello and Banks offered their reactions after the forum was over. "I got more than I expected," Banks said. "I learned from the candidates and the floor."

"I’ve made decisions, after being undecided, after attending the debate," said Farello.

—Rebecca J. Williamson is a local freelance writer. Reach her at robjwill@gmail.com.
“I have a proven record of tackling hard complex social problems,” he said.

Here are Soto’s views on the issues:

**HOUSING**
- My preferred approach to housing shortage issues and high rents in the city are to:
  - Lower building costs.
  - Invest in both public- and nonprofit-owned housing.
  - Focus on middle- and low-income housing with three-plus bedrooms.
  - Help renters out in times of crisis through the homeless prevention programs.

**HOMELESSNESS**
The best approaches to solving the homelessness crises are to:
- Streamline homeless services.
- Provide homeless youth transitional living.
- Clean up the mess associated with homeless camps.
- Provide more permanent supportive housing.
- Offer training services for street outreach programs.
- Make a goal to have 0% homeless veterans in District 9 by 2022.

**SUPPORT COLLEGE AREA COMMUNITY COUNCIL’S COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE?**
Absolutely. Communities should have their say on what type of development is needed and wanted. As a city council representative, it will be my job to endorse this plan 100%.

**OTHER ISSUES ON YOUR PLATFORM**
The environment. I want to preserve environmental, cultural, and historic resources; preserve the integrated open space system of our natural canyons, park grounds, urban plazas, and landscaped streets; and improve fire protection and prevention.

For more information about Alex Soto, visit his campaign website at alexsoto2020.com.

**Ross Naismith**
Ross Naismith says his life has been built through volunteering, community organizing, leading, and working with people.

“Whether it’s my background in teaching, community planning, or leading nonprofits in a volunteer capacity, working with people and improving their lives has always been, and always will be at the forefront for me,” he stated.

Here are Naismith’s views on the issues:

**HOUSING**
We have to think outside the box. I like to say you never know when a good idea will lead to a great idea. Developers are not building homes or units that people can afford. This has been happening for a long time. Multi-story high rises are extremely expensive. Building bungalow courtyards are an attractive option that are cost efficient and community oriented. With the technology available today, these can be built quickly and efficiently. We should be looking more at modular or pre-fabricated home installations as well.

**HOMELESSNESS**
Millions of dollars are being spent and we aren’t seeing enough solutions. There is a shuffle strategy going on with the homeless that is using a tremendous amount of resources — part of the reason communities outside of Downtown are seeing more homelessness.

There are shelter tents throughout the city, and we have more and more homeless storage facilities popping up. The shelters are crowded, and nobody can sleep at the storage sites.

I would like to see modular or pre-fabricated homes installed, in place of these shelters and storage sites, with services on site, where our homeless community members can truly feel what it feels like to be in a home again. We will actually save money in this process as well. It’s a win-win.

**SUPPORT COLLEGE AREA COMMUNITY COUNCIL’S COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE?**
I look forward to continuing the work already done and gathering in robust community discussions with community members at the forefront in having a say for what’s best in their community. Being a community planning group member myself, it is very important to support the work they do. I represent Rolando Village on the Eastern Area Community Planning Committee.

**OTHER ISSUES ON YOUR PLATFORM**
Transportation. We all know the traffic here all too well. Moving people around our city quickly and efficiently must be a priority. I will lead conversations on bringing a legitimate high-speed rail network to San Diego.

Sure, this is a long-term goal, but everything starts somewhere. We don’t need to reinvent the wheel to do it, other countries have already mastered this technology and are actively selling rail packages throughout the globe. Let’s reach out, ask for help, and bring our international friends into the fold here locally.

Also, the arts. Being a musician for over 25 years now, it’s tough to see the cuts in our schools and lack of programming for the arts, music, and culture. Seeing something to bring our international friends together like the arts, music, and culture? I will look to support these areas as much as I can on the City Council.

For more information about Ross Naismith, visit his campaign website at vote4ross.com.

—Reach editor Jeff Clemetson at jeff@sdnews.com.
**Pulling all the right punches**

By ANDREA MEDINA • Dockside News

For Andrea Medina, boxing is not something to do just for fun. The 19-year-old San Diego State University student takes the sport seriously. In fact, you could say she doesn’t pull any punches.

Medina recently made the USA Boxing Olympic Games Qualification Team at 57 kilograms (125.6 pounds). The final team chosen will head off to Tokyo this summer to represent America in the 2020 Summer Olympics (July 24-Aug. 9).

A 16-time national boxing champion, Medina is one of 13 boxers selected to represent Team USA at the qualifications event. There are also 11 alternates for the team.

The students, called leaders, showed up at the school two days prior to volunteering with her mother, Melissa. Anika Ochs was helping with lumber, paint, and other enhancements to the Harriett Tubman Village Charter School two days prior to the show.

As Medina sees it, representing her country would be a big accomplishment.

“I want to help other people,” said Anika Ochs, 6, who was volunteering with her mother Melissa. Anika Ochs was helping to paint benches, picnic tables, and add other enhancements to the school’s front walkway.

“Some of these boxers were neck-and-neck between training camp and the 2020 Stranadza Tournament. The next step in the process for Medina and others will be a pair of opportunities to knock out their spots for a trip to Tokyo this summer.

Medina and many other boxers out there, a typical day means making sure one gets their workouts in.

“Boxers out there, a typical day is about two to three hours long but separated into two sessions throughout the day,” Medina noted.

Iqlaas Mohamed, 12, and Samiya Hasaan, 12, among others.

The students, called leaders, numbered in the tens that included seventh graders Saabrina Bayer, 12, Sulama Ismaili, 12, Iqlaas Mohamed, 12, and Samiya Hasaan, 12.

Volunteers included the young and old.

**Volunteers beautify Tubman in honor of MLK**

By REBECCA J. WILLIAMSON • Dockside News

On her Twitter account, the late basketball icon Kobe Bryant posted on the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. “The best way to honor the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is to ensure kids understand his purpose, message and impact so that they can carry it forward. This is a great way to start teaching them. #MLKDay”

That impact played out locally via community service back on Jan. 18 when The Mission Continues, a non-profit, gathered volunteers to paint benches, murals, landscaping, and add other enhancements to the Harriett Tubman Village Charter School community.

“Martin Luther King Jr. was all about serving his community and this was a perfect match on so many levels,” said school counselor Adriana Bush with the Harriett Tubman Village Charter School.

“Dr. King’s passion for education and his efforts to improve the lives of those who are less fortunate are echoed in The Mission Continues.”

The students, called leaders, numbered in the tens that included seventh graders Saabrina Bayer, 12, Sulama Ismaili, 12, Iqlaas Mohamed, 12, and Samiya Hasaan, 12.

Volunteers included the young and old.

The first will be at the America’s qualification tourney in Argentina (March 26-April 3). Those not qualifying there get one remaining chance during the world qualifier in France (May 13-24).

As Medina sees it, representing her country would be a great honor and I will feel that I have accomplished my goal that I’ve had since I was 8 years old,” Medina said. “To represent San Diego at the Olympics would mean everything to me because I have so much support from family, friends, and fans that I don’t even know.”

Medina got her first interest in boxing at the young age of 5. “My dad took me to get signed up at a karate gym but there was a boxing gym right next door and it interested me more than karate did,” Medina stated. “My dad made sure that I wanted to do it because he boxed when he was younger.

That same day, I got signed up at a gym called Far Fan,” As they say, the rest is history.

For Medina and many other boxers out there, a typical day means making sure one gets their workouts in.

“A typical training day for me is about two to three hours long but separated into two sessions throughout the day,” Medina commented.

For one Andrea Medina, she is pulling all the right punches in her quest to accomplish a dream she has worked hard for.

—Dave Thomas is a San Diego-based freelance sports writer.
Federal solar tax credit begins sunset in 2020

One of the most significant pieces of legislation that has helped advance the development of both residential and commercial solar across the United States is the solar investment tax credit. Established in Congress in 2006, the investment tax credit (ITC) grants a federal tax credit for the installation of a solar power system on residential or commercial properties. A tax credit is a dollar-for-dollar reduction of the income tax you owe. For example, if you owe $1,000 in federal taxes but are eligible for a $1,000 tax credit, your net liability drops to zero. Tax credits are generally designed to encourage or reward certain types of behavior that are considered beneficial to the environment, the economy or to further any other purpose that the government deems important. When you purchase a solar power system, you can claim a tax credit equal to a percentage of the cost of the project outlined by the program. This [new] 30% through Dec. 31, 2019. Since the tax credit was implemented in 2006, two years after the founding of local solar firm Sullivan Solar Power, the solar industry has grown by more than 10,000%, with an average growth rate of 5.2% each year according to the Solar Energy Industry Association. The growth of the solar industry in the United States means a win for the local and national economy. It provides a new industry to supply local jobs and greater savings for consumers on electricity, which can be re- distributed back into the economy. In addition to positioning the United States as a leader in global technology, investing in solar power grants political independence from foreign fossil-fuel producing countries and helps protect the environment. The ITC is designed to encourage or reward this kind of behavior while our nation needs it most. The solar ITC was set to expire in 2016, however, Congress passed the Omnibus Appropriations Bill of 2016, which garnered bipartisan support in part because, it also lifted a ban on fossil fuel exports. The legislation extended the tax credit in full through the year 2019, with a step-down clause to commence from 2020-2022. The step-down clause of the solar ITC is as follows: • 2020 – 26% for residential and commercial • 2021 – 22% for residential and commercial • 2022 – 10% commercial only There is no better time to go solar than today, when Americans can take advantage of the federal tax credit to help pay for a solar power system which will reduce or eliminate their electric bill. Southern Californians pay a premium for energy, Southern California Edison bills run as high as $200. Electric often fall within the top 10 most expensive utilities in the United States. A typical Southern California family can pay off their solar power system within an average of five years, equating savings of more than $80,000 within 20 years. —Daniel Sullivan is president and founder of San Diego-based Sullivan Solar. For more information, visit sullivansolarpower.com
Difference Maker: Jena Olson

By JEFF CLEMETSON COLLEGE TIMES COURIER

Jena Olson was born and raised in Southeastern Wisconsin. She earned her Bachelor of Arts, double majoring in Political Science and Women’s Studies, from the University of Wisconsin in 2004. She and her husband moved to San Diego over a decade ago — eventually settling in College Area. In San Diego, she earned her master’s degree in Nonprofit Leadership and Management from the University of San Diego in 2016.

What is Kid Spark Education? Share its history and various programs.

Founded in 2015, Kid Spark Education is a 501(c)(3) social enterprise headquartered in San Diego. Our organization is helping to build a generation of young people who are confident in their ability to learn and apply science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) to real-life challenges. Industry leaders have made major investments in STEM education in high schools and universities in order to develop a diverse workforce that is prepared for the 21st century but starting in high school is too late.

By fourth grade, 1 out of 3 children have decided that science isn’t for them, and by eighth grade, it’s half of all students. This statistic is even more startling for girls, children of color, and children from low-income families who don’t typically get STEM exposure at an early age. Kid Spark exists to disrupt that pattern.

The most effective way we do that is to expose young children to STEM subjects as soon as they enter their first classroom, and to continue offering applied STEM experiences every year. Many schools are challenged in their ability to do so due to lack of funding and teacher confidence in teaching STEM. So, we’ve spent over a decade of research and development in addressing these issues to build a STEM education program that’s not only affordable for schools, but also accessible for teachers and fun for students.

Our program, which is comprised of a progressive pre-kindergarten-through-eighth-grade curriculum, engineering and building materials, as well as professional development opportunities, makes it possible for schools to provide a self-sustaining STEM program for their entire student population for as little as $12,000. This is possible because our program utilizes existing teaching staff and classroom facilities, and reusable and long-lasting building materials.

Our programs have been adopted in all 50 states and over a dozen countries worldwide. Our clients include schools, libraries, nonprofits, and after-school educational programs and camps.

What is your role at Kid Spark?

As chief executive officer, I’m responsible for managing overall operations and company resources, working closely with the board of directors on strategy and governance, and developing community partnerships. Prior to that, I focused my career on youth development and social justice, working in organizations including the University of Wisconsin, The AJA Project, A Reason To Survive (ARTS), and now Kid Spark Education.

Can you give a specific example of how Kid Spark helped a student/group of students you worked with?

We had a teacher share with us a very powerful story recently, that I think back to regularly and want to share: “We have special education students who are in an inclusion program, meaning they rotate in and out of the mainstream classes during a school day. A young lady in the special ed program who was very detached from the educational setting, she came to me at the end of our [Kid Spark] class where we did a hands-on project — we built the hammer, built several different prototypes — she came to me and was asking if she could return the following day to rejoin the class and the project.

