Peninsula planners support more law enforcement at Sunset Cliffs

By Dave Schwab | The Beacon

In October Peninsula Community Planning Board approved drafting a letter supporting enhancing safety and law enforcement at Sunset Cliffs Natural Park. PCPB board member Mandy Havlik presented photos depicting problems at the popular Sunset Cliffs.

“The Sunset Cliffs community has been dealing with some significant issues with visitors,” Havlik said. “There has been lots of partying and trash, alcohol, and drug use are being witnessed, people camping overnight and there’s a lot of graffiti and the signs in the park have been vandalized several times. That seems to be a continual issue that needs to be addressed.”

Added Havlik: “The park at night is closed and what happens is the dark of night tends to bring a covers for people who are not being respectful of the park. We’ve had parties and raves that have been going on in the park after-hours. And due to the danger of trying to get down the cliffs, the park ranger and the police have not been able to access the beach in the evening because there’s a safety issue there for them.”

Havlik then asked PCPB to consider drafting a letter supporting a recent Sunset Cliffs Natural Park Council letter to the City.
Planning Commission sends short-term rental proposal back to committee

By DAVE SCHWAB | THE BEACON

Following lengthy testimony, the City Planning Commission Oct. 8 voted 4-3 to send a short-term rental compromise propos-
al by District 2 Councilmember Jennifer Campbell back for further review.

In carrying the matter over, the seven-member commission presented a long list of questions to be answered. Those included a request for more details of the council member’s plan including information on fees and a lottery to include short-term rental operators under a proposed unit cap, as well as specifics on how a new ordinance would be enforced.

If successful in passing muster with both the Planning Commission and the City Council, Campbell’s proposal would take effect Jan. 1, 2022.

Campbell’s plan has stirred strong emotions on both sides since it was first proposed three months ago. As outlined in a memorandum of understanding, the ordinance would be enforced.

“Not many politicians would be willing to try and find a compromise,” said Greg Knight of Mission Beach. “There is no way to comply with illegal dwellings. And we need enforcement.”

In carrying the matter over, two hours of back-and-forth public debate, during which proponents argued Campbell’s proposal was reasonable and pref-
erable to the non-sustainable sta-
tus quo, while opponents insisted STRs don’t belong in residential neighborhoods, planning commis-
sioner Matthew Boomhower moved for a continuance.

“We absolutely need to regulate short-term vacation rentals,” said Boomhower. “I don’t believe there should be a complete ban. But I also don’t believe that the current wild west free-for-all is sustain-
able. I absolutely know that there are bad actors out there. But I al-
so know that there are short-term hosts who follow the rules and need additional income.”

Added Boomhower, “I also think Councilwoman Campbell and her staff should be compli-
mented for trying to solve this is-
sue. Not many politicians would have had the guts to actually try and take this one on. But I’m not sure how we can be expected to vote on this in its current form. “It’s important that we have something on the books, some-
thing that actually creates some kind of structure and frame-
work,” replied Campbell’s chief of staff Venus Molina. “We’ve gone through a lot of scenarios to ac-
quaint the council office and City staff to the plan and now we are right now. We do feel strongly that a lot of the tools, the small details,
will be fleshed out and bring about some processes over the next year to make this work.”

Commissioner Vicki Granowitz, who seconded Boomhower’s continuation motion said, “Residential zoning is residential zone. And we’re trying to make those work. I am willing to try and find a compromise.”

“This isn’t the first time we’ve looked at this,” said planning commission vice-chair James Whalen. “There is nothing in commission Boomhower’s com-
ponents opposed to having rules to pull together to address the prob-
lems – and benefits – of short-term rentals.”

Several beach residents testified on Campbell’s proposal.

“Our own council voted very strongly in favor of our own proposal, which Jen Campbell took key components from and includ-
ed in her proposal,” said Mission Beach Town Council president Matt Gardner. “Our proposal in-
cluded fines and revocation of per-
mits for bad actors.”

“We urge you to reject this ill-advised ordinance,” said Brian White, Pacific Beach Town Council president. “Our council was not consulted at all on the STR issue, and the same goes for many other community groups. We remain opposed to this ap-
proach, taken before an uncertain mayoral election, by legalizing ho-
etel operations in our residential zoned communities. The residents have had no input, no seat at the table.”

“For this ordinance does not have strict requirements, there is ab-
solutely no maximum occupan-
cy,” said Greg Knight of Mission Beach. “There is no way to comply with illegal dwellings. And we need enforcement.”

