Landmarks like The Lookout in La Mesa's Downtown Village will be highlighted on the Oh! San Diego Open House tour in March. (Photo by Brady Architectural Photography)

Tour highlights community design

By ELAINE ALFARO | La Mesa Courier

Seven days, seven neighborhoods and numerous opportunities to learn more about the communities and architecture of San Diego. This year, La Mesa citizens will not have to go far to participate in the upcoming Oh! San Diego Open House Tour. La Mesa will be making its debut appearance as a destination on the architectural tour March 5-12.

SEE HOME TOUR, Page 9

Community power plan to begin in March

By JEFF CLEMETSON | La Mesa Courier

Starting in March, La Mesa’s municipal buildings will no longer be purchasing electricity from SDG&E. Instead, the municipal buildings will be customers of the newly formed San Diego Community Power — the power supplier that will serve La Mesa and four other regional cities as part of the Climate Action Plan to reduce dependence on fossil fuel-sourced energy.

At the Feb. 23 La Mesa City Council meeting, San Diego Community Power CEO Bill Carnahan and COO Cody Hooven gave a presentation on the new power supplier and what city businesses and residents can expect in the next months.

Carnahan said that the very first meeting of San Diego Community Power (SDCP) was held in October 2019.

“Since that period of time, we’ve been trying to stand up and create the function so we’d be in a position to start delivering community power plan to begin in March

See SD Water Authority, Page 4

SD Water Authority mulls new aqueduct

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

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

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

The Water Authority is the long-term water planning
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For 50 years, Family Health Centers of San Diego (FHCSD) has provided caring, affordable, high-quality health care and supportive services to everyone, with a special commitment to uninsured, low-income and medically underserved persons.

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

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

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

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4. Mental health and substance use disorder services, including behavioral health treatment (this includes counselling and psychotherapy)
5. Rehabilitative and habilitative services and devices (services and devices to help people with injuries, disabilities, or chronic conditions gain or recover mental and physical skills)
6. Prescription drugs
7. Ambulatory and emergency services
8. Laboratory services and hospitalization (surgery and overnight stays)

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City Council meetings to maintain pandemic accessibility

By KENDRA SITTON | La Mesa Courier

Citizens participating more in their government’s public meetings is just one of the changes that coronavirus has wrought. Since La Mesa City Council meetings have switched to Zoom, public comments have exploded during the meetings as there is greater accessibility to participate from home. A proposal brought forward by Council members Colin Parent and Brian Hooven aims to keep up that participation even when the public emergency ends.

City to conduct community survey

The City of La Mesa is dedicated to providing high quality facilities and services that meet residents’ existing and emerging needs. To help reach this goal, the city hired True North Research, an independent survey research firm, to conduct a statistically valid citywide sample survey to better understand how La Mesa residents feel about the ways the city is providing vital services, understand where the city should spend resources, and assess opinions on a variety of topics such as public safety, traffic and city services. La Mesa conducts a community survey every two years.

To ensure that a statistically valid survey is achieved that will produce data that is representative of La Mesa residents, approximately 800 to 1,000 La Mesa households will be randomly sampled to participate in the survey. Residents may receive an email or a call from the research firm requesting participation in the survey. Once the survey data is tabulated, the findings will be presented to the La Mesa City Council at an upcoming regularly scheduled council meeting. The results of the 2021 Community Survey will also be posted on the city’s website at cityoflamesa.us/531/Public-Opinion-Survey where residents can currently find results from past surveys.

If you have any questions about the survey please contact the City Manager’s Office at 619-667-1311.

“Customer power” cont’d from Page 3

the energy needs of our member systems as quickly as possible,” he said.

SDCP operates as a Joint Powers Authority between five member cities – Chula Vista, Encinitas, Imperial Beach, La Mesa and San Diego. Each city has a representative on the board of directors that oversees the enterprise. Council member Bill Baber represents La Mesa on the board.

“We’ve actually had some meetings with customers this month and it’s been awesome,” Baber said. “We are not out of work in getting this far.”

SDCP has set an ambitious goal of reaching 100% renewable energy portfolio by 2035. It also aims to offