Apple Tree Market makes comeback in Ocean Beach

Apple Tree Market, after a nearly four-year hiatus, is on its way back in Ocean Beach. “It’s taken a year or so – too long – and we’re very anxious, and excited: we’re almost there,” said Saad Hirmez, owner of the independent Apple Tree Market, who expects to re-open on Newport Avenue “in late February or early March.”

Hirmez’s new, smaller retail space of about 7,000 square feet at 4976 Newport Ave, is about half the size of his previous spot at 4949 Santa Monica Ave. (a CVS since 2015). The Hirmez family had operated the Apple Tree Market grocery business on Santa Monica Avenue – ever since they took over the former Safeway in 1989 – was Ocean Beach’s only full-time grocery store until the business lost its lease.

The new retail space has gone through several reincarnations over the years. It was a Bank of America building for a time.

SEE MARKET, Page 20

THOUSANDS PROTEST REFUGEE BAN AT SD AIRPORT

After President Trump signed an executive order on Jan. 27 banning refugees from entering the country for 120 days and immigrants from seven predominantly Muslim nations – Iran, Iraq, Syria, Sudan, Libya, Yemen and Somalia – for three months, protests erupted at airports across the U.S. In San Diego, more than 2,000 protesters were at the airport’s Terminal 2 on Sunday, Jan. 29 condemning the ban and supporting refugees and immigrants.

SEE LIGHTS, Page 20

Lights up at PLHS stadium

Four 72-foot-tall light towers now installed, neighbors not happy

A meeting between neighbors and the San Diego Unified School District over a lawsuit challenging the school district’s decision to install stadium lights at Point Loma High School did not yield immediate results and a June trial before a judge is set.

Meanwhile, the new light towers were installed last week at Pointers stadium, to the chagrin of some. Each of the four light towers is 72-feet tall and is designed to project LED lights onto the playing surface with minimal spillover to nearby homes.

David Dick, a Peninsual Community Planning Board member speaking on his own behalf, noted the new PLHS light towers are “72-feet tall, which is 20-feet shorter than similar installations at other school sites. The reduction in height was required for the district...”
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Point Loma High School students ask Trump to apologize in video

Point Loma High School students in Anthony Palmiotto’s Cinematic Art Program were upset about the results of the November election. So they did something about it. Led by sophomore Melissa Deorsola, a Latina whose family is from Brazil, a group of half a dozen students did a 90-second public service announcement asking President Trump to apologize to minorities he offended during his presidential campaign.

The cleverly crafted and edited spot is interspersed with video clips of Trump from his controversial campaign. It includes comments from students representing different minorities at Point Loma High.

Pointing out she took a “mental health day” after the Nov. 8 election, Deorsola said she was inspired by a previous PSA done by Palmiotto’s students decriying SeaWorld orca shows. The popular marine park, responding to public pressure, has since abandoned orca shows. The popular marine park, responding to public pressure, has since abandoned orca shows. The popular marine park, responding to public pressure, has since abandoned orca shows. The popular marine park, responding to public pressure, has since abandoned orca shows.

“I thought it (video) would be really big for us,” Deorsola said. “Hopefully, it will get more people to realize what’s going on and to want to get involved. I wanted to get that out.”

Palmiotto said students doing PSAs is nothing new in his classes.

“I thought this was a great idea,” said senior Brandon Rodriguez. “It was a way to express our voice as an active citizen. I knew that my voice was important, so I got involved in the video project.”

“Melissa contacted me and expressed her vision, and I thought it was a great idea,” said senior Brandon Rodriguez. “It was a way to express my voice as an active citizen of America ... we wanted to do it in a peaceful manner. I wanted to participate, not for rebellion, but as a means of getting my voice heard.”

Christian Wilson, a senior who is a full-blooded Native American from the Navajo nation in Arizona, said he wanted to use the opportunity...
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Easter Sunrise Service at Cabrillo Monument

Easter is April 16 this year and the gates to Cabrillo National Monument will open at 6 a.m. with the non-denominational service beginning at 6:30 a.m. There is seating for approximately 700 attendees and the public is encouraged to arrive early. The Kiwanis Club of Point Loma will again present an ecumenical Easter Sunrise Service at the Cabrillo National Monument. The services will be held in the lower parking lot, giving those who attend a great early morning panoramic view of San Diego Harbor and the city behind it.

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Some of the business owners honored at the Ocean Beach MainStreet Association’s awards celebration.

Ocean Beach MainStreet Association honors local businesses at annual awards dinner

The Ocean Beach MainStreet Association honored members for their contributions to the Ocean Beach community at its annual awards celebration on Thursday, Jan. 26.

“Our annual awards ceremony is a great occasion to reflect on the past year in Ocean Beach and celebrate the accomplishments of our hard-working merchants, who continuously give back to the community,” said Denny Knox, executive director of OBMA.

The program highlighted events and accomplishments over the past year with a slideshow.

Each year the OBMA committees award individuals and businesses for their contributions to public improvements, public safety, design, promotion, revitalization and expansion within the community.

The OBMA members voted on a People’s Choice winner in each category while the Customer Service Business of the Year was chosen by the public through online voting.

Forty-five businesses/individuals were recognized for their contributions at the event; of those, the following received the People’s Choice for their categories:

Public Safety Committee
SDPD Western Division: Keith Lucas, Assistant Chief of Police; Lt. William Carter for their outstanding work throughout the Ocean Beach community.

Design Committee
OB Brewery for turning a vacant building into a hip, local brewery with amazing views.

Economic Vitality Committee
Wonderland Ocean Pub for bringing employment opportunities to the community.

Promotion Committee
OB Historical Society for promoting Ocean Beach and producing the informative OB Pier Historical brochure.

North OB Committee
OB Woman’s Club for renovating Point Loma Masonic Center for offering the space for the Annual Awards Center.

Community Partner Awards
Newbreak Church for participating in so many local activities and generously donating meeting space, as well as volunteering to help where needed.

Point Loma Landscape for quietly maintaining the plants at the corner of Newport Ave. and Sunset Cliffs Boulevard.

Point Loma Masonic Center for offering the space for the Annual Awards Center.