“We cringe at housing that’s converted to short-term rent-
als,” said La Jolla and District 1 Council candidate Joe LaCava. “We are horrified that apart-
ments are being replaced with mini-hotels. San Diego should fol-
low other coastal cities treating STRs as commercial operations: They are.”

Planning commissioners subse-
quently set Dec. 3 as the date for the council office and City staff to return with a more developed STR compromise plan.

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It is the season of costume making, witches and bats in flight, spooky parties and favorite candy treats. All of this fun, fun fills my mind, but I also know that it’s important to follow a few safety rules while celebrating.

Read the clues to fill in the crossword:

1. October 31, __________, is a time of pumpkin patch visits, parties, parades and special treats!
2. A _______ is lighted and grins from the porch.
3. People dress up in __________ and turn into pirates, clowns and princesses.
4. Kids __________ up and down the streets.
5. Battery-powered __________ glow, lighting their way.
6. Doorbells ring, __________ of candy and small toys are tossed into bags.
7. Zombies and __________ sit in the graveyard placed in the neighbor’s front yard.
8. A _______ stirs her cauldron, mixing a potion and casting a spell.
9. Tractor-powered __________ creep through fields full of spooky creatures.
10. __________ roam a school’s hallways tonight, flying from room to room.
11. A haunted _______ gives us “scares” and we laugh with friends and family.
12. A dog howls, an __________ hoots, a cat hisses and children shout.
13. A giant web spun by a hairy _______ hangs in the corner of a porch.
14. A full _______ glows and lights up the houses and streets below.
15. The next morning the sun rises and all the creatures and shadows of the night __________.
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Point Loma Nazarene tightens health measures after COVID outbreak

By DAVE SCHWAB | The Beacon

A dozen reported positive COVID-19 cases on Point Loma Nazarene campus last week prompted the university to respond with a dorm lockdown and tightened health protocols for students, faculty, and staff.

In addition to those positive cases identified through ongoing surveillance testing, the university revealed there are currently 50 students across campus identified as “close contacts.”

“A close contact” for COVID-19 is defined as being within six feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes, either with or without a face covering. PLNU’s Wellness Center is continuing to identify other potential contacts.

“We are partnering with the County of San Diego in larger-scale testing in addition to our ongoing surveillance,” said Jill Monroe, PLNU’s director of public affairs.

Monroe said PLNU began the fall semester virtually on Aug. 17 with limited students in residence. “We were able to increase housing to approximately 740 students (1,700-bed capacity) back in September and all were tested at intake,” she added. “We’ve continued with weekly random surveillance testing of 25% of our campus population which enabled us to identify the current clusters more quickly. Instruction remains virtual with the exception of our nursing program.”

A PLNU campus announcement went out to students, staff, and faculty on the Point Loma campus on Oct. 13.

“A cluster of cases and potential exposures have been identified in Klasseen, Hendricks and Young halls,” the announcement read.

“Per university protocol, these positive cases are already in isolation in specific university housing outside of the potentially impacted floors.

“In addition to these identified clusters, we are closely monitoring two unrelated cases in Nease Hall. The next steps include requiring residents on the identified floors to shelter-in-place and not leave their respective floors until they are notified by the release of the PLNU Wellness Center.”

Sheltering in place allows the university, in coordination with the County of San Diego, to complete contact tracing and institute appropriate COVID-19 testing and rigorous assessment of any virus symptoms. Sheltering also enables PLNU to tailor its response to the specific situation in the identified halls.

Reacting to the COVID situation, PLNU campus resident Jill Lynn Parham said: “Living on campus during these unprecedented times has been very interesting. Factual was the first case of COVID-19 on campus, which I received while being away at home. Thankfully, I care about the well-being of others and quarantined as soon as I found out that I was around someone with the virus.”

Added Parham: “I was quarantined for 14 days in my room. The school was nice enough to bring me breakfast, lunch, and dinner for those stressful days. It is definitely a unique experience being on campus during a pandemic since we no longer have sporting games, in-person chapel, in-person club meetings, etc. I feel like Loma has definitely tried its hardest to help, while still creating a sense of community while taking necessary precautions to keep us safe.”

Read more online at sdnews.com

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UPDATE: What’s next with the local economy?

Point Loma Nazarene economist says rebound continues in spurts

By DAVE SCHWAB | The Beacon

With the coronavirus and all its ramifications dragging on, the Peninsula Beacon caught up with Lynn Reaser, Ph.D., chief economist and adjunct professor of economics at Point Loma Nazarene University, to get her take on the expected post-COVID economic rebound.