“The special ed teacher then came and spoke with me and said the young lady so enjoyed the class. She is not a good writer, not a good reader, but became a design leader in the room, in her group. Then she told me a classmate’s mother said ‘This is the best class your daughter has ever had. Thank you so much for making this happen.’

“I still remember that moment and am so grateful that we are able to make places for young people who are confident in their ability to learn and apply science, technology, engineering, and math to real-life problems. The Kid Spark teachers and materials can make a difference in each student’s life.”

“Jena Olson was born and raised in Southeastern Wisconsin. She earned her Bachelor of Arts, double majoring in Political Science and Women’s Studies, from the University of Wisconsin in 2004. She and her husband moved to San Diego over a decade ago — eventually settling in College Area. In San Diego, she earned her master’s degree in Nonprofit Leadership and Management from the University of San Diego in 2016.”

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As chief executive officer, I’m responsible for managing overall operations and company resources, working closely with the board of directors on strategy and governance, and developing community partnerships. Prior to that, I focused my career on youth development and social justice, working in organizations including the University of Wisconsin, The AJA Project, A Reason To Survive (ARTS), and now Kid Spark Education.

Can you give a specific example of how Kid Spark helped a student/group of students you worked with?

We had a teacher share with us a very powerful story recently, that I think back to regularly and want to share: “We have special education students who are in an inclusion program, meaning they rotate in and out of the mainstream classes during a school day. A young lady in the special ed program who was very detached from the educational setting, she came to me at the end of our [Kid Spark] class where we did a hands-on project — we built the hammer, built several different prototypes — she came to me and was asking if she could return the following day to rejoin the class and the project.

“The special ed teacher then came and spoke with me and said the young lady so enjoyed the class. She is not a good writer, not a good reader, but became a design leader in the room, in her group. Then she told me a classmate’s mother said ‘This is the best class your daughter has ever had. Thank you so much for making this happen.’

“I still remember that moment and am so grateful that we are able to make places for young people who are confident in their ability to learn and apply science, technology, engineering, and math to real-life problems. The Kid Spark teachers and materials can make a difference in each student’s life.”

For more safety tips, visit sdge.com/safety.
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I am happy to report College View Estates Association is not only well but growing. A couple of weeks ago CVEA had elections for board officers. In many neighborhood associations, there is very little turnover in the board as that is what has been true for CVEA. This year, we found ourselves needing to fill four board positions: president, vice president, and two at-large members. Having never been faced with this situation, the board began to panic a bit wondering if anyone would step forward. A plea went out to the membership asking for volunteers and the results were amazing! Not only did we fill the four board positions, but many residents volunteered to do what they can to support the organization, including two people to replace those working with membership.

I firmly believe if you have something worthwhile that people believe in, when push comes to shore, someone will step forward to assist. I think our election was a good lesson for the board and may make future elections less stressful.

The newly elected board members are Prachant Bharadwaj, president; Vi Calvo, vice president; Patricia McGann and Dan Banister, at-large members. The board has the discretion to appoint one more board member. Our new Membership Committee is Terri Scott and Edward Aguado. I think College View Estates should celebrate the wonderful residents who volunteer their time, talent and treasure to make this a place where neighbors care. New life has been injected into the board and we can look forward to new ideas for making College View Estates a neighborhood with broad appeal.

I want to also recognize the members of the board who will be leaving. Joe Jones, a long-time member of the board, has helped to facilitate the planting of more than 150 trees in our neighborhood. In case you are unaware, trees add value to your property and are certainly important in terms of global warming. Once the undergrounding is completed in the area, the city will be offering to plant trees along the roadway.

Another board member desiring recognition is Bryan Bea. He has been very involved in renewing the College View Estates Association website. To see the results of his efforts, visit collegeviewestates.org.

I made a commitment to complete the remaining 1 1/2-year term of my predecessor as president. I have enjoyed my term. It gave me the opportunity to meet even more people in our community. They make College View Estates a “Community that Cares.” If you live in the neighborhood, I hope you have committed to being a member of CVEA. Your commitment supports your new board and our community. If you are looking for a wonderful community in which to raise your family or a place where you know your neighbors, come visit us. See what a “Community that Cares” looks like.

—Patrick Hanson is the new former president of the College View Estates Association.