Union Bank – Justin Johnson, bank manager, for sponsoring the event.

Customer Service Business of the Year
These awards go to the businesses that exemplify the spirit of Ocean Beach and reflect a positive awareness and activity in the community through their exceptional customer service.

First place – Catrina Russell Real Estate.

Some of the business owners honored at the Ocean Beach MainStreet Association’s awards celebration.

- Second place – Tranquil Home Personnel Service.
- Third place – TYSON.

Two special awards were presented at the annual event, Julie Klein was presented the “Sheriff of OB Award” for single-handedly charging forward with the OB Security Program to help protect OB’s commercial district businesses, local shoppers, and visitors. Next, Shane Hardin, son of the late Mike Hardin, founder of Hodad’s, presented the Mike Hardin “Like a Boss” award, which is presented to an outstanding member of the community who reflects Mike Hardin’s spirit, generosity and love of Ocean Beach. This year, the award went to Dave Martin for his contributions and devotion to Ocean Beach.

For more information on the Ocean Beach MainStreet Association, visit www.oceanbeach-sandiego.com.

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UC San Diego Health
FAA disputes increase in noise from SD Airport departures

By DAVE SCHWAB | THE BEACON

A growing perception by some coastal residents from Point Loma to La Jolla that they are hearing more noise from commercial airplanes was disputed by a Federal Aviation Administration official at a Jan. 18 Airport Noise Advisory Committee subcommittee meeting in Liberty Station.

At that meeting, which was to assess historical versus current San Diego International Airport arrivals and departures, the conversation turned instead to spreading noise complaints from residents in Mission and Pacific beaches, as well as La Jolla Shores and Bird Rock. Some long-term residents are insisting they’re hearing loud airplane noises in areas where they never have before.

FAA air traffic manager Barry Davis gave a slideshow presentation Jan. 18 discussing new noise complaints. Concerning the majority of new noise complaints, Davis said the FAA determined that “88 percent of those were attributed to general aviation (private) aircraft and helicopters,” adding “Montgomery Field is the culprit.”

Davis conceded, however, that “the [FAA] still has some work to do.”

Responding to Davis’ remarks, airport watchdog Casey Schnoor, representing Point Loma on the ANAC subcommittee, argued, “New noise complaints are not a valid benchmark. A lot of people are still experiencing noise problems. They’re just not reporting them.”

Following the Jan. 18 subcommittee meeting, Schnoor added, “I strongly do not believe that the information presented can support a conclusion that residents hearing ‘extra noise are misinterpreting what noise is out there to be commercial airlines, when it’s actually general aviation/helicopters.”

Schnoor noted the ANAC subcommittee then determined that the (FAA) presentation “was incomplete as it was intended to study historical migration (if any) of flight tracks from one geographic area to another (i.e. coastal routes migrating northerly up the Peninsula over time, as was demonstrated to the mayor in October 2015, and requested to be provided.”

Debbie Watkins, ANAC subcommittee chair, said the group’s mission is to receive input from all the stakeholders throughout the region, including the various sections of Point Loma, which is most affected due to its proximity to SDIA. She said the goal is to ultimately make recommendations to the full ANAC committee as to what should be done to ensure noise over residential neighborhoods is minimized/mitigated to the largest extent possible.

READ MORE ONLINE AT sdnews.com

An airplane flies over palm trees in Point Loma.
High Tech High holds ‘Soap for Hope’ fundraiser

Students in High Tech High Media Arts in Liberty Station want to use proceeds from a nonprofit, student-run soap company to fund a four-day trip across California to visit eight different colleges.

“In the past, the soap company’s profits have sent kids to college on scholarships and even helped a student’s family whose apartment burned down,” said Jasmin Meyer, a High Tech High junior.

Previously, Meyer noted her school funded the four-day trip across the state to visit colleges.

“But this year, the trip is no longer free,” said Meyer. “At my high school, more than half of the students qualify as economically disadvantaged.”

Meyer noted the student soap company “could be the ticket to revive our hopes for college.” She added, “You have to see the faces of determination and passion at our ‘Soap For Hope’ fundraiser,” details of which are forthcoming.

High Tech High students have an active fundraiser on Go Fund Me at gofundme.com/hthma-class-of-2019-college-trip. For information, email jasmynmeyer@gmail.com.

VIDEO CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Deorsola’s video offered “to speak out for my indigenous people.”

“There’s still a problem with Native Americans being stereotyped,” Wilson said, adding indigenous people continue to suffer disproportionately from “drugs, gangs, violence and suicidal depression,” along with homelessness and substandard housing conditions.

“We’re still getting stereotyped every day,” Wilson said. “Nobody seems to see that.”

Davon Lacy, a senior who is African-American, said he participated in the Trump video because, “I needed to voice my opinion. This was my chance to really speak out. Everybody needs to look at it (video) and understand where we’re coming from.”

Asked what upset her about President Trump’s comments, Deorsola said, “A lot of his stances are often used to create fear in people.”

Citing one example, Deorsola noted, “He wants to have all Muslims register. That only leads to more segregation, and it’s really taking a step back. I just think a lot of his policies are used to separate people that are different than him, that he doesn’t understand. That is not what America stands for.”

Deorsola added she tried to get a Muslim student to participate in her PSA, but they respectfully declined out of fear of potential reprisals.
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Peninsula planners discuss building height limits

In January, the Peninsula Community Planning Board grappled with the vexing issue of the city’s 30-foot building height limit, with a city official explaining to testy residents why it’s been so difficult to amend municipal height regulations.

Robert Vacchi, a Point Loma resident who leads the city’s Development Services Department, discussed city rules governing building heights. A case in point, cited by Vacchi, is the controversial multi-story development on Emerson and Evergreen in Roseville, which many residents believed exceeded the 30-foot height limit. Many residents have complained that the city’s municipal code is now too loosely defined governing how – and where – a building’s height limit is measured.

Vacchi said it was more difficult to make changes to height limits in this case, because the 30-foot height limit was passed by voters with Proposition D, rather than being an action taken by the San Diego City Council.

“It was difficult to find a solution, in part because the law is written, not like a (city) ordinance, where you can go back in and fix it through words,” Vacchi said, noting it was an act passed instead by voters, which he added is tougher to change.

