Feuding factions seek compromise for Ward Canyon Dog Park

JORDEN P. VALE../Uptown News

When signs indicating temporary closure of an off-leash dog area appeared in early October at Ward Canyon Park, Normal Heights dog owners were concerned.

For residents of the neighborhood surrounding the park, however, the signage couldn't have been posted soon enough.

Daily users hope for the park to remain at or near its current location without extended closure, while the residents nearest to it prefer it be relocated or closed. The area adjacent to three houses is now closed off, forcing the large and small dogs to play together in the fenced area closer to Ward Canyon Park.

North Park cold case murder trial underway

NEAL PUTNAM Uptown News

A jury is deliberating after two men testified a third man beat a 71-year-old North Park man to death with a baseball bat in 2000 in a cold homicide case that was brought only after DNA evidence was found in 2018 on the victim's empty pockets where his wallet was taken.

The two men testified in the trial last week of Edward Jamarr Brooks, now 39, who is charged with killing LeRay "Mac" Parkins, who was mortally injured during his morning walk at 8:35 a.m. in an alley behind 3675 Pershing Ave. in North Park on Aug. 23, 2000.

A crime lab technician, Tamira Ballard, testified she found Brooks' DNA in three places on one pocket of Parkins' shorts which were preserved. Advances in forensic DNA technology led to the arrest of Brooks, who was found in North Carolina.

Brooks' attorney, Robert Ford, told jurors the two men were "the actual murderers" and that Brooks didn't do it. Ford conceded in his opening statement that his client's DNA was found in one pocket of Parkins' shorts, but that was only when he took the wallet but didn't kill him. Brooks has denied committing the slaying.

Closing arguments were heard Monday, Oct. 28, and the nine-man, three-woman jury instructed by San Diego Superior Court Judge Runston Maino.

Parkins lived in North Park and was a choir member at the Metropolitan Community Church. He said the tradition of celebrating the dead goes back to pre-Columbian cultures in what is now Mexico. As European influences came into play, the traditions became mixed with Christian traditions and it evolved into the celebration we have today.

What to see and do

While at the event, the state park will offer a celebration of activities and attractions for the entire family that will be a tribute to those who have passed away. From a professional artist painting a large Day of the Dead skull in the middle of the park to a public altar where visitors can place remembrances, there's something for everyone.

Additionally, there will be a vibrant Dia de los Muertos parade that will proceed around the state park plaza on Saturday at 5 p.m. featuring many local groups and performers.

Simms added the Fiesta de Reyes courtyard at the north end of the state park will be full...
Look what's in the city's basement!

Past Matters
Katherine Hon

During October, the city of San Diego’s Office of the City Clerk celebrated their third annual Archives Month with the theme of “Hidden Treasures.” Indeed, the basement of the City Administration Building at 202 C St. holds a treasure trove of city records from as early as 1817.

The City Clerk’s website notes that the Archives Program was begun in 1987 “to serve as a central source of information and materials regarding the history and development of the City of San Diego.”

The functions of the City’s Archives Center include identifying, preserving and storing records that capture the city’s history. City staff and volunteers have been diligently digitizing the vast backlog of records for years, making the results on the City Clerk’s Digital Archives website at sandiego.gov/digitalarchives. You can view land record documents related to taxes, purchases, sales, and assessments; City Directories from 1926 through 1954; and historical official documents such as minutes, ordinances, and resolutions from 1817 to 1966 online from the comfort of your own home computer.

Not everything has been digitized, however. A volunteer examining materials in the City Clerk archives recently contacted the North Park Historical Society to share some photographs and old plans related to North Park. Three images are highlighted in this article.

A 1912 preliminary plan to widen University Avenue east of Park Boulevard includes a sketch instantly recognizable as the venerable concrete arch Georgia Street Bridge. A cut under Georgia Street had been excavated in 1907 to accommodate a single track of the 87 streetcar line out to Fairmont Avenue. A redwood bridge had been built above University Avenue along Georgia Street to keep early residents connected to the south.

Within just a few years, growth created the need to double track the streetcar line. A letter dated Nov. 20, 1912 from W.M. Rumsey, city engineer, to the city’s Common Council transmitted the preliminary plan for widening and paving the existing 30-foot-wide roadway to 52 feet. The plan included the pictured “Preliminary Sketch.” Rumsey’s letter proposed “a reinforced concrete arch bridge in place of the present wooden bridge which will have to be torn down. If the cut is widened. This widening will require a vertical retaining wall on either side…”

The estimated project cost was $25,000 — about $660,000 in today’s dollars.

The North Park Theatre on University Avenue has been a popular subject for photographers since its construction in 1929. The timeframe of undated photographs can usually be estimated from the movies being advertised on the marquee. The year of this photograph of the North Park Theatre is 1945, based on the movies showing: “Captain Eddie” with Fred MacMurray and “Lady on a Train” with Deanna Durbin.

The magician entertainment to "Finish the Job — Buy Victory Bonds," refers to World War II.

A photo from the mid-1940s labeled “Looking east on University Avenue opposite Ray Street,” shows a rarely seen view of the original J.C. Penney store constructed in 1942. This building was replaced in 1954 with an expanded J.C. Penney department store, which is the building that now houses Target Express. The top of the tower of the original Fire Station #14 on University Avenue can be seen above the roof of the J.C. Penney building. The fire station was damaged during construction of the original department store in the winter of 1941-42. A new fire station was built at its current location of Lincoln Avenue and 32nd Street in 1943, although the tower remained until the department store’s expansion in 1954.

A streetcar is in the middle of the street. Electric streetcars ran on University Avenue from 1907 to 1949. On the left is the building at 3050 University Ave, currently housing Fatboys Cornerstore and Dixie Lumber Company and other shops.

Any fan of history will agree that the city clerk that, “By preserving the past, the Archives will enhance the present and enrich the future history of San Diego.” To make an appointment to conduct research in the Archives Center or obtain additional information, contact the archives of the City Clerk at 619-236-6143.

Katherine Hon is the secretary of the North Park Historical Society. Reach her at info@northparkhistory.org or 619-294-8990.
While some legends fade away, others continue to stay fresh in people’s minds and become even more popular over time. Take the two-story Whaley House Museum in Old Town Town. The house, which was constructed in 1857 and is a historical landmark, is where numerous ghost sightings have been reported for decades. A brick monument to early San Diego, the home was built by Thomas Whaley, a merchant and real estate agent and the house was designed by him and constructed of bricks made in his own brickyard.

According to Dean Glass, Whaley House Museum historian: “In its day, the house was a hub of social activity, with its brick construction, fireplaces, and large rooms being very attractive to 19th-century San Diegans accustomed to small adobe houses. It soared as the area’s commercial theater in San Diego; San Diego’s second county courthouse and seat of justice; and Thomas Whaley’s general store, all of which have been returned to the museum for visitors to see today. In addition to serving as a historic landmark, Glass is a member of the museum’s curatorial team, as well as the administrative manager for Save Our Heritage Organization (SOHO), which operates the museum on behalf of its owner, the County of San Diego. “I have worked at Whaley House for just over 15 years. I have been a fan of the museum since first touring as part of a fourth-grade field trip in 1975,” Glass said.

SOHO Executive Director Bruce Coons is the director of the Whaley House and has been since 2000. “One of the oldest brick houses in Southern California and San Diego’s finest example of a mid-1800s brick mansion, it has been designated California Historical Landmark No. 65,” Glass said.

Scary sightings
As for all those unusual sightings, well, Glass said: “The house’s haunted reputation dates back to the 19th century, mainly stemming from the fact that it stands on San Diego’s former execution grounds, and its fame is worldwide thanks to countless books and TV shows that report on it. Reports of hauntings continue to this day, and visitors continue to tour the museum in hopes of spotting something supernatural. Our hope is that visitors also learn about the history of San Diego in the 1800s, the Whaley family, and the house itself.”

When asked if he has personally witnessed any ghosts himself, Glass says he has, and more than once. “I saw a full apparition of a man I believe was Thomas Whaley (though in his 20s), standing on the upstairs landing as I walked up the stairs one morning. He looked at me as if he was curious as to who I was and why I was in his house, then disappeared. He was all shades of gray, no color to him; I’ve seen a few other fleeting figures that are all gray also, but none as distinct as Mr. Whaley,” he recalled.

“One occasion, I witnessed the chandelier in the courtroom swinging back and forth for no apparent reason. I have also on many occasions heard footsteps walking across the upstairs floor when no one is there; these sounds are always preceded by a loud crashing sound, like a sonic boom. I once heard a man clear his throat loudly as if to let me know I wasn’t alone when I was alone in the museum.”

And with Halloween just around the corner, many like to visit the Whaley House Museum in hopes of possibly seeing a ghost. “While October/Halloween is a fun time of year to tour the Whaley House, and we dress the museum in traditional Victorian mourning complete with casket in the parlor and our focus is more on the ghostly legends of the house, the hauntings seem to happen throughout the year, both morning and night.”

Sometimes these occur when one is alone and other times whole groups have witnessed strange goings-on,” he said.

If you’re wondering where someone would want to visit to see the famous house/museum, there are a few reasons, he said. “It has been said that the Whaley House contains more history within its walls than any other building in the city, and I believe that is likely true. So, anyone interested in history or heritage tourism will find the museum a fascinating look at 19th-century San Diego,” he said. “The museum is furnished with period furnishings and artifacts, many of which belonged to the Whaley family. Also, people who are interested in the paranormal or fans of any of the many television shows that have filmed here will want to see it in person. While no one can guarantee a ghost will materialize at any time, there is always the chance of an encounter. The Whaley House offers both history and mystery to its visitors.”

Fact or fiction
While the story of the Whaley House is a fascinating one, some of the most famous legends surrounding it simply are not true, Glass added.

One of these involves the little Washburn girl who was supposedly killed in the backyard when she ran into a low-hanging clothesline — never happened. Nor was anyone hanged from the pepper trees in the side yard; these trees were planted by the Whaley’s long after anyone was hanged on the property, and the hangings occurred on gallows that stood beneath the footprint of the house, Glass said.

“So, daughter Violet Whaley’s husband George, while far from a perfect gentleman, was not quite the cad he is made out to be and did not abandon Violet on their honeymoon as has been

WESTERN HISTORY

HISTORY

Whaley House – where ghosts continue to be seen and heard in Old Town

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Local authors release books on writing, the death of a parent, a flying car

November is National Novel Writing Month (often abbreviated as NaNoWriMo), where people try to write thousands of words that through editing, revisions, and rewrites may someday be a book. To inspire people attempting this feat, Uptown News has put together a list of local authors who successfully published their books. These authors range from children to elders, but all are united in their connection to San Diego and their use of the written word to express their creativity.

**Book for writers by a writer**

The executive director of SD Writers, Ink has published a book to help people on their NaNoWriMo journeys full of writing exercises and prompts. Executive director of San Diego Writers, Ink and former magazine editor, Kristen Fogle, has more than a few ways to help get writers going.

Fogle recently released “Dare to Write: Creative Writing Prompts for Young People and Word Rebels Everywhere,” which is filled with instruction and exercises that help develop a compelling narrative, character, setting, dialog, conflict, and resolution. The book is geared toward young people of all ages, from teens just starting out to seasoned professionals looking for a fresh perspective.

Fogle’s book is out just in time for NaNoWriMo, which encourages aspiring writers to take the month of November to put pen to paper— or fingers to keyboard— and write that novel they’ve always wanted to. “When I teach writing, I’ve found that asking students a series of detailed questions helps give them clear direction for their stories,” says Fogle. “As much as I love working with writers one on one, I also want to reach aspiring writers in other parts of the country.”

“A good prompt can ignite a poem, free a trapped novel, trigger a cathartic brain dump, let a singed heart speak, or simply give you space to rant about the burnt pizza, if that’s what you need to do,” Fogle continues. “Research consistently shows that people who write are happier and healthier, especially young people processing complex feelings and conflicting desires. The point of writing doesn’t have to be publishing a novel, but writing well helps people organize their thoughts and communicate more effectively.”

**Bankers Hill author releases new book on childhood loss**

Treadway was 8 years old, both of her parents had died. She moved in with family members and went on to lead a successful life, but always felt a void. That void was not only from the loss of her parents at such a young age, it stemmed from the absence of processing her grief. No one talked about her sadness, anger, or sense of abandonment.

Still, as an adult, Treadway finds that people feel uncomfortable talking about death, “I get it. Talking about death can be difficult,” says the author of the recently published self-help book “Six Healing Questions: A Gentle Path to Healing Childhood Loss of a Parent.” “Part of the reason it’s hard is that we have little experience having these conversations. When I was a child, adults spoke in hushed tones about death or never spoke of it at all. I wondered if there was something shameful, or morally questionable, about dying. And no one ever asked me about my feelings of loss, guilt, and anger over my parents’ deaths.”

These feelings can be exacerbated during the holiday season when everyone else seems to be joyously celebrating with their loved ones. “Loss is always difficult for children, but can be especially emotionally challenging during the holiday season,” says Treadway.

Treadway says she wrote her book with two readers in mind: those who experienced loss of their own parents during their childhood, and people who want to support children who have experienced loss. “I hope that the years of research I have done offer comfort and guidance to people struggling with loss,” she says. “The loss of a parent leaves deep wounds, but that doesn’t mean we have to experience grief for the rest of our lives,” she says. “There are ways to honor, commemorate, and celebrate our loved ones in a way that empowers and heals us.”

**10-year-old Francis Parker student releases second book**

10-year-old author Arden Pala returns with another exciting chapter to capture the imagination of young readers. “The Adventures of Noah’s Flying Car Through Turkey” is the second in the series “The Adventures of Noah’s Flying Car.” Arden continues to whimsically embrace the unique and beautiful aspects of culture and togetherness.

It is important for Arden to communicate to young readers the goodwill gestures and golden rules of being inclusive and welcoming, despite our differences. No matter where we come from, we are all human and our cultural differences give us unique lenses and perspectives of the world. Sharing and acceptance are qualities that are at the heart of Arden’s adventurous tales.

A creative and dedicated fifth grader, Arden attends Francis Parker School in San Diego. In addition to writing, he loves professional theater and will be acting with the Old Globe in Balboa Park this upcoming holiday season.

Arden’s first book sold more than 5,000 copies with all proceeds donated to low-income youth. Partial proceeds of this book will be donated to homeless pets.
Mayoral candidate Barbara Bry signs the Workplace Equity & Civility Initiative.

(Photograph courtesy National Conflict Resolution Center)

The San Diego LGBT Community Center announced Oct. 16 the 2019 inductees into the Benjamin F. Dillingham, III & Bridget Wilson LGBT Veterans Wall of Honor. Established immediately after the repeal of the “don’t ask, don’t tell” (DADT) policy in 2011, the LGBT Veterans Wall of Honor recognizes lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) veterans with ties to San Diego who served their country with distinction despite the ban on LGBT service, which was in place decades before DADT. By recognizing our country’s brave, bold, and beautiful diversity, this wall of honor serves as a role model for advancing equality for all. The LGBT Veterans Wall of Honor commemorates these veterans’ lives in hopes that their courage, bravery and sacrifices will continue to inspire future generations.

The 2019 San Diego LGBT Veterans Wall of Honor inductees are Eugene Burkard, USAF; David Byrd, U.S. Navy; Lee Lozano-Osier, USN; Ruby Phillips, U.SN; Jackson Redmond, USA; Gary Wayne Rees, USN; Wallace Bruce Shank, Jr., USAP; Frank Stirnii, USN.

The public is invited to join the community in honoring the inductees at the Nov. 7 ceremony from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at The Center.

$4 MILLION DESIGNATED FOR CITY HEIGHTS PARK

The City Council approved a package of capital improvement project funding including over $4.7 million for parks in District 9 on Oct. 14. The funds will go to the three District 9 communities of City Heights, El Cerrito, and Southcrest. The City Heights Swim Center is receiving $3,990,681 for comprehensive repairs to the pool.

“This funding is important for quality of life in District 9,” said Council President Georgette Gomez. “The residents and I have been working hard to get to this point and it’s a great start for what we have planned across all our communities. I’m excited that the City Heights Pool will get the comprehensive repairs it needs.”

CITY COUNCIL APPROVES VENDOR CONTRACTS FOR I-15/MID-CITY BRIDGE DECKS

The City Council approved agreements with the California Department of Transportation on Oct. 22, that will allow local businesses to rent spaces at the El Cajon Boulevard and University Avenue transit plazas or bridge decks above Interstate 15. Council President Georgette Gomez said, “The ability to activate the El Cajon Boulevard bridge decks for both residents and transit commuters is an exciting opportunity to bring even more economic vitality and walkability to this vibrant area. This is an example of strong local and state partnerships to strengthen our communities.”

The City Heights community has reportedly been eager to activate the area that is part of the I-15 between North Park and Mid-City. The action today will allow local businesses to set up shop on the bridge decks to not only increase their economic return but also walkability along the transit route.

In 1985, the city of San Diego and Caltrans entered into an agreement for the construction of Interstate 15 freeway and bridge decks through Mid-City communities. As part of the original agreement, the city was granted rights for any parks or other developments on decks spanning the freeway. With the action on Oct. 22, the city is taking the next step to enable vendors to activate the bridge deck plaza areas on El Cajon Boulevard and University Avenue.

EMPLOYERS JOIN WORKPLACE EQUITY & CIVILITY INITIATIVE

Lawyers Club invites all regional employers to adopt the Workplace Equity & Civility Initiative, a statement that the employer commits to strive for work environments free of sexual harassment and gender discrimination by adopting and enforcing policies that promote pay equity; respectful workplace speech, language and conduct; environments where employees feel safe to speak and report concerns: education for all employees and measurable strategies to evaluate the education’s effectiveness; and positive engagement from employees regarding these issues.

Twenty local employers already have signed on to the Workplace Equity & Civility Initiative Commitment, including the San Diego City Attorney’s Office, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce, Athena San Diego, San Diego County Regional Airport Authority, and a number of law firms and nonprofit organizations.

The Initiative began as a response to the #MeToo movement and brought together community leaders in a collaborative effort to address in a positive and productive way the means to stamp out workplace harassment while at the same time promoting equal pay in the workplace.

Through the Initiative, Lawyers Club and its partners seek to inspire and empower companies to create workplace cultures that make San Diego America’s finest place to work. “Without pay equity, diversity and civility in the workplace, we cannot advance women in the workplace,” Lawyers Club President Elvira Cortez said. “We hope this Initiative will increase opportunities and create better workplaces for everyone in San Diego.”

“The employers who have already signed on to the commitment understand that accountability and education will lead to changes in the workplace that are difficult to address through legislation,” San Diego City Council President Pro Tem Barbara Bry said. “We already have laws on the books addressing these issues, but we still experience the same problems in the workplace. Through this initiative, we can work together to make San Diego more equitable for all of our region’s workforce.”

The Initiative provides resources for employers, including tool kits developed by Lawyers Club to provide information about workplace harassment laws, as well as workshops facilitated by the National Conflict Resolution Center. The workshops include: “The ART of Inclusive Communication,” which addresses how to cultivate inclusive communication in a diverse workforce; “The Exchange,” which provides tools for managers and supervisors to facilitate conversations between employees in conflict situations; and “The Bystander Challenge,” which covers how to empower bystanders to speak up when they see inappropriate conduct in the workplace.

SANDAG STUDY FINDS HOMELESSNESS ON THE RISE AMONG ARRESTEES

The percent of arrestees who have experienced homelessness continued to increase in 2018, according to a report released by the SANDAG Criminal Justice Research Division on Thursday, about 3 in 4 of arrestees who were ever homeless said they first became homeless in San Diego County. The SANDAG brief, “Homelessness Among Justice System-Involved Individuals in San Diego County,” found that more than 1 in 3 arrestees surveyed described themselves as primarily homeless in the 30 days prior to being booked into jail. The SANDAG brief also found that 2 in 3 surveyed said they had ever experienced homelessness. These numbers continue to rise year after year. In a 2007 report, 50% of arrestees reported ever experiencing homelessness, compared to 66% in 2018. “These data clearly show us that we are losing a number of individuals in our justice system who have housing instability, which is often related to mental health issues and substance abuse,” said SANDAG Criminal Justice Research Director Dr. Cynthia Burke in a release. “A multi-tiered and collaborative approach will be needed to address the concerns of our community related to homelessness and the underlying needs of these individuals.”
Don’t fall for college prep scams

Getting your kids into a good college is a stressful journey for both parents and students, especially when it comes to the prep work that goes into getting a good score on college entrance exams. Numerous companies have capitalized on this stressful time by offering programs to help students study for the SAT or ACT test. Unfortunately, rogue actors have infiltrated this growing market and are impersonating test prep companies to swindle unsuspecting parents out of their credit card number and personal information.

Here’s how you can identify suspicious companies and avoid falling into a college prep scam:

- If you receive a call from someone claiming to be from the College Board – the organization responsible for the SAT and SAT tests – do not give out personal information. Instead hang up. College Board representatives will only make calls to families in response to inquiries made by students.
- Some scammers will email or call asking for credit card or personal information in exchange for test prep materials. Do not give out personal or financial information. This is a common scam currently being used to scam parents.
- Scammers often have the name, address and other personal information of those they call to make themselves more believable. If you did not personally contact a known test prep company asking for test materials, then the caller is likely trying to swindle you.
- Requests for payment through a money wire, gift card or reloadable credit cards are scams.
- If you receive an offer from a test prep company, always research the company. Start by asking your student’s school counselor to confirm the company’s reputation.
- If you receive a call from the College Board, verify they are trying to reach you by calling them yourself. Scammers use technology to make any phone number they want appear on caller ID.
- Even when purchasing services from a legitimate company, always read the fine print.
- If you receive a phone call from a scammer or were scammed by one, here are steps you can take to report them and avoid falling for one again: Contact the company at the Federal Trade Commission.
- Report the scammers to the attorney general.
- Contact your bank and report the transaction.

With the fall season just kicking into full gear, students and their parents have enough to worry about between after-school activities, maintaining a high GPA and getting into college. Preparing for college shouldn’t involve getting scammed. Best wishes to your college-bound child. Remember, each student has his or her own path to success and California has excellent community colleges that can pave the way for a university.

The DA’s Consumer Protection Unit is made up of deputy district attorneys, investigators and paralegals dedicated to protecting consumers and law-abiding businesses from fraudulent or unfair business practices. To report a consumer complaint, you can call 619-531-3507 or email consumer@sdca.org.

—Summer Stephan is San Diego County District Attorney.

FROM PAGE 1 NORTH PARK

Church when it was located on 30th Street in North Park. MCC Senior Pastor Dan Koeshall recalled Parkins as “having the most beautiful Irish tenor voice” when Koeshall was the church’s music director in 2000.

Deputy District Attorney Christina Acordilla Schleicher is expected to ask jurors to convict Brooks of first-degree murder with the special circumstance of murder during a robbery. If convicted, Brooks faces a life term in prison without the possibility of parole.

Lester Roshunn Bell, now 39, testified he was walking down the alley with Brooks, who was holding a baseball bat. “I was kind of shocked when he hit him,” said Bell. “He happened to be a man walking through the alley.”

Bell said he thought Brooks was carrying the bat for “intimidation.” The jury is aware that Bell pleaded guilty to voluntary manslaughter and faces up to 11 years in prison when he is sentenced on Nov. 15.

Bell was implicated in the crime because he asked an ex-girlfriend who worked at a clothing store if he could run someone else’s credit card to buy some clothes. Parkins’ credit card was used the same day and she called the request because it annoyed her. “Don’t get me in trouble,” she recalled telling Bell.

Also implicated was Terrence Maurice Brown, now 38, who signed the credit card at the clothing store. Brown has pleaded guilty to robbery and faces five years in prison when he is sentenced Nov. 15.

Ford accused Brown last week of wielding the bat that killed Parkins, but Brown denied it, saying he was the getaway driver and was never in the alley. Brown testified that Brooks and Bell came running back to the car “kind of giggling about the situation,” Brown quoted Bell as saying “Brooks went [obscene] and hit somebody in the head.”

Brown said he asked Brooks what happened, and Brooks leaned forward and said: “Mind your own and you’ll live long”— a phrase Brown said he interpreted as a threat. Brown said the expression is common and it means, “you didn’t hear what you heard: you didn’t see what you saw.”

On cross-examination by Ford, Brooks became irritable and told the defense attorney, “Your client committed a crime.”

“[He] Brooks wants to be a coward and not man up and admit [what he did],” said Brown. “I never hit Mr. Parkins. I don’t know what Mr. Parkins looks like. Your client knows what Mr. Parkins looks like.”

Also testifying was San Diego Police Detective Jovanna Derrough, who said she asked Brooks in 2018 in North Carolina if he recalled details of a murder in North Park. She said Brooks told her “Oh, the bat,” without her mentioning what type of weapon. Derrough said Brooks described the victim as “the old white dude.” She said Brooks spontaneously added it was “down an alley in North Park.”

Anthony Johnson, a former police officer and now district attorney investigator, testified he requested additional DNA testing on the pants pockets in 2018.

Another witness was Philippe Poncey, a French teacher who was honored in 2009 as one of three Teachers of the Year by the San Diego Unified School District. Poncey testified he helped notice a parked car whose engine was running “nasty” that day. He said the driver started “sliding down” in the seat as if he did not want to be seen, which was within a few minutes of the slaying. Poncey couldn’t identify the driver.

Brooks, Bell, and Brown all remain in jail.

— Neal Putnam is a local courthouse reporter.
The San Diego Museum of Art (SDMA) kicked off the opening of its new exhibit “Abstract Revolution” with a popular after-hours event on Thursday, Oct. 17. Guests were told to wear their boldest and brightest outfits to celebrate Abstract Expressionism — outside the male lens.

The exhibit showcases the oft-overlooked women who drove the movement, which began in post-World War II New York. The significance of the contributions made to Abstract Expressionism by [Jackson] Pollock and his male contemporaries should not be underestimated, but nor should the contributions of the many female artists who not only helped to found the movement but who continued to define abstraction for many decades. “Abstract Revolution” features the work of important female artists, including Lee Krasner, Elaine de Koonig, Helen Frankhahler and Deborah Remington.

The event “Culture & Cocktails” spread the theme of the new exhibit throughout the entire museum. Galleries normally dedicated to early American art were converted to host a Rainbow Exposure photo booth and tables where guests designed their own bandanas. Attendees played with color in an area for spin art. Makeup artists were on hand to add Abstract Expressionist-inspired face paint to offset guests’ daring, bold outfits.

The entrance of the San Diego Museum of Art transformed into a dance floor. Eagle Steakhouse. The light cocktail tail was made with clementine Svedka Vodka and fresh Hawaiian pineapple.

The event attracted so many guests, not only was the central dance floor moderated by DJ Amanda Malcolm-Brown, but many of the galleries also filled with crowds to see permanent exhibits, with Malcolm-Brown’s beats pulsing through the walls. The “Abstract Revolution” exhibit will be on display until Feb. 23, 2020, and the next “Culture & Cocktails” event will occur early next year.

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

The Essential Objectives of Estate Planning

By: Dick McEntyre and Chris von der Lieth, Attorneys at Law

The essential objectives of estate planning are:

1. To eliminate or minimize probate fees. “Probate fees” are attorney’s and executor’s fees allowed by law in a court-supervised administration of one’s estate. One means of eliminating, or at least reducing, probate fees is by creating a revocable living trust.

2. To eliminate or minimize federal estate tax (“FET”). If you are married and have a substantial combined net worth, be sure to take advantage of “portability” – the additional of the first spouse to die’s unused lifetime exclusion amount (from federal estate taxes) to the surviving spouse’s lifetime exclusion amount. To obtain this portability present law requires the filing of a federal estate tax return following the death of the first spouse to die.

3. T to eliminate or minimize probate fees, consider purchasing an umbrella liability insurance policy (e.g., auto, homeowners insurance coverage). One thing you can do here is purchase automobile insurance on your auto or home insurance policies. Chase an umbrella liability insurance policy for your life insurance policies.

4. To minimize the risk from a damage award against you (for example, from auto accident liability in excess of your coverage). One thing you can do here is purchase an umbrella liability insurance policy through the insurance company providing your auto or home insurance policies.

5. Most importantly, to be certain that your estate will pass to those beneficiaries you desire to have it by so designating them in a trust and/or will or other appropriate dispositive document(s). The above statements are generalizations only and are not to be taken as legal advice for the reader’s particular situation.

Dick F. McEntyre practices law in the area of estate planning and administration, having served the San Diego community as a lawyer for over 40 years. Chris von der Lieth is a California estate planning attorney. They can be reached at 2615 Camino Del Rio South, Suite 101 (Telephone (619) 221-0279); www.richardfmcentyre.com.

The sun-down series also brought together a mix of culinary delights, including the Taco Picasso food truck, complimentary salads from Napizza, and lemon cupcakes as well as the evening’s signature cocktail “The VIP” from Del Frisco’s Double Eagle Steakhouse. The light cocktail tail was made with clementine Svedka Vodka and fresh Hawaiian pineapple.

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How to become motivated to work out in the mornings

If you are ready to get your workouts done in the morning, you're making a great decision. There are a lot of benefits to working out first thing in the morning. In this article, we will talk about how doing this can benefit your quality of life and what you should do to get started and make working out in the morning a habit.

The first and most obvious benefit to working out in the morning is that you get it over and done with. You don't have your entire day to make up excuses to skip your workout or have something else come up that takes your time away from you. If you wake up just a bit earlier than normal, you can get your sweat session out of the way and then go on with the rest of your day.

Once you start doing this, you will probably find that it is actually easier to work out in the morning than it is to save it for the end of the day. You aren't working out on a full stomach, nor are you starving and anxiously awaiting dinner. Your stomach is relatively empty, versus completely barren as it is after work, in most cases.

Plus, if you exercise in the morning, it will help you improve your sleep. Working out too close to bedtime keeps you up at night and will lessen your quality of sleep, making you even more tired throughout the day. But if you work out in the morning, not only will you sleep better at night but you will have more energy during the day.

So how can you coax your body into getting up even earlier and actually getting out there to exercise?

First, you need to start by setting a strict bedtime and sticking to it. You want to get about eight hours of sleep every night, so depending on what time you need to wake up to get your exercise in, you need to go to bed accordingly. Doing this for a few weeks will help get your body into the routine, and eventually you won't even need to set an alarm for the morning. You will just naturally get tired at the same time every day and your body will wake up at the same time every morning.

But before you get to that point, you will want to set a loud alarm that doesn't give you the option to hit snooze. Keep your alarm across the room so you actually have to get out of bed to turn it off when it goes off. This will help ensure that you are up when you need to be.

Set out everything you need for your workout the night before. Get your water ready and put your keys by your headphones so you can just get up and go. One pro tip that you can do (if it is comfortable) is to actually sleep in your workout clothes. Most workout clothes are pretty comfortable and allow you to move around, so they are similar to your pajamas anyway. This way, you can literally get out of bed and leave.

Make sure that you have a playlist that you are excited to listen to in the morning to get you going. Start with your favorite song, and if you have to get in the car to drive to the gym, listen to your playlist in the car to get you pumped up.

If you don't think you will be able to get yourself up every morning alone, either find a workout buddy to keep you accountable for your exercise or sign up for an early morning exercise class. You are less likely to let other people down who are expecting you to do something, than you are to let yourself down if you really just want to go back to sleep and put your workout on the back burner. Also, if you spend money on a trainer or a class, you won't want that money to go to waste.

Once you start working out in the morning, you will find that it is easier than you thought and you will stick to it. It will become a habit that is part of your daily routine.

**Fitness Together**

Mission Hills offers personal training with qualified professionals by regular appointment in private suites. **Exercise and nutritional programs are custom designed to fit your needs and abilities. Call 619-794-0014 for more information or to schedule a free fitness diagnostic and personal training session. See what others are saying about us on Yelp.**

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**A FEW SMART IDEAS TO HELP YOU SAVE.**

Here are some things you can do this season to save between 4 p.m. and 9 p.m. when energy prices are higher:

- Do laundry before 4 p.m. or after 9 p.m. when energy prices are lower.
- Caulk/weatherstrip doors and windows to save 10-20% on heating.
- Let hot foods cool off (1 hr max.) before placing them in the fridge.
- Turn off computers, TV’s and other electronics when not in use.
- Prepare meals in a slow cooker outside the hours of 4 p.m. and 9 p.m.

Find more tips at sdge.com/whenmatters

© 2019 San Diego Gas & Electric Company. All trademarks belong to their respective owners. All rights reserved. Actual savings may vary and will depend on various factors, including geographic location, weather conditions, equipment installed, usage rates and similar factors.
Some people think the Queen of England has an easy job, riding around in a carriage, giving that famous imperial wave, and taping a nice Christmas message every year.