Community plan report nears completion

The steering committee reviewed the public comments and the two submitted advisory board comments in late January, and concluded that most comments were either supportive or added details that were properly analyzed when the City Planning Department begins the formal community plan update. Therefore, those comments were added as an appendix to the report.
Top-secret carne asada

Restaurant Review

By FRANK SABATINI JR.

The newest Mexican eatery to arrive at San Diego State University is actually one of our city’s oldest taco chains.

Lolita’s Mexican Food turned 36 years old in January. Its claim to fame is carne asada, which is made with a proprietary blend of spices that most of the employees don’t even know.

When I asked the founder’s son, Juan Farfan, for the names of one or two of the spices that go into his recipe, he shook his head with a grin and denied me an answer.

Farfan’s parents, Joaquin and Delores (“Lolita”), originally opened Lolita’s at 413 Telegraph Canyon Road in Chula Vista. Today, his dad religiously hangs up in San Diego, said it’s the best thing he ever tasted as we dove into a burrito filled with the covertly spiced beef.

Whatever the well-guarded secret is, Lolita’s carne asada has been a high point in my visits. I’m an old-timer: I’ve been going there for more than two decades ago as a staff writer and began his local writing career. 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 staff writer for the former San Diego Tribune.

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Starting a dialogue on a controversial subject

By DAVID DIXON | College Times Courier

Since its inception in 2017, The Roustabout Theatre Co. almost immediately became an acclaimed and award-winning company, producing new dramas and comedies. After taking an unofficial break from producing main stage shows in San Diego in 2019, the organization is back with a new dark comedy at the Monica Theatre in Rolando, “gUnTOPIA.”

Directed by Rosina Reynolds, the play is set in the life of a loving patriarch, Harry Cooper (Phil Johnson and Will Cooper that were produced in San Diego, including Moxie’s production of "Jade Heart" and The Roundabout’s staging of "Margin of Error," are dramas with moments of humor, their latest is more comedic than those tales.

“ frequents the family, and attempts to change as the plot develops.

Many of the points that Cooper wants audiences to take away from the text are not easy to decipher.

“Harry is the most empathetic guy I’ve ever played,” he said.

Despite caring about Harry, Johnson acknowledges that the character makes poor decisions in the first part of the show. Yet, Johnson respects how much Harry cares about his family, because the role is making him reflect on his relationship with his own 10-year-old child.

“Something I think about all the time is, what would I do to protect my son?” he said.

Although gun violence is a sensitive topic, Cooper, Reynolds and Johnson want to leave audiences thinking deeply about this issue. Roustabout’s latest hopes to inspire people to take part in smart and nuanced discussions revolving around a serious subject that is now more relevant than ever.

“gUnTOPIA” runs Wednesdays through Sundays, March 8-29 at the Moxie Theatre, 6663 El Cajon Blvd, Suite N. For tickets and more information on “gUnTOPIA,” visit roustabouts.org or call (619)-728-7820.

—David Dixon is a freelance film and theater writer based in San Diego.

Network could help San Diego meet its goals under its aggressive climate action plan.

Support for the Move Forward plan is broad and growing. The National League of Cities, the AFL-CIO, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and the Business Roundtable are just a few of the organizations praising the proposal. If you can get the chamber and Labor on board, you must be doing something right.

Rebuilding America should be a bipartisan endeavor. Democrats, Republicans, and President Trump must come together on behalf of Americans who are clamoring for an infrastructure that will lead us into the future.

The cost of inaction is too great for our communities. An investment in our infrastructure is an investment in American workers and manufacturing, including steel through strong Buy America protections.

The Move Forward framework sets those priorities, creates jobs, and will be a key component in the goal to address climate change. So, let’s get moving and get this done.

—Rep. Susan Davis represents Central San Diego, as well as La Mesa, Lemon Grove, Spring Valley and parts of El Cajon and Chula Vista.

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Patrick Henry Student of the Month

By ELIZABETH GILLHAM

We are proud to have David Harimana named as Patrick Henry High School’s Student of the Month for January’s Kiwanis meeting held last month. Principal Listy Gillingham attended the meeting with David and said a hard work ethic, dedication to education, and overall solid character is what set him apart from other seniors at Henry.

David has run for the Patrick Henry cross-country and track teams since his freshman year. Coach Myette has worked with him in a variety of capacities and shared this account about him when recommending him for the student of the month: “David’s impact on the team was immediate. Arriving with a great work ethic, David’s passion, commitment, and sacrifice makes him a great teammate and leader. In addition to success on the track and in cross-country, David knows six languages, taught himself how to program in Java by watching YouTube videos, and built his own drone. If that were not enough, you can listen to his alter ego, DJ ProUp, who has made his own music videos much to the delight of his teammates, peers, and coaches (check out his YouTube channel).

Immigrating to the United States from the Democratic Republic of the Congo via Uganda, David’s remarkable life experience carries over into everything he does. He embraces every opportunity with joy, laughter, and gratitude, making him the perfect fit to be selected as the Student of the Month.”

Another teacher reported that “David is the kind of student you think about when planning a lesson — the kind who gives it his absolute all and who you don’t want to let down by delivering anything but the best you can on any particular day, the kind who makes you feel like they deserve nothing than the best that you can offer. His presence makes Henry a better place and I can’t wait to see where his hard work and good attitude will take him.”

Knowing that he immigrated to the U.S. in middle school and has recently become an American citizen through his journey from Mann Middle School to Henry High School, makes us all proud to know him and honor him as one of Henry’s best.

—Elizabeth Gillingham is principal of Patrick Henry High School.

EDUCATION BRIEFS

HENRY CLUSTER STEMM FOUNDATION EVENTS

The Henry Cluster STEMM Foundation will be hosting the fifth Mini Golf Challenge on Saturday, April 18, from 10 a.m.–1 p.m., at the Mission Trails Church located at 4880 Zion Ave. Student K-12 teams of four to six students are welcome from local schools or organizations to compete. The reigning champions are 6th grade students the first place team, and they will be attempting to repeat as champions and take home the new trophy.

Once again, the HC STEMM Foundation will be partnering with the San Carlos Library and the Friends of the San Carlos Library for the annual Robotics Showcase Extravaganza on Saturday, Feb. 22, from 11 a.m to 1 p.m., at the San Carlos Library. There will be robotics displays and demonstrations from a number of elementary, middle and high schools from our community including a booth from San Diego State University. For more information, go to the sancarlosfriendsofthelibrary.org.

TRANSITIONAL KINDERGARTEN AND KINDERGARTEN INFORMATION NIGHT

On Wednesday, March 18 from 5–6 p.m., St. Katharine Drexel Academy will be holding a Transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten Information Night in the Kindergarten classroom. Come learn about the program, meet the teacher and principal and receive an application for the 2020-2021 school year.

At St. Katharine Drexel Academy, 4551 56th St. Visit skda-sd.org or call 619-582-3862 for more information.

HENRY ENGINEERING TEAM WANTS INCOMING FRESHMEN

Patrick Henry’s Engineering Academy is accepting applications. Are you interested in a fun project-based elective course series that will teach you skills used by real engineers?

Patrick Henry has the largest engineering program in a public high school in the state of California. With four dedicated teachers, we offer nine total courses in the core pathways — Engineering Design, Engineering & Architecture and Computer Science. Most of our courses are articulated for honors credit and our students have the opportunity to participate in field trips, clubs (including Society of Women Engineers and FIRST Robotics), community college credit for select classes, special internships and scholarship opportunities, and networking with industry professionals.

We accept all applicants on a first-come, first-served basis unless classes are full. No prior experience in engineering is needed. For more information or to apply, please visit patrickhenryyeda.org or contact Mrs. Moy at emoy@sd.net.

How can people support the work at Kid Spark or get involved in the school?

The best way for people to support Kid Spark is by connecting us to school and district leaders who could benefit from having our STEM programming at their classrooms and schools or connecting us to companies that want to help get STEM into more schools.

For more information about Kid Spark, visit kidsparkeducation.org.

—Reach editor Jeff Clemenson at jeff@sdsnnews.com.
CA Happenings Continued from Page 1

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 individual skills 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 months special. Whether it’s for self defense, getting into shape or to relieve stress. You will be glad you did!

EDITOR’S PICK

Sunday, March 8

‘gUnTOPIA’ Through March 29

Movie Theatre presents ‘gUnTOPIA’ — a dark comedy by Bill Cooper about America’s obsession with gun culture. Set in a utopian fictional show format, the play explores how gun violence affects people on both sides of the Second Amendment issues. With all the play itself, many performances will also include discussion on gun issues, student activism related to school shootings and more. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7:30 p.m. and Sundays at 7 p.m. at Movie Theatre, 6663 El Cajon Blvd., Suite N. Tickets are $40. To purchase ticket and get more information about special discussions, visit bit.ly/J7AMUGL.