“A (voter-passed) proposition takes precedent over anything the City Council does,” Vacchi said adding, “With existing projects in the pipeline, what California case law says is that, once the city has issued a building permit – you can’t change the rules on them. An audience member called Vacchi out, alleging the city was not being entirely truthful in its stance on present building.”

“I really find a high level of audacity for you to address this crowd and present us with this convoluted logic that has allowed out-of-character structures to be approved in this community,” said the resident. “This has been a deception, and these regulations are for financial gain.”

“Nothing can be changed once the stakes are in the ground,” replied Vacchi.

“This is a hot-button issue in this community, and you’re telling us the city has lost control of it,” pointed out Peninsula Planning Board member Jim Hare.

Hare characterized recent height-limit reform undertaken by the city as “landmark actions with regard to the protection of this community. I just want to say, ‘I appreciate you being here to work through this with us.’”

“We were led to believe the city was going to have a moratorium on (questionable) projects,” said board member Julia Quinn.

“We had no direction from the City Council to have a moratorium on any building permits,” responded Vacchi. “The city recommended going through zoning changes and reducing the amount of collateral damage in the process, and we succeeded in that.”

PCPB met the third Thursday of the month from 6:30 to 9 p.m. in the community room at Point Loma/Hervey Branch Library at 3701 Voltaire St.

Bridging the gap between military, civilian communities

The San Diego Public Library, in collaboration with local nonprofit So Say We All, will host an evening of readings and discussion aimed at helping bridge the gap between military and civilian communities.

Crossing the Military-Civilian Divide: Stories and Conversation will run from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 15, at the Point Loma/Hervey Branch Library.
Folsom named All-CIF First Team for Pointers football

For the first time in several decades, a Point Loma High football player, who is only a junior, has been named to the All-CIF First Team on offense.

Davey Folsom, an interior line- man, stands 6-foot-4 inches tall and weighs 315 pounds. A quiet, polite person off the field, it is his brute strength that drew the attention of opposing players and coaches.

“It’s a major accomplishment,” Folsom said, “and being the first one of this era to do it definitely means something.”

“It’s a heck of an honor,” said Pointer head coach Mike Hastings.

“Making first-team as a senior is a real honor, but Davey made it as a junior,” he said after the team’s annual awards banquet last month. But achieving at this level didn’t come easily.

“I definitely worked for it,” Folsom said. “I trained constantly,” he noted. “I was going out Saturdays and Sundays with (offensive) line coaches, working on my technique and just learning the game better.”

Folsom and the Pointers play in the toughest league in the county, so among opposing coaches who saw him play personally were two (Madison and Cathedral) who guided their Western League teams to state championships.

Perhaps Folsom’s finest moment came during a game against Madi- son.

“On one play Davey picked up the Warhawks’ Army All-America linebacker Sampson Niu (6-foot-1 inch, 215 pounds) and lifted him off the ground, carrying him three yards before putting him on his backside,” said Hastings.

That moment, seen on video passed around to county teams, showcased Folsom’s abilities and skills to a wide audience of knowledgeable football people.

“Coaches from Saints and Cathed- ral had nothing but praise for him,” added Hastings. “After seeing how he played against them they knew he was a monster.”

And what does Folsom hope to do for an encore in his senior year?

“Maybe all-state or all-American,” he said. “We’ll see.”

As might be expected, a number of big-name colleges have Folsom on their radar. Asked to list them, he casually reeled them off.

“A few Pac-12 schools, and I’m definitely looking into them. Schools like UCLA, Cal Berkeley, Washington State, San Diego State, Virginia and Boston College.”

Another league member was per- sonally-rough St. Augustine, while Mira Mesa was the unfortu- nate fifth member and represented the only league victory for the Pointers, who thrashed the Marauders, spoiling their home-coming in a 45-14 blowout.

Overall, the Pointers finished 5- 7, with highlight victories against Ramona, Bonita Vista and a par- ticularly satisfying rebound win in a CIF playoff game against an El Camino team that had defeated them in the season opener.

Head coach Mike Hastings and his assistants recognized the fol- lowing players:

All-Western League


Honorable mention, offense: Antonio Quintanilla, Pablo Hernandez, Alex Washington, Malik Moore.


Team Awards

Scout team defense: Pelayo.

Scout team offense: Anthony Karty.

Special teams award: Horjon.

Most Inspirational Player: Ball and Daniels.

Jimmy Howard Semper Fi Award: Folsom.

Coach Steve Horrow Memorial Award: Washington and Grady.

Bob Hammes Most Improved Academics Award: Gabe Hall.

Coach Bill Hastings’ Specialist Award: Nathan Werner.

Coach Benno Edens Award: Tim Sheldon.

Seniors

Seniors ending their Pointer careers were honored, including Pelayo, Horjon, Daniels, Washington, Hall, Sheldon, Antonio Quintanilla, William Price, Ramon Valdez, Austin Waterhouse, Pablo Hernandez, Patrick Dorman, Nathan Lee, Declan Robinson and Patrick Rutledge.
Celebrate San Diego Rally at Petco Park

Local sports teams, elected officials and community leaders are joining forces on the Celebrate San Diego Rally, to be held Saturday, Feb. 11 at Petco Park’s Park at the Park. The free public celebration will feature special appearances by athletes and leaders who call San Diego home, including Padres Trevor Hoffman and Randy Jones, Padres manager Andy Green, former Chargers Nick Hardwick and Rolf Benirschke, and San Diego Gulls head coach Dallas Eakins.

Mayor, planners working on Midway homeless issues

Homelessness once again dominated discussion at Midway Community Planning Group in January. The community advisory group also was updated on the latest developments with the city’s ongoing update of the Midway Community Plan, the district’s blueprint for development.

The Midway/Pacific Highway Corridor Community is situated between Old Town and Point Loma. The community is a hodgepodge of an urbanized commercial core containing numerous shopping centers and institutional facilities. The corridor is defined by large-scale buildings and unscreened commercial parking lots mixed in with low-lying industrial buildings. There are a few multifamily residential complexes in the western portion of the district adjacent to Point Loma.

Anthony George, from Mayor Kevin Faulconer’s office, said the mayor in his state of the city address cited tourism, homelessness and housing affordability as three of his top issues to work on in 2017. He noted the “housing first” model for getting homeless off the streets and transitioning them into permanent housing will be a priority in 2017.

“The mayor has proposed a connective system, a central hub for the homeless where all agencies can work together,” answered George.

San Diego Police Department Officer David Surwilo told community planners a shift change recently happened in Western Division with officer’s hours and patrols being transitioned. Surwilo reiterated that police response is “radio-call driven.” He added its doubly important for residents to call and report problems and issues, including those homeless-related.

“If you see drug use going on, or trash, give us a call,” exhorted Surwilo who added that police make every effort to be humane to the homeless, including not troubling them when they congregate under bridges during rainy weather or the bridge linking Midway with Old Town.

James McGuirk, from Councilwoman Lorie Zapf’s office, noted, while San Diego has the fourth largest homeless population in the nation, it is only 2.3% in federal funding.

“We would like to see a re-evaluation of the homeless funding,” said MCPG chair Cathy Kenton.

Pointing out homelessness is rampant in Midway, especially with pan-handling, MCPG board member Todd Horvath suggested it might be wise to do a public service announcement asking people “not to give to panhandlers,” but to give instead to support organizations empowered to help them.

“We’re frustrated with homelessness,” noted Kenton. “We keep talking about it, month in and month out, and nothing’s really changing – except it’s getting worse. The mayor needs to take the lead on this. I’d like to see some kind of community task force with the mayor leading it.”

City planner Vickie White said real progress is being made with the ongoing Midway Community Plan update noting “we’re really pushing hard for this to be done by end of calendar year 2017 (December).”
THE PENINSULA BEACON | THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2017 | PAGE 11

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Give back, while you kick back! Ocean Beach Brewery invites you to join us on February 7th from 5–Close to raise money for the San Diego Food Bank. $1 from every house beer sold will be donated.

This year the San Diego Food Bank distributed 18.3 million meals to people in need in our city, including low-income military recipients. More than 700,000 pounds of food went to veterans, active-duty service members and their dependents. Help the San Diego Food Bank in their noble plight by drinking a pint or flight….or two!

It’s no wonder why the Ocean Beach MainStreet Association presented OB Brewery this year’s Peoples Choice for Design and also won the Beacon’s Readers Choice Award for Best New Restaurant! They make giving back to our community so easy!

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New hands on deck at NTC Foundation

The NTC Foundation recently announced the appointment of fourth-generation Point Loman Lori Fleet-Martin as the board chair. Fleet-Martin, who joined the board in 2010, has been active in the continued development of Arts District Liberty Station and its transformation from Navy base into an arts and culture district. Martin replaces Richard Opper, also a Point Loma resident, who will remain on the board.

Fleet-Martin’s roots run deep in this community. Her great-grandfather and grandfather helped develop the Fleetridge neighborhood of Point Loma and community philanthropy has been a bedrock of her family for generations. She has been a trustee of the Reuben H. Fleet Science Center for 13 years.

Additionally, she has been involved with The San Diego Foundation, MADCAPS (Mothers and Daughters Club Assisting Philanthropies), the San Diego Yacht Club Junior Board, as well as numerous committees for The Bishops School and Warren-Walker School.

“I initially became involved with the foundation because it was important for me to help something in our local community be successful and thrive. I wanted to give back to the community that I was born and raised in,” Fleet-Martin said.

During her tenure, Fleet-Martin spearheaded the effort to relocate the Fantasy on Ice Skating Rink to Liberty Station and founded the Friends of NTC to help build a community of people and businesses committed to the success of the not-for-profit NTC Foundation and its advancement of San Diego’s premier center for arts, culture and creativity.

Now, Fleet-Martin says, “Liberty Station has grown into a broader community-wide asset.” She takes the helm just as the NTC Foundation heads into its 10th anniversary year. In December of 2006, the NTC Foundation celebrated the opening of the very first building in San Diego’s newest arts and culture district.

In 2017, the foundation will begin a year of programs celebrating the growth from “an unprecedented opportunity” to a successful, thriving, nationally and internationally-recognized destination. Plans include activities to honor the past, recognize those who helped us get here as well as celebrations including exciting community programming, public art installations and arts and culture activities.

Joining Fleet-Martin on the board are new members, Jason Panguio and Linda Mamer.

Panguio is a small business owner, nonprofit founder, and public policy advisor who lives in Chula Vista. While a music teacher, Jason founded Parade Band Foundation Inc., a nonprofit that helps to connect school music programs with their community and has awarded tens-of-thousands of dollars in grants, scholarships and incentives to school music programs.

Panguio has extensive experience and a commitment to serving the community. San Diego Metropolitan Magazine awarded him one of the region’s “40 Under 40,” the San Diego Business Journal awarded him a finalist of the “Most Admired CEO” awards and winner of the “25 in their 20s,” the Chula Vista Chamber of Commerce has twice awarded him the “Pacesetter of the Year Award.” ” Outstanding Business Advocate of the Year Award,” the “President’s Award,” and Philippine American Business Improvement and Development awarded him the “Rising Star Award.”

Mamer has more than 20 years experience in commercial and business banking. She has worked for Wells Fargo Bank and Bank of California/Union Bank and is currently a senior vice president/senior relationship manager at Bank of California in Wells Fargo Commercial Banking Group. Mamer specializes in working closely with business owners to help them reach their goals by understanding their needs and brainstorming ways to overcome challenges.

Mamer has experience serving her community in a variety of ways, including president of the PTA and as a Girl Scout leader. She remains active in the American Cancer Society. She has served on the board of the San Diego Yacht Club Junior Board and Warren-Walker School for 13 years.

She specializes in working closely with business owners to help them reach their goals by understanding their needs and brainstorming ways to overcome challenges.

The NTC Foundation bids a thanks and farewell to retiring board members Roger Brenes and Fran Holian (former board chair). “We are grateful to our retiring board members for their service and their vision. Their efforts have led to our continued growth and success,” said NTC Foundation CEO Lisa Johnson.