But Moira Buffini’s “Handbagged” gives a different picture while drawing a portrait of the current queen’s somewhat rocky relationship with Margaret Thatcher during the tumultuous 11 years of Thatcher’s tenancy as Prime Minister.

Kim Strassburger directs the strange and wondrous “Handbagged,” which plays through Nov. 17 at Moxie Theatre.

Since what goes on between those two leaders has historically been kept private, we’ll probably never really know the queen’s opinion about the Iron Lady, either now or during Thatcher’s 1979-1990 reign as PM.

But Buffini offers a riveting and mostly amusing glimpse at what they might have thought of each other at the time. She does it in a most unusual way: with two actors playing each woman. In the script, the younger queen is called Liz (and played here by Debra Wanger), while the older queen is called Q (played by Sandy Campbell).

Likewise, Thatcher the younger, called Mags, is played by Lisel Gorell-Getz, while the older Iron Lady is called simply T and played by Linda Libby. The dual characters often speak to each other, to the other duet and to us directly—and they frequently contradict each other. It’s a fascinating theatrical gambit that requires a bit of attention, but is well worth it.

There are also two men in the play, who offer some 17 instant characterizations of servants, ministers, husbands or whatever the script calls for. They are magnificently played by Max Macke and Durwood Murray. Though in the play primarily to provide illustrative or historical notes for those who weren’t around at the time, they get their chance too, most especially when portraying U.S. President Ronald and Nancy Reagan.

Rupert Murdoch, the right-wing millionaire who in 1981 bought London’s major paper The Times, also shows up in amusing ways.

The title refers not to the use of a handbag as a weapon, but to the use of a “verbal attack to crush a person ruthlessly and forcefully.” Both of these women are capable of first-class handbagging.

Buffini sees the main problem between Thatcher and Elizabeth as a philosophical difference about the purpose of government. Thatcher is more interested in individual rights than social cohesion. She wants as little regulation of business as possible and is horrified when Liz suggests that “we in the Commonwealth are fortunate enough to belong to a worldwide comradeship.” Their styles differ too. The queen is subtle and reserved in her word choices, whereas Thatcher’s unflinching, bull-in-a-china-shop approach earned her the nickname “Maggietollah” from British Member of Parliament Neil Kinnock.

“Handbagged” started as a one-act in 2010. It was revised and toured in 2013. It seems that a few comments have been inserted that, shall we say, have relevance to U.S. policy today.

Director Kim Strassburger is blessed with a powerhouse cast that seems to take delight in presenting this delightfully peculiar piece. If I had to pick a favorite, it would have to be Murray, whose array of characters is absurdly, wonderfully varied and he is terrific at each one. But they are all brilliant.

The design team is excellent as well, especially in the costume and wig departments (credit Danita Lee and Missy Bradstreet, respectively).

Julie Lorenz’s set design is simple and unobtrusive, with a big jagged Union Jack at the rear and very little furniture. Lighting and sound are well handled by Cynthia Bloodgood and Mason Pilevsky. And credit Vanessa Dinning with the coaching of all those accents.

Get your tickets now. “Handbagged” is one of the best plays of the year.

— Jean Lowerison is a long-standing member of the San Diego Theatre Critics Circle and can be reached at infodame@gmail.com.
The gourmet sandwich shop, Wich Addiction, located in Friars Mission Center plaza off Friars Road, just launched a noteworthy brunch menu featuring items such as house-cured Canadian bacon, brisket Benedict, hand-breaded chicken with scratch-made biscuits and more. The eatery is owned by Mark Manning and his wife, Dyann, who is a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America. They also own a location in Mira Mesa.

Fried grasshoppers are coming to Hillcrest. And they can be washed down with margaritas, Mexican craft beers, and wines from the Valle de Guadalupe in Baja when Swami’s Cocina de Cocina, previously occupied by Brazen BBQ, brings to the neighborhood a full-service bar and lounge area, a fast-casual dining section, and an outdoor patio deck.

The bar offers more than 30 tequilas and high-end mezcals along with local beers on tap. From the food menu, customers will find their favorite tacos and burritos in addition to skirt fajitas, ceviche rojos, and seasoned pork (al pastor) carved from a vertical spit. There’s also a sampler platter stocked with taquitos, mini chimichangas, chicken wings, guacamole and more.

“The community has been so loving and welcoming since we opened. Many customers said they were missing us so much,” noted owner Luis Diaz Jr. note, who closed the former Hillcrest location earlier this year after Dunkin Donuts took over the structure’s lease. The new spot, he pointed out, also features a back lot with 12 parking spaces for patrons.

The long-awaited Pachamama, which specializes in cuisines from several South American countries, has opened on Adams Avenue under the ownership of Vick Vannucci, an Argentinean-born professional tennis player turned model. The food is touted as “100% organic” and with many options falling into the categories of vegan, gluten-free and paleo-friendly.

Local art, live greenery and earthy textures pervade throughout the space, which also features outdoor seating. A portion of the restaurant’s sales will be given to animal-welfare organizations. 3737 Adams Ave., 619-738-3737, whoispachamama.com.

The newly open Los Panchos Tacos & Cantina is the stylish re-incarnation of the drive-through taco shop that operated one address away for nearly 20 years. Its return to Hillcrest (in the space previously occupied by Brazen BBQ) brings to the neighborhood an all-service bar and lounge area, a fast-casual dining section, and an outdoor patio deck.

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Take a culinary journey around the Mediterranean at this Normal Heights restaurant. (By Frank Sabatini Jr.)

A family-style Mediterranean feast is in store at Hanna’s Gourmet in Normal Heights, where chef-owner Hanna Tesfamichael showcases globally inspired cuisine on both her regular menu and in month dinner specials.

The upcoming six-dish Mediterranean event will be held at 5:30 and 7:30 p.m., Nov. 21. It will feature chicken kabobs with green wheat tabbouleh, baked salmon in orange-wine sauce, roasted Moroccan root vegetables, Italian rum cake and more. The cost is $45 per person. 2864 Adams Ave., 619-280-5600, hannagourmet.com.

— Frank Sabatini Jr. can be reached at fsabatini@san.com.
San Diegans never stopped mourning the closure of Da Kine’s some 11 years ago. The eatery became cherished for its Hawaiian plate lunches since originally opening in Pacific Beach in 1997. Within many culinary circles, the very mention of kalua pork or loco moco drew rapid responses citing Da Kine’s for serving the best versions of those dishes locally.

Oh, and that picnic-style macaroni salad served as a meal side-kick. It was nothing to sneeze at either. It endeared the palates of consumers with its teasing bits of green onions, carrots and celery — all tossed in a light mayo dressing.

But those days of deprivation are now behind us.