Reaser: The rebound will continue in spurts. Third-quarter economic growth was strong as government payments boosted incomes while the economy slowly reopened. Growth is now slowing as government stimulus has been stalled and fears of a “second wave” mount. San Diego’s economy anxiously awaits each state announcement on Tuesdays whether it retains its “red zone” rating or is either downgraded or upgraded.

Beacon: Are we talking weeks, months, or years in terms of a rebound?

Reaser: Much of the recovery should take place in 2021 if a safe and effective vaccine is delivered to a sizable portion of the population.

Beacon: What about jobs? Are some jobs lost for good?

Reaser: San Diego’s total job count is currently equal to about 91% of its February pre-pandemic peak. This still means that we need to make up a loss of 135,000 jobs. The most vulnerable jobs will involve brick-and-mortar retail stores competing with online shopping. Movie theaters may struggle as they compete with streaming services. Employees in businesses ranging from cleaning services to restaurants to rapid transit, dependent on filled downtown office buildings, could also shed workers for some time. Many new jobs will also be created in online warehousing and transportation. Teledicine, biotech, and alternative energy.

Beacon: What economic sectors are most/least affected?

Reaser: San Diego’s tourist sector has been devastated. While some restaurants have been able to survive by offering outdoor dining, delivery service, and pick-up options, many are barely hanging on with sharply reduced seating. Hotels have sky-high vacancy rates and amusement parks, concert venues, and other entertainment operations remain sharply curtailed. In contrast, home building is booming along with home repair and remodeling businesses. Financial services are also benefiting from people who have the time and money to invest.

Beacon: What do you expect in terms of small-businesses? Any idea what percentage of small businesses won’t be making it back?

Reaser: About half of all small businesses fail within the first five years of opening. The pandemic has accelerated that process and has also taken down older, well-established firms. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce’s survey of small businesses found in July that 58% feared that they might have to permanently close due to the pandemic. While many of these will survive, it does illustrate the anxiety that is weighing on small-business owners each day that the virus persists.

Beacon: It seems like this is almost like an extinction-level event. But, just like with the dinosaurs, some jobs might be back. What do you see in the short-term?

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Tanya Joy Pilates stretches out to Ocean Beach Woman’s Club

By DAVE SCHWAB | The Beacon

Oceobian and esthetician Tanya Joy has shifted gears, relocating her Pilates practice to the Ocean Beach Woman’s Club where she is finding renewed success.

“Because of the pandemic and working so close to people’s faces, I’m actually not doing skincare right now other than selling some products online and doing some virtual facials,” said the skin care professional and fitness trainer. She added, “I’m not quitting, just calling it a pause. In the meantime, I’ve brought my semi-private Pilates Reformer class to the OBWC at 2160 Bacon St. in north Ocean Beach.”

Tanya is a member of both the Ocean Beach MainStreet Association merchant group and the OBWC. Given that she is taking a break from skincare, Tanya is re-focusing on her Pilates training for all fitness levels.

The woman’s club provides a large and airy space with more than 10 feet of distance between exercise equipment. “All cleaning and sanitation practices are in effect. “It’s all by appointment Tuesday through Friday, two people at a time,” said Joy of her Pilates practice. “There is no membership, no commitment. I wear a mask the entire time and the customers, once they get to their machine can choose if they want to wear a mask.”

Semi-private Pilates classes are 55-minutes long and a discount is offered for OBWC members. Developed by Joseph Pilates from Germany during the first half of the 20th century, the workout he developed is a system of exercises intended to strengthen the human mind and body, which he believed were interrelated.

Pilates accompanied his method with a variety of equipment, which Pilates called apparatuses, and are designed to help accelerate the process of stretching and strengthening body alignment while increasing core strength. The best-known and most popular apparatus used today is the Reformer.

“People like it because it really helps stretch the body out,” noted Joy, adding the technique is especially helpful to osteoporosis clients “that need to increase their bone density by doing weight training. Pilates is a great alternative because of the spring-loaded equipment with ropes and pulleys that helps with (thin) bone density. It’s great for toning the body, and also excellent for strengthening your core to support your whole body.”

Added Joy, “You can do the exercises lying down, on your side, sitting or standing. It’s fitness for any level and is often used as rehabilitation for people suffering from back pain and sciatic (nerve) issues.”

Joy noted her workout space is “extremely nice,” pointing out there are high ceilings with six ceiling fans, 10 open windows, and two open doors.

“The machines are 10 feet apart from one another so we’re socially distanced,” said Joy.

For more information email tj@ tanyajoypilates.com.
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New owners for Apple Tree Supermarket in Ocean Beach

By DAVE SCHWAB | THE BEACON

Apple Tree Supermarket in Ocean Beach is changing hands, giving way to Krisp Beverages + Natural Foods.

"Our relatives, our first cousins, have bought the business and we are retaining a percentage of the ownership. We’re also landlords, this is our property," said Apple Tree owner Saad Hirmez. "We’re retiring. It was time to scale back, so we took on partners. We’ve been in business for close to 55 years. It’s just time."

"Nothing is going to happen with Apple Tree that is not going to be positive for the community," promised Hirmez, who noted "most likely they’re going to be adding some hot foods and some other improvements, building upon what we did." Ironically, Hirmez said he was the one who sold Krisp to his cousins back in 1971.

The OB entrepreneur said Apple Tree’s sale was in no way prompted by or connected to the COVID outbreak.

"Business has been excellent for us," said Hirmez. "We were an essential business and our volume actually picked up." Because Apple Tree has a state Alcohol Beverage Control license to sell alcohol, the sale of the business will take some time to become official.

"Any time you go through any kind of change of ownership, and there is an alcohol license involved, that has to be posted with the ABC and that can take up to three months," Hirmez said. "It (sale) will likely be after the first of the year."

Added Hirmez, "We’re excited. They’re (cousins) likely going to putting in a kitchen and adding to the aesthetics, above and beyond what we have done, maybe putting in some more natural products."

Apple Tree Market was OB’s full-time grocery store from 1989 until 2012 when it was forced to move from 4949 Santa Monica Ave. Saad Hirmez and family worked five years, spending nearly $2 million, on renovating a downsized space in the former Bank of America building on the corner of Newport Avenue and Bacon Street.

Apple Tree Market reopened in May 2017. Hirmez bought the current 9,800-square-foot building now housing Apple Tree in 2001.

Like its name, Krisp Beverages + Natural Foods carries natural and organic items. The market’s new owners will continue to have a full meat department and butcher shop, a produce department, and a soup and salad bar, as well as carrying a variety of specialty grocery items including local beer, wine, and spirits.

Krisp also has two existing locations in East Village and Golden Hill. For more information about Krisp Beverages + Natural Food, visit krispsd.com.
Demolition underway at former Midway post office site

The Ryan Aircraft Company occupied the land, known as Dutch Flats, for many years. Some of Point Loma’s earliest homes can be seen in the background.

By Scott Hopkins | The Beacon

Between March 1972 and 1993, billions of letters and packages passed through the main San Diego Post Office on Midway Drive and billions more after a new main post office was opened in Carmel Mountain Ranch.

The concrete structure sat vacant since 2014 when it was closed and replaced by a smaller post office at 2701 Midway Drive and the entire 16-acre property was put up for sale. Demolition of the massive, yet long-vacant structure is now underway.

Passersby can now see the machines of AMG Demolition who are bringing down the concrete structure as the once-famous property owner, San Diego-based Hammer Ventures bought the property for $40 million from R exford Industrial Realty Inc. of Los Angeles in 2017. R exford purchased it from the U.S. Postal Service in 2015 for $19.3 million.

Meanwhile, the Dutch Flats area retains its vital presence in San Diego’s history.

Several years before World War II, the airfield’s name was changed to Speers Airport but it was inoperative during the war. The land was converted to military housing before government plans were made for this mammoth structure to handle San Diego’s mail needs.

Hammer Ventures bought the property for $40 million from R exford Industrial Realty Inc. of Los Angeles in 2017. R exford purchased it from the U.S. Postal Service in 2015 for $19.3 million. Meanwhile, the Dutch Flats area retains its vital presence in San Diego’s history.
increasing calls for emergency services including cliff rescues, large parties with alcohol and drug use, loud music and yelling, and the trash left behind. Sunsets Cliffs Natural Park Council recommends that street parking on the west side of Sunsets Cliffs Boulevard in the parking lots be closed from two hours after sunset, unless otherwise indicated by allowing any accessible parking beaches.

“The pictures you’ve shown are absolutely outrageous. It’s a natural resource that needs to be protected.”

“I couldn’t agree more,” concurd board member Magoa Alemany who lives in the cliffs.

“It’s always been frustrating with the parties, but since COVID it is so grotesquely out of control. It’s disrespectful, so un-American. It’s very partying here at night and using the streets and alleyways as a toilet...

Read more online at sdcnews.com.
ECONOMY
CONTINUED FROM Page 7

will there be new businesses coming along to take the place of those that are departed?

Reaser: A remarkable development is taking place this year. We are seeing the highest rate of new business start-ups in more than a decade. This suggests that some people remain optimistic about the future and that the pandemic has made them eager to forge a new career path and put their dreams and ideas in place.

Beacon: Is the new “normal” ever going to be like pre-COVID normal? What can we expect in terms of permanent future changes? Will people continue to work from home and not commute? Will we ever have in-person meetings? What about live events?

Reaser: Many jobs, such as in construction and manufacturing, will of course have to be done on-site. For companies and professions that shifted most work to home, the new model is likely to be a hybrid with more choice. Many workers may split their time between home and the office. There are likely to be fewer in-person meetings, but people will welcome the opportunity to actively engage with their colleagues after reaching the limits of “Zoom fatigue.” Once COVID-19 fears subside, people will be thrilled to again be able to attend live sporting events, concerts, and other entertainment venues.

Beacon: Have we heard some people say they think that a lot of the COVID reaction will subside after the election. Do you agree?

Reaser: The virus will not know whether it is Nov. 3 or 4. Health and other policies will not change until any new people elected actually take office. The introduction and use of a vaccine by a large part of the population would make a difference. Until that time arrives, human behavior, such as involving mingling in large groups or not wearing masks, will determine the rate of COVID’s spread.

Beacon: Will we ever return to something like pre-COVID levels?

Reaser: It may take a while, just like it did following the 1918 pandemic, but 2020 will increasingly appear as an aberration as opposed to a major break in the way our economy and society operates. By 2022, more people will be working remotely, shopping online, and streaming than before 2020. However, they will be anxious to go to restaurants, entertainment venues, and travel. Companies will scrutinize their supply chains, but most will remain globally-connected, in part to serve growing markets overseas.

Beacon: On the positive side, what do you think will come from this health threat?

Reaser: People have found the value of family. One man became a first-time father in April and has been able to spend the first six months of his daughter’s life with her. Record-low mortgage rates have enabled many to buy their first homes. The environment has benefited with a substantial reduction in pollution. Companies have learned that sizable amounts of remote working can be effective.

Finally, we realize that we had taken for granted our ability each day to freely go everywhere and meet with friends. We will be so grateful when this all ends.

PHLS FOOTBALL COACH STEPS DOWN

Mike Hastings, head football coach at Point Loma High School, is stepping down.

Hastings, mustuotted PLHS Principal Kelly Lowry of his decision Wednesday morning. Hastings is only the third head football coach since 1946 at the school arriving 26 years ago, taking the head coach job from leg- endary Bennie Edens 22 years ago. Hastings guided his teams to four CIF football championship games and collected six league titles.

“We will begin our search for the next head football coach at Point Loma immediately,” said Lowry. “I hope we can find another individual who can carry on that tradition and mentor young student-athletes as they become productive citizens.”

MISSION BAY JETTY REPAIR

Repair work by the Army Corps of Engineers is continuing on the Mission Bay jetty. The work involves repairing the large rock structure of the jetty outer layer near the ends of each jetty, as well as a portion of the north jetty close to the South Mission Beach parking lot.

Additionally, the large concrete pad that used to support the navigation light at the end of the north jetty will be removed along with the graffiti. The contractor will be using a barge-mounted crane to place the rock and a tug to position it.

www.sdnews.com

COMMUNITY

PLANS FOR ENTRANCE INTO ACADEMY OF CHARTER SCHOOLS

The Peninsula Academy of Charter Schools is currently accepting applications for the 2021-22 school year. The charter school is focused on providing access to an academically challenging and socially engaging educational experience. The school is driven by the Common Core State Standards and the International Baccalaureate framework.

For more information, visit www.peninsulacharters.org or call 888-726-3687.

MISSION TO FREE MEXICO

A mission to free Mexico from the drug war and to rebuild the country has been called for. The mission is a response to the violence and corruption plaguing Mexico. The mission will start in Tijuana and travel through Mexico, with stops in major cities and towns along the way.

For more information, visit www.freemexico.org.

COOL GOLDEN WEST

Golden West College has received a grant from the California Community Foundation to support its Student Success initiative. The grant will be used to fund programs and initiatives that help students succeed in college.

For more information, visit www.goldencwest.edu.

Look out for the next issue of The Peninsula Beacon, featuring more local news and events.

Lisa Perich
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ECONOMY
CONTINUED FROM Page 7

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ECONOMY
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ECONOMY
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