“Were excited about this latest change in command,” she added. “The foundation is looking forward to more positive changes for 2017 and beyond.”

Linda Mamer is one of the new members of the NTC Foundation board.

Community
USA Hostels Ocean Beach named top hostel in nation

USA Hostels Ocean Beach in San Diego won three prestigious titles in January as Hostelworld.com announced the 2017 HOSCARs. USA Hostels Ocean Beach was named the No. 1 hostel in the USA, the No. 2 hostel in North America and the No. 8 Medium Size Hostel worldwide based on guest-generated reviews and ratings.

“To win one award is always an honor, to win three for one hostel is almost overwhelming, especially since we only purchased our Ocean Beach San Diego location two years ago,” said David Reuter, founder and president of USA Hostels. “We purchased the Ocean Beach hostel in August of 2014 and we set out right away on renovations,” Reuter said. “It was a lot of work and time, but clearly it’s paid off with a hostel that guests really seem to love. We tried hard to stay true to the spirit of Ocean Beach and did not change our iconic exterior, nor did we remove the famed peace sign on the roof.

“We also have all local staff, who bring their love of Ocean Beach to the job and share their enthusiasm with the guests,” Reuter said.

During 2016, USA Hostels Ocean Beach averaged a 95 percent rating by guests.

Get the most of Technology

Worried you’ll accidentally launch a rocket by pushing a few wrong keys on your smart device? Stop worrying and get over to TechOutfitters. These local tech experts love show you how to get the most out of all the technology in your life. If you have questions about your smart phone, your laptop, or the latest smart-home technologies TechOutfitters are your local technology gurus.

Students love productivity tools like Brydge keyboards that help you stay connected and dry during the beer cans and weekend cruises.

And everyone loves the locally-roasted coffees that TechOutfitters baristas create and serve. If you want a crash course in who’s roasting great coffee in San Diego, TechOutfitters can prepare a flight of local coffees for you to taste. And you can buy a bag of your favorite beans to take with you and share with your friends.

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USA Hostels Ocean Beach at 4961 Newport Ave. is hard to miss. 

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Michael Hervey, a San Diego native, and Point Loma High School alum, leaves this April to hike 3,100 miles from Mexico to Canada, along the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail.

As part of his preparations, he’s paired up with local nonprofit, Outdoor Outreach, to raise funds and awareness for their programs that help connect San Diego’s at risk youth with the transformative power of the outdoors.

“I wanted to take this hike that I was planning, and use it to give back to the community somehow,” Hervey said. “I’ve used the sheer expansiveness of the trail’s distance to get attention about the work that Outdoor Outreach is doing, and the relationship has proved to be very rewarding.”

The Continental Divide National Scenic Trail, or CDT, runs 3,100 miles following the spine of the Rocky Mountains. Beginning at Crazy Cook Monument on the Mexican border, hikers follow the Continental highpoint, across New Mexico, Colorado, Wyoming, Idaho, and Montana, and finish at the Northern border with Canada.

This trail is one of what long distance hikers call the “Triple Crown” of long distance hiking, with the Appalachian Trail and Pacific Crest Trail rounding out about 7,500 miles of backcountry hiking.

A successful hike of any long trail is often times unreported, but the CDT remains the least popular of the “Triple Crown” trails. High altitude and remoteness make the CDT more daunting, labeling it the “expert trail” where most hikers that attempt the trek, have previously completed another major thru hike. In a given year, roughly 300 hikers will attempt the trail in a single season.

Having completed the 2,600 mile Pacific Crest Trail during the summer of 2013, Hervey has developed the right skills and the right gear for this kind of adventure.

With only the essentials on his back — a tent, a sleeping bag, rain gear, a stove, a map and compass, and plenty of food — he can keep the weight light, maximizing the distance he can cover, which means that in order for Hervey to successfully hike the entire trail in a single season, he’ll be averaging 25 to 30 miles per day.

“I mostly plan my trip around food resupplys, so I’ll hike four to six days at a time, and when I cross a paved road, I can hitch a ride into the nearest town for food, laundry, and shower, and then I return to the trailhead for the next leg,” Hervey said.

Hervey plans on the hike taking about 150 days, or five months. The entire time, completely exposed to the elements.

“Hiking long trails is about balancing weight and speed. But you have to be fully committed in order to see the goal through. That is where the real challenge lies.” Hervey will begin his hike mid-April, to hike the entire 3,100 mile trail in a single season. In order to make this possible, he must move quick enough to beat the first snow storms in the northern states.

Along the way he will bear extreme heat, snow and ice storms, high altitudes of up to 14,000 feet, thunder and lightning, and the most breathtaking views the western United States has to offer.

With a yearly schedule of after-school and overnight programs around San Diego County, Outdoor Outreach provides kids with the necessary knowledge and equipment to experience the outdoors through a variety of recreational activities. Some of their programming includes surfing, kayaking, hiking, rock climbing, mountain biking, and environmental stewardship.

“The impact that the outdoors has on all of us is indefinable, but when you meet the kids that are touched by the experience, we can suddenly put a face to that transformation,” Hervey said.

In partnership with three Title I high schools and various other youth-serving organizations in San Diego, Outdoor Outreach is dedicated to using the outdoors to inspire youth to see opportunity in their lives.

Beyond recreation, Outdoor Outreach’s high school leadership program helps teach practical job skills to ease the transition to adulthood. Participants in the program can be trained as outdoor educators, and can even lead after-school programming with the potential of being hired on as part of Outdoor Outreach’s staff.

Recreational fluency and environmental stewardship are how Outdoor Outreach, to raise funds and awareness for their programs, is working to ensure that the outdoors and environmental stewardship are available to all people through their San Diego youth.

“Outdoor Outreach is making a difference has proved to be very rewarding,” Hervey said. “I’ve used the sheer expansiveness of the trail’s distance to get attention about the work that Outdoor Outreach is doing, and the relationship has proved to be very rewarding.”

The San Diego Foundation has grants available

The San Diego Foundation recently announced the availability of grant funding through the Opening the Outdoors program.