Founder Nelson Ishii (“Uncle Nelson”) ran three locations of Da Kine’s — in Pacific Beach, Point Loma and National City before gradually closing them after his wife was diagnosed with a terminal illness. While serving as her caretaker, he maintained a catering operation. His recent emergence in The Presidio strip plaza near west Mission Valley isn’t so much a retooling of his retail business, but rather a pure comeback featuring the exact recipes he disappeared from the lines that ran out the door.

He added the kitchen that day went through 320 pounds of teriyaki chicken, 280 pounds of kalua pork and more than 150 pounds of Korean-style short ribs. I showed up shortly thereafter with a same-day companion. Here is what we consumed in the modest-size eatery, starting with our top three favorites.

The teriyaki chicken yielded a heap of thigh meat deeply marinated in what might possibly have included Japanese rice wine (mirin) or sake. Or maybe not. Ishii keeps his native Hawaiian recipes a secret. Either way, the chicken boasted a teasing semi-sweet flavor, which fortunately tasted nothing like commercial teriyaki sauce.

Loco moco is a poor man’s dish that supposedly originated on The Big Island in the 1940s. It features a fluffy mound of shredded pork and more than 150 pounds of teriyaki sauce. Ishii is both surprised and invigorated by the rousing reception he’s received since ending his hiatus.

Ishii uses reduced-sodium dressing. Here it makes a classic appearance in musubi, which are molded rice squares with fitted slices of Spam on top, and wrapped in thin sheets of seaweed (nori).

In the pipeline are pork dumpings and a Japanese-Hawaiian noodle dish called saimin. They’re expected to appear on the menu in the coming weeks.

Ishii is both surprised and intrigued by the rousing reception he’s received since ending his hiatus.

“Uncle Nelson’ is back
Da Kine’s reopens with a bang

Restaurant Review
Frank Sabatini Jr.

San Diego’s Largest Vintage & Antique Mall
In conjunction with Consignment Classics
100 + Dealers 40,000 $f of new, vintage & mid-century furniture, vinyl records, new and vintage jewelry, art and mirror frame shop, china, glass, books, vintage clothing, vintage postcards, toys, collectable signs, rugs, art, mirrors, Native American, clocks, watches, garden, patio & much more!

3602 Kurtz Street San Diego, CA 92110 619-291-3000 consignmentclassics.net

Spam. But fear not, this revered canned meat of Hawaii and many Asian countries still lives up to its salty reputation, and it plays finely to the oceanic flavor of the nori while giving the neutral rice a needed zing. We ordered two. My companion gradually warmed up to them. Me? Not so much.

The plate lunches come with two scoops of rice. We each topped them with a choice of the lauded macaroni salad or a green salad sporting noteworthy sesame-soy dressing.

In the pipeline are pork dumpings and a Japanese-Hawaiian noodle dish called saimin. They’re expected to appear on the menu in the coming weeks.

Ishii is both surprised and intrigued by the rousing reception he’s received since ending his hiatus.

“I would like to open two more Da Kine’s within San Diego, and I dream of opening another restaurant that is 100% gluten-free,” he revealed.

Frank Sabatini Jr. is the author of ‘Secret San Diego’ (ECW Press) and began his local writing career more than two decades ago as a staffer for the former San Diego Tribune. You can reach him at fsabatini@san.rr.com.¬
**UPTOWN CALENDAR**

Friday, Nov. 1

**Local author book signing**

Mother Elizabeth Schumacher will be at The Book Catapult at 7:30 p.m. to discuss and sign her UPTOWN CALENDAR 2020. Schumacher was associated with Mexican holiday that honors friends and family members who have passed on. The entrance to the Balboa Park Conservancy is free. Meet at The Book Catapult at 5 p.m. **Friday, Nov. 1**

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**RECURRING EVENTS**

**North Park Thursday Market**
Shop at more than 20 tents with local artisans offering seasonal groceries, fresh food, and hand-crafted arts and crafts. 3:30-7 p.m. Saturdays, 3535 University Ave. **Weekdays**

**A one-woman show written and directed by Natala Wiesinger**

**Saturday, Nov. 14**

“Awkward but Grateful”

A one-woman show written and performed by Natala Wiesinger and directed by Grant Gelvin. Natalia is from Slovenia. She is a Yoga and Meditation teacher.

**Saturday, Nov. 21**

“Beyond the Wall”

A play about the history of the Cold War, the Berlin Wall, and the events leading up to its fall.

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**Monday, Nov. 4**

**I Can't Help Having Hats**

I Can't Help Having Hats is a collection of short stories written and directed by Lilly Hoang and Kamal Ali. 10:30 Juniper St.

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**Saturday, Nov. 14**

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A play about the history of the Cold War, the Berlin Wall, and the events leading up to its fall.

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**Tuesday, Nov. 5**

**Baby Time**

Baby Time is a weekly program at the Mission Valley Library. Bring your baby and a friend. Ages 0-3.

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**Wednesday, Nov. 13**

**Our Neighborhood Stories: Old Town**

The Mission Hill-Hillcrest/Knox Library plans to host a series of programs highlighting the rich history of the neighborhood in the Uptown area, in partnership with the Mission Historical Society, the Knox Free Library, the Library, and the San Diego History Center. Bring your passion for community to this interactive and thought-provoking conversations about our communities. This month's event at 6:30 p.m. will focus on the history of Old Town.

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**Thursday, Nov. 14**

**Shakespeare’s Hamlet**

Gather in OP’s open-air amphitheater for an evening of Shake-speare in the Park! Please join us November 14th for the opening night of Our Lady of Peace presents Shakespeare’s Hamlet. Due to construction, this performance will be held outdoors in a pitch black tent to provide a comfortable sitting, standing chairs and cushions will be sold at the event. Supplies are sold, so they will be on sale first come, first serve basis.

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**Friday, Nov. 8**

**Zooarchaon weekend**

More than 70 programmers, designers, and re-creators will gather at the San Diego Zoo Institute for Conservation Research to take part in the 2019 Zooarchaon in San Diego Zoo's Tech-savvy participants from throughout the region will work together to solve solutions to problems facing wildlife around the world and contribute to international wildlife trafficking.

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**Monday, Nov. 4**

**Hillcrest Market**

A street market featuring original San Diego artists! Local and regional arts, crafts, clothing and furniture, and food and wine vendors.

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**Saturday, Nov. 2**

**Race for the Cure**

Susan G. Komen San Diego will hold its 2nd annual Race for the Cure on Sunday, Nov. 3, in Pacific Beach. The event is for runners, bikers, and walkers to raise funds for breast cancer research and support programs.

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**Monday, Nov. 4**

**Toddlers Story Time**

A story about the children and their toys.