Saturday, March 14

Book Club

The Friends of the College-Ro- lando Library Book Club will next discuss “Our ‘Hard Time’” by Timothy Egan. 10 a.m. at the library, 6601 Monte- zuma Road. For more information about the College-Rolando Library’s book club, visit collagerolandolibrary.org.

Sunday, March 15

Waipuna — A Dedication to the Mauna

Hawaiian trio Waipuna — Kale Hannahs, Scott M spotted and Dahu Kamakai — will bring their award-winning Polynesian music to San Diego. 5-11 p.m. at the San Diego Performing Arts Center, 4579 Mission Gorge Place. Range $30-$35; available at bit.ly/3PyYqV.

Saturday, March 28

‘The Hollow’ Through March 29

LaMichtappers Community The- atre presents Agatha Christie’s mystery comedy about an un- happy game of roman- tic love — the leading lady, Gerda, her mistres and promi- nent sculptor Henrietta, and his former suitor adored film star Veronica. Also visiting are Edward and Midge, whose ro- mantic assertions are likewise entangled with the mix. As a list of romantic associations grows, so does the list of potential sus-pects when Cristo is shot dead. Finals at 5 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. at Lamp- lighters Theatre, 5915 Severin Drive, La Mesa. Tickets range $18-$23, available at lamplightersama.com.

Saturday, Feb. 29

Make It Market

College Area Business District hosts a monthly artisan pop-up happening noon-4 p.m. in the College Area Business District. At 3:30 El Cajon Blvd. , San Die- go 92115 a new-to-College Area clothing consignment store. The Make It Market offers an opportunity to shop for new clothes and enjoy a lively atmosphere with vendors offering unique items including handcrafted jewelry, beauty products, clothing, art, pet products and more.

Sunday, March 8

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Saturday, Feb. 27

Family Arts & Literacy Night: Giants of Jazz

Celebrate Black History Month and the African American leg- endary contributions that led to a truly un- common art form. The Rob Thorsen Jazz Quartet will feature some of the great geniuses of jazz including Louis Armstrong, Herbie Hancock and Charlie Parker, in a visual artist Aroel Cal- varia will help customers imagine the emotions they feel while listening to the jazz performance with templates and imagina- tion. These hands-on events are hosted along with Ar- lean Art for Learning San Diego, to enrich children’s lives by encour- aging a love for knowledge, as well as presenting them with fun, exciting and memorable adven- ture movie. Viewers will follow the family into nightlights, heroic rescues, and experi- ence life-changing ministry. In the midst of this unique and extraordinary journey, you will witness amaz- ing lessons of faith from one of the most inspiring families in the world. 7-9 p.m. at All-Mission Valley, 1640 Camino Del Río North. Tickets range $12.50-$35.10. Visit bit.ly/2J5USWk.

Wednesday, Feb. 26

Author talk: Margaret McLellan

Margaret McLellan will be at San Diego State University at 7 p.m. in Love Library 430 (Lee- mons Room) to talk about her memoir “Where the Path Lived. One Family’s Story of Ex- ile, Loss, and Return —” a story about the author’s quest to uncover the history of her Jewish Hungarian relative who was forced into concentration camps during the Holocaust.

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Sunday, Feb. 23

Boulevard Mardi Gras Gras Gras

Get ready to “Let the Good Times Roll” at the third annual Boulevard Mardi Gras Gras in Logan Heights. The event, led by a festive New Orleans-styled brass band, will include stops at a diverse mix of local businesses, with drink and food specials and other fun activities along the way. Festivities will kick off at noon in the parking lot for The Beer Inn, 2020 El Cajon Blvd., where Folk Arts Rare Records will be spinning and food and drinks will be available from Paranai Brew- ing, Junidshine (hard kombucha) and Shrimp City (Cajun seafood). Guests will be able to purchase Boulevard Tickets at this location to enjoy $2, $4 and $6 specials along the crawl route. At 1:30 p.m., the Eupho- nia Brass Band will begin lead- ingarty guest downtown El Cajon Boulevard. Around 3 p.m., revelers will arrive at the crawl’sfinal destination, the historic Lafay- ette Hotel, 2223 El Cajon Blvd. Free. Additional event details can be found at bit.ly/2wq1Nig.