According to The San Diego Foundation, the CDT is a daunting, labeling it the “expert trail” and remoteness make the CDT more challenging. High altitude remains the least popular of the “Triple Crown” trails. Long distance hiking, with the Appalachian Trail and Pacific Crest Trail rounding out about 7,500 miles of backcountry hiking.

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WANT TO HELP?

Michael Hervey and Outdoor Outreach are working to ensure that the outdoors are available to all people through their campaign “Connecting the Divide.”

To donate, visit his fundraising page at donate.outdooroutreach.org/hervey

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Point Loma’s Greg Smith hits the skins with Falling Doves

BY BART MENDEZA | THE BEACON

The key to a great band? It’s the drummer. You can have a great singer or songwriter, but without a solid drummer, someone who knows how to craft a beat that compliments the tune on hand, a combo won’t gain much traction.

San Diego is fortunate to have a wealth of great musicians in its midst with many great drummers including Jake Najor, Larry Grano and Duncan Moore. One of the newer additions to the list is Point Loma-based percussionist Greg Smith.

Smith was born and raised in San Francisco, moving to San Diego in 2011 after a two-decade stay in Sacramento. “I grew up playing music in San Francisco. I stayed mostly around the San Francisco Bay Area until I met my wife,” he said.

His relocation to San Diego was set in motion by his daughter joining the Navy. “She was stationed in San Diego. After a number of visits my wife, in her infinite wisdom, decided that San Diego would be a much better place to live,” Smith stated.

Currently performing with rock quartet, Falling Doves, who next perform at the House of Blues inAnaheim on Feb. 6 and Winston’s on Feb. 11 as a warm up to a West Coast tour. Smith is a veteran of the California scene, recording his first single, “DOA in San Jose,” with a Ludwig Super Classic 4-piece set I saw at a neighborhood music store. “I asked for a snare drum and cymbal I saw at a neighborhood music store. My parents went out and bought me a Ludwig Super Classic 4-piece set for that birthday! I still play that same kit today,” he pointed out.

His musical influences remain the same today as when he first started out playing. “I would have to say the Beatles and the other British Invasion bands on ‘Ed Sullivan’ were my original inspiration to play music,” he said. “I was into the progressive rock of the ’70s, so Yes and Emerson, Lake and Palmer were definitely an influence and I also listened to a lot of Steely Dan. I really appreciate the precision of the rhythms in their material.”

Smith recently performed on a tour of Europe, filmed for an upcoming documentary, which saw his band, Falling Doves, playing the same clubs the Beatles did when they were starting out. “It was fun to see and play in some pretty historically significant locations,” he remarked. “We went with the goal of following the footsteps of the Beatles from The Jacaranda and Cavern clubs in Liverpool to The Kaiser Kellar in Hamburg, Germany. Call it a return to my original inspiration, if you will,” he said.

“Touring with the Doves tends to be fast paced as you seem to be always going,” he continued. “But I like being busy so that suits me just fine. We played eight shows in two weeks, so there was a good balance between gigging days and travel or rest days.”

The next year looks to be a busy one for Smith. He’ll be recording tracks with singer Kaidyn Gold this spring as well as touring Europe once more with the Falling Doves later this year, with U.S. festival dates in the works as well. Smith is happy where music has taken him.

“There is nothing like it,” he said. “Creating and honing songs in the moment and being able to play them successfully live is a unique feeling. It keeps you young, because there are no age barriers,” he mused.

San Diego Dance Theater’s high tea fundraiser benefits Aging Creatively and Kids on Board

The San Diego Dance Theater’s 45th year opened Jan. 20-22 at the Seattle Center, where classes are held in the Dance Building.

This was an anniversary, not only of SDDT, but of 20 years of performances created under Isaacs’ leadership. A high tea fundraiser took place in the lobby before the Jan. 22 performance, honoring the three founding members of SDDT: George Willis, Lolita Donoso-Carter, and Johnawa "Jabby" Jackson.

There were 60 guests plus staff and volunteers. They supported Kids on Board, which takes school children along the Trolley Dances route in the fall, to view their own special performance of the dances.

The Aging Creatively program, serving approximately 60 seniors from 55-to 92 years old in modern classes, tap, theatrical and jazz dance, was the other beneficiary. It is SDDT’s part of the “Live Well San Diego Initiative.”

Manny Rotenberg donated 100 percent of sales of his photographs reflecting years of dance performances. Since the donations totaled more than $3,000, George and Kate Willis added a $3,000 matching grant. The fundraiser earned $8,000.

After tea, finger sandwiches, cakes, and cookies, there was a short backstage tour and a presentation in which the founders, and Jean Isaacs were honored.

Matt Carney, SDDT’s executive director, welcomed the guests and thanked the board of directors. “They really are the backbone of this organization,” he said.

READ MORE ONLINE AT sdnews.com
Point Loma resident Ruth McGraw—affectationally nicknamed Ali—now sports the title “Architect of Dreams” for her artistic endeavors with students at Father Joe’s Villages.

McGraw recently led a talented team of resident high schoolers ranging between the ages of 14 and 18 to sketch and paint their biggest, wildest dreams in a landscaping mural at Father Joe’s 4th Street location. The vibrant dream backdrop that graces one of the building’s largest rooms, stands as a testament to talent, determination and aspirations.

“No one can assume their dreams just by looking at the mural, but you know that these kids want more,” said the 34-year-old former Marine. “I wouldn’t have expected teenagers to be this excited or talented, but they were. Their artistic ability really knocked my socks off. These kids deserve to be proud of their work.”

According to McGraw, once the sketches were up, the kids painted for hours. McGraw helped upon request “at the right place, at the right time.” She added Deacon Jim. “The mural’s an artistic piece that expresses the community artists.”

The vivid mural is a reminder for everyone that “Is made possible only through painting, pottery, photography, pastels, mixed media, sculpture and crafts. McGraw also built a towering raw-wood installation for the San Diego’s hungry.”

According to Father Joe’s Villages, San Diego’s largest homeless services provider, works to empower its residents to achieve independence. Serving 3,000 meals daily to infants, adolescents, adults and seniors, Father Joe’s provides housing, healthcare, clothing, education and child development under the guise of “one-stop shopping.”