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**Uptown Crossword**

**CLUES ACROSS**
1. Has stopped hill 37. French river
2. Five usually accompanies it 38. Told on
3. Skill at 39. Fall back or spring forward
4. Unembarrassed 40. Famed traveling journalist
5. Fire usually accompanies it 41. Peyton’s little brother
6. Talked 42. Soviet Socialist Republic
7. Flat-topped hill 43. Where the current is fast
8. Where teens spend their days 44. Welsh river
9. Prefix meaning “within” 45. Welsh river
10. Skill at 46. A Philly football player
11. Strong hostilities 47. Records brain activity
12. Skill at 48. Aromatic powder
13. B complex vitamin 49. A hot, massive star
14. Where teens spend their days 50. Orange-brown
15. Go quickly 51. Circular panpipe
16. Unembarrassed 52. Separates DNA and RNA
17. Toast 53. Mexican agave
18. A team’s best pitcher 54. Ship as cargo
19. Used to anoint 55. Self-contained aircraft unit
20. Rust fungi 56. Encourage
23. Forests have lots of them 57. Atomic #52 (abbr.)
24. Unhappy 58. About latitude
25. Prickly shrub 59. Bar bill
26. Large, flightless bird 60. Adult female
27. Trims by cutting 61. OJ trial judge
28. A Philly culinary special 62. One’s grandmother
29. Weepy 63. Dark brown
30. Expectorated 64. Hot, massive star
31. The Caspian is one 65. Withstand
32. It might be on the back 66. Small Motes
33. Some practice it 67. Bar bill
34. Spy organization 68. A Philly culinary special
35. Female body part 69. A Philly culinary special
36. Softly with the tongue 70. A Philly culinary special
71. A Philly culinary special

**CLUES DOWN**
1. Advanced degree 29. Wacky
2. Gose with flour 30. It might be on the back
3. The Cappan is one 31. Spy organization
4. Accumulate on the surface of 32. Female body part
5. Vascular systems or plants 33. Came back from behind
6. A popular kids magazine 34. Fall back or spring forward
7. A can be a heat-pitcher 35. Where the current is fast
8. Vandalized a car 36. Forests have lots of them
9. Fire usually accompanies it 37. Forests have lots of them
10. Used to anoint 38. Forests have lots of them
11. Skill at 39. Forests have lots of them
12. Skill at 40. Forests have lots of them
13. Skill at 41. Forests have lots of them
14. Skill at 42. Forests have lots of them
15. Skill at 43. Forests have lots of them
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40. Skill at 68. Forests have lots of them
41. Skill at 69. Forests have lots of them
42. Skill at 70. Forests have lots of them
43. Skill at 71. Forests have lots of them

**PUZZLES/NEWS**

**FROM PAGE 1**

**DOG PARK**

The community factions made their concerns public at an Oct. 22 town hall meeting.

Although it was the third formal gathering regarding the dog park, this town hall was the first that allowed for community input. More than 40 locals attended to vocalize their concerns and hear from City of San Diego representatives.

“We hear people in the morning and at 10 at night,” a woman who identified herself as Rosie said during the open forum portion of the meeting. “We really would like to work together to get a dog park at (another site). Our bedroom is back by the dog park and we get woken up at least five times a week. "We can’t use our backyard because it’s dusty and loud. We’re not anti-dog park. We’re anti-dog park right behind our house.”

Others came in support of the dog park, which is one of the few places dogs can play off-leash. Ahead of the meeting, Denise Douglas-Hiley emailed Uptown News to say, “The dog-park has been poorly maintained (probably funding issues), but has been widely used by the heavily dog-centric populations of Normal Heights, Kensington, Talmadge, North Park and City Heights. It is the only off-leash park for miles around. “I believe that this dog-park serves as a vital resource in our mid-city neighborhoods. Most of us wish to live in close knit communities with neighbors that participate and interact with one another. However, many of us come home after a long day at work and isolate ourselves in our little boxes we call home. A dog-park, though it may be small matter in the scheme of things, provides this kind of interaction between many diverse people who might not normally connect and creates bonds that help make a neighborhood stronger and a real community."

The City of San Diego has drafted a renovation plan for the park, which includes a community garden in the space where the off-leash area currently sits. Under this plan, a new dog area would be constructed away from homes. The project would require a land deal with CalTrans, which owns the space for the proposed new off-leash area.

However, the office of City Council member Chris Ward says there are limited financial resources available to carry out the plan and no timetable for including them in city budgets. Elizabeth Chennam-Chetty, of the city’s Recreation Council Advisory Group told Uptown News $250,000 has been allocated to the project and a planning committee has begun work to prepare the area for construction of a new park.

When pre-development is finished, the project will still require federal or state funding to complete the project.

Facilitators of the town hall hope the two factions will reach an informal compromise that can be used to make bids for grants. The project is expected to cost more than $5 million in total.

“The previous conversations with dog owners and the residents near the park have been very cordial,” Chennam-Chetty said. “We wanted to take this opportunity to have everyone advocate for themselves and find a solution for our community. I see a lot of potential in this group. "We have to compromise and find some sort of solution in the interim, then we — dog owners and residents — can advocate for ourselves with the city for a solution that can work."

— Jorden P. Bales is a multimedia journalist based in Southern California. Follow him on twitter @jbp differential
The event in the state park is more than a street fair as so many other Dia de los Muertos celebrations in the area have become. We embrace and celebrate the meaning of the holiday and people – especially families – are attracted to that. People of all ages and ethnicities attend. The state park event sees many families attending together with multiple generations of progeny.

“The sentiment of setting aside time to remember our ancestors and loved ones who are no longer with us with reverence and joy is very appealing. It has truly started to become an international celebration. Many cultures all over the world embrace the concept of celebrating the dead at certain times of the year, so Dia de los Muertos fits into those traditions as well,” he said.

Attendees echoed the sentiment like Robert Barros, Day of the Dead artist, who said: “We love the Day of the Dead celebration in Old Town as a place to showcase our Day of the Dead art. It’s a refreshing break from the wild street-fair environment of most events around the holiday. The focus on tradition, remembering the dead and art has us choose this event every year.”

Eric Minella, manager of Historic Interpretation at Fiesta de Reyes in Old Town San Diego State Historic Park said, “I’ve been creating altars and larger-than-life public displays for Dia de los Muertos in Fiesta de Reyes and Old Town for more than 10 years. It has been a joy to watch the celebration grow in popularity each year because the sentiment behind it is so touching – and I think it’s important for kids and families to embrace.”

For information and a complete schedule of events, visit fiestadereyes.com/ddlm or dayofthedeadsd.com.

— Jill Diamond is a Southern California freelance writer with a penchant for interesting historical pieces. Reach her at jillDiamondHistory@gmail.com. o