Monday, Feb. 24

‘Free Burma Rangers’ Through Feb. 25

“Free Burma Rangers” is a doc- umentary about the extra- ordinary 20-year journey of missionaries Dave and Karen Eubank. The film follows Dave, Karen, and their three young children, as they venture into war zones where they are fight- ing to bring hope. Dave Eubank is a rare hero of the faith. He is a former U.S. Special Forces soldier turned missionary to con- flict zones. The story is a true adventure movie. Viewers will follow the family into nightlights, heroic rescues, and experi- ence life-changing ministry. In the midst of this unique and extraordinary journey, you will witness amaz- ing lessons of faith from one of the most inspiring families in the world. 7-9 p.m. at All-Mission Valley, 1640 Camino Del Río North. Tickets range $12.50-$35.10. Visit bit.ly/2J5USWk.

Saturday, Feb. 22

‘The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee’

San Diego’s annual second Super Sunday Gospel Fest will showcase na- tional and notable artists including Matt Mitchell, Chicago-based singers Jessica A. Clements and D’Juan Mitchell, Chicago-based singers Jessica A. Clements and D’Juan James, Detroit-based singer Ki- ri Daffin and 11 gospel choirs and dance teams from the SD- SU campus and the San Diego community. The free concert begins at 6:30 p.m. in Montezu- ma Hall of the Conrad Prebys Aztec Student Union. There will be parking available on site. For more information and to get more information, visit bit.ly/2tjoxsL.

February 2020

Calendar / Community

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How proposed local density plan affects College Area neighborhoods

By SARAH WARD

In my column last month, I talked about SB 50, a pending housing bill in Sacramento that would have virtually eliminated R1 zoning (single-family zoning) in various areas throughout California by replacing it with R4 zoning (multi-family dwelling units). Sacramento keeps pushing forward with ideas on increasing population density mostly in developed areas. Those are the easiest areas to build-out, they say, since the infrastructure is already in place.

With SB 50, nearly any residential street in San Diego County could have a single-family home torn down and a four-unit complex constructed on the lot. Other concerns were that parking space requirements would be reduced as well as setback requirements so that structures could be built right up against the sidewalk.

In late January, SB 50 was not advanced in the Senate and the bill died — for now. However, just as the potential passing of SB 50 has ended (for a while), a local bill has now been created for San Diego that somewhat mirrors SB 50. Mayor Kevin Faulconer and his team have created the “Complete Communities Housing Solution and Mobility Plan.” This bill does much of what SB 50 would have done — increases building density throughout the city.

This bill only affects parts of the city of San Diego and the City Planning Department will soon be releasing maps and parcel addresses of which neighborhoods will be affected. We already know that the plan has different density zones depending on location and, yes, College Area is affected.

Currently, 1,966 acres of College Area would have increased density and taller height limits under the plan. If you own property within College Area, be prepared to have your community height limits, setback requirements, and maximum density levels overridden by Faulconer’s Complete Communities Housing Solution and Mobility Plan. Also, since Mayor Faulconer’s proposed plan will be implemented with special legislative permits, no community groups can provide input or approve or reject the projects.

It appears that closer to SDSU, the plan shows very high-density allowances via a Transit Priority Area. It seems other parts of College Area would have a density score of four, allowing a building’s square footage to be up to four times the lot size. For example, a 2,000-square-foot lot could have an 8,000-square-foot building constructed. With the mayor being term limited out of office, some I talked to said he wants to run for a higher office, perhaps governor of California, and by passing this increased density plan, he could claim to have solved San Diego’s housing crisis. I will keep an eye on this issue going forward and keep you updated.

COLLEGE AREA REAL ESTATE MARKET

The 92115 local real estate market continues to boom. The median sold price has risen almost 5% year over year in the College Area to $586,750 for a single-family property. The story currently is that there is very little inventory available for buyers!

Inventory of homes for sale is down 47% year over year to just 31 properties, which represents just one month of inventory — an extremely low number. Days on market is a ridiculously low 22 days. If you are interested in buying or selling in this market, call me for a no-obligation chat on my suggestions for achieving success.

—Sarah Ward is a Realtor with College Area Realty. Reach her at sarahward021@gmail.com or at 858-431-6043.

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