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Construction crews carefully lift one of four new light towers installed on the Point Loma High School stadium field Jan. 26 as part of the school’s upgrade plan. Each tower is 72 feet tall and is designed to project LED lights onto the playing surface with minimal sprawl to nearby homes.

COURTESY PHOTO BY DON S. ZALAY

LIGHTS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

to secure approval from the FAA, which also required that each standard be topped with continuously illuminated warning lights due to concerns about hazard to air navigation.

“Ironically,” according to Dick, “the lower height has a tendency to increase light ‘spillage’ due to the need to ‘point’ the lights at a more obtuse angle to assure complete light coverage of the field.”

Those were the latest developments in the push to add Point Loma High to the list of SDUSD athletic stadiums equipped with lights to host Friday night football games, along with other sports.

The sticking point between neighbors and the district apparently remains the same: A lack of an enforceable guarantee that the stadium won’t be used for commercial gain by outside third parties.

Gilson Pratt, an attorney and PLHS stadium neighbor and spokesman for Pro-Point Loma opposing lights, said it’s not unusual for alternative dispute resolution between opposing sides, as in this case, to take time.

A trial lawyer himself, Pratt noted, “After trying cases for 30 years, sometimes it takes more than one day to settle things. It (lights) just didn’t get settled that day.”

“‘These are non-binding mediation sessions,’” added Pratt about the day-long negotiating meeting between both parties in mid-November.

A court mediator is usually a neutral third party. Their goal is to find a middle ground,” but he added, “I think the group is willing to reach an agreement.

I think the group is willing to reach an agreement. A court mediator cannot rule for or against either side in the dispute.”

Craig Sherman, the attorney representing Pro-Point Loma, said neighbors continue to be open to discussing SDUSD’s field-use policy governing who would be allowed to use PLHS facilities, and when.

Though neighbors “are adamant about outside third parties not being able to use Point Loma’s athletic fields,” Pratt added neighbors “have been willing to discuss reasonable — meaning enforceable — conditions for use of lights for high school kids. I think the group is willing to reach a middle ground,” but he added, “the school district has not been willing to commit to that.”

SDUSD could not be reached for further comment.

Sherman said a trial date before a judge, who will hear both sides and likely render a decision, has been scheduled for June.

In May 2016, SDUSD unanimously endorsed environmental documents for Point Loma High’s long-term modernization, which includes stadium lights. District trustees then voted 5-0 July 12 in favor of a master-planned, Whole Site Modernization and Athletic Facilities Upgrades Project for the high school.

Shortly thereafter, 17 neighbors of the high school, adamantly opposed to adding new stadium lighting, filed a class-action lawsuit against SDUSD. They claim new lighting will harm their quality of life, adding more noise, crime and visual pollution to their already overcrowded and impacted neighborhood. They also fear further commercialization of the PLHS stadium by outside interests, which they claim doesn’t benefit local students or the community.

Back in October 2016, at a Peninsula Community Planning Board meeting, PLHS principal Hans Becker said the high school was “very excited about having lights in our stadium. We look forward to having the same opportunities as other schools in the district since we are the only large comprehensive high school without stadium lighting. As principal, I respect the impact in the neighborhood and will continue to do everything I can to be a good neighbor. The PLHS field use policy will be followed and monitored closely.”

The PLHS Whole-Site Modernization and Athletic Facilities Upgrade Project, of which proposed stadium lights is a part, is the first phase of planned long-range improvements at the high school.

MARKET

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

“That space has been many things,” Hirmez said. “The last thing was a surf shop. It’s also been a bazaar, a gym — several things.”

The Hirmez family acquired the building in February of 2001.

Of his new facility, Hirmez said, “Its going to be a beautiful store and fill a major void in the community. It’s going to be a full-blown supermarket with a meat department and produce, a dairy and deli. We’re going to emphasize a lot more organic, with whole products that we didn’t have at the other store.”

The grocery owner said he will work with the community to stock his new store with them in mind.

“We’re going to have to juggle to see what the community needs and bring in products that work,” he said. “We want to listen to our customer’s needs and give them what they want. It’s going to be trial and error.”

The small size of the Hirmez building required some adjustments. Previously, Hirmez said there wouldn’t be room for detergents, beauty products and other items typically found at a grocery store. Items which can be found at two nearby drug stores — CVS and Rite-Aid.

As for alcohol, Hirmez said police previously approved the transfer of his license from the former location to sell beer, wine and spirits — though final approval from the state Alcoholic Beverage Control Department was pending.

To gain police support, Hirmez said he agreed to several conditions, including: no single cans of beer, no half-pints or miniature bottles of spirits, no fortified wines and no sales after midnight.

Also, Hirmez noted no protests were filed when he applied for alcohol at the new location. He said that was a tribute to the solid reputation and goodwill he earned at his previous site.

Of remodeling and permitting, Hirmez said, “It’s been trying. I really feel bad that we haven’t been able to re-open faster.”

The grocery owner gave kudos to the beach community for its support.

“The response we’ve gotten from the community, the way they’ve welcomed us with open arms — they’ve been an absolute peach. We’re glad to be able to give them a store where they can satisfy their ordinary grocery needs and staples, instead of having to drive out of town or live off of deli sandwiches.”

As principal, I respect the impact in the neighborhood and will continue to do everything I can to be a good neighbor.

HANS BECKER
POINT LOMA HIGH PRINCIPAL

Apple Tree Market at 4976 Newport Ave. in Ocean Beach.

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Apple Tree Market at 4976 Newport Ave. in Ocean Beach.

MARKET

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Apple Tree Market at 4976 Newport Ave. in Ocean Beach.
OB attorney on San Diego Defense Lawyers’ board

Zachariah Rowland, resident of Ocean Beach and a senior attorney with the San Diego law firm Balestreri Potocki and Holmes, has been elected to the San Diego Defense Lawyers’ 2017 board of directors. Rowland’s practice encompasses all types of commercial, employment, personal injury, and construction-related litigation.

Balestreri Potocki and Holmes is a boutique law firm headquartered in San Diego. The firm provides representation to a diverse range of business clients with an emphasis in the legal advocacy and consultation of business owners and companies working in or related to the construction, transportation and hospitality industries.

Willis Allen Realtor Beth Zedaker Earns Circle of Excellence Award – Gold Level

Point Loma, Calif. (Jan. 2017) – Willis Allen Real Estate congratulates Realtor Beth Zedaker on achieving the Circle of Excellence Award – Gold Level from the San Diego Association of Realtors (SDAR). The award recognizes Beth’s top production in 2016. Gold Level Circle of Excellence Award recipients have sales in the top 1% of all Realtors in San Diego County. Beth received her award at the Circle of Excellence Awards Dinner, held at The Fairmont Grand Del Mar in January.

“It’s an honor to be recognized by SDAR for the number of sales and volume I had last year,” says Beth. “My goal is to make sure every real estate transaction is handled with the utmost in customer service for my clients.”

Beth adds that taking care of her clients is always her top priority. “It’s important for my clients to know that in any real estate transaction, they can count on my expertise, knowledge and professionalism, along with receiving the highest level of customer service.”

Point Loma Branch Manager Judy Kettenburg-Chayka says she joins the rest of the Willis Allen Real Estate team in congratulating Beth on this tremendous achievement. “These awards highlight the outstanding individuals in the San Diego real estate industry, and to be in the top 1% of this esteemed group is really something to celebrate,” says Kettenburg-Chayka. “We’ve always known Beth is an elite agent, and now she has this award to prove it!”

To contact Willis Allen Realtor Beth Zedaker, call 619-602-9610 or send email to bethzedaker@gmail.com.

About Willis Allen Real Estate (www.willisallen.com)

Willis Allen Real Estate is one of San Diego County’s oldest and most prestigious real estate firms and has been serving San Diego County since 1914. The brokerage is headquartered in La Jolla with additional branch offices in Coronado, Del Mar, Downtown San Diego, Point Loma and Rancho Santa Fe. Willis Allen Real Estate is an exclusive affiliate of Christie’s International Real Estate, the world’s leading luxury real estate network that was founded in 1766, and Leading Real Estate Companies of the World and Luxury Portfolio.

Find out more about Willis Allen at www.willisallen.com.

Hanna-Blentzas named to Rising Stars list

Sullivan Hill Lewin Rex and Engel recently announced that Point Loma resident Catherine Hanna-Blentzas has been named to the 2017 Rising Stars list. Each year no more than 2.5 percent of the lawyers are selected to this Super Lawyers list of Rising Stars. Hanna-Blentzas’ construction law practice includes contract and performance disputes spanning both public works and private projects.

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SAN DIEGO YOGA FESTIVAL

Dozens took part in the closing ceremonies of the San Diego Yoga Festival on the Ocean Beach Pier on Sunday, Jan. 29. From Friday, Jan. 27 to Monday, Jan. 30 the festival held classes on the pier, beaches, and parks, along with dozens of indoor venues for all levels bringing a healthy vibe to the beachside community. More than 1,000 yogis attended from not only San Diego, but nationally and internationally.

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Sold for $1,250,000.

CLOSED
Garden Club

Point Loma Garden Club meets monthly on the second Wednesday, 10 a.m. to noon. The Feb. 8 meeting will feature a Valentine Floral Design Show. Dale Rekus, member of PLGC and president of the Flower Arrangers Guild of San Diego, will create several special Valentine-themed floral designs. The meeting is free. There will be tickets available for purchase, for an opportunity drawing of the creations. www.PLGC.org.

Ocean Beach Pier Surf Classic set for Feb. 4

Hodads’ Burgers and AWOL Productions will present the second annual Ocean Beach Pier Surf Classic starting at 7 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 4. AWOL is a local brand inspired by surf, skate and moto. Established in 2002, AWOL stands for A Way of Life. The local surf competition is for all ages young and old in the community.

There will be longboard, shortboard and family divisions along with trophies, prizes and a raffle. A portion of the proceeds will benefit Ocean Beach Community Foundation. Advance registration is required at obsurfclassic.com.

Republican Women

The Point Loma Republican Women Federated monthly lunch meeting will take place 10 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 15 at Point Loma Cafe, 4865 Harbor Drive. Program: Chaldean Christians and refugees in San Diego County. A no-host lunch follows. Guests welcome. Call Marilyn at 619-222-9532 for additional information.

Native Plant Society

The SD Chapter of CA Native Plant Society will hold a community meeting 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 8 at OB Rec Center, 4726 Santa Monica Ave. To be discussed is a request for community input on the society’s native plant garden at the north end of Sunset Cliffs Natural Park.

The meeting will be preceded by a social gathering from 6 to 6:30 p.m., during which snacks and refreshments will be provided. For more information, call 858-277-3233.

Ocean Beach Historical Society program

Ocean Beach Historical Society will hold a presentation on the “Point Loma” book written by Eric DuVall, Kitty McDaniel and authors from La Playa Trail Association 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 16 at Point Loma United Methodist Church, 1984 Sunset Cliffs Blvd. Point Loma is one of San Diego’s most historic neighborhoods. The newly-released book by Arcadia Publishing is packed full of lovely historical photos and information about the peninsula’s community.

Newly elected OBHS president DuVall and newly elected OBHS board member McDaniel, along with other collaborating authors from La Playa Trail Association, will present wonderful images and stories from the book. The Ocean Beach Historical Society program on this book will cover Ballast Point and La Playa, where the first Europeans stepped ashore in California, to the Theosophical Community Lomaland, on the crest of the Point. The book explores the community’s unique neighborhoods, people, businesses, public institutions, and military bases.

Nimitz Blvd. art selection

The Point Loma Association’s next project is a piece of public art to be placed on the Nimitz Boulevard median, just south of West Point Loma Boulevard. Several well-known artists have submitted proposals. Now, you can help make the selection. See the possibilities and cast your vote at one of these public presentations:

- Thursday, March 2, at 7 p.m., in the Family Life Center at Point Loma Community Presbyterian Church, 2128 Chatsworth Blvd.
- Tuesday, March 28, at 7 p.m., in the Dick Laub NTC Command Center at 2640 Historic Decatur Road at Liberty Station. For more information, visit pointloma.org.

BRIEFS

Ocean Beach Historical Society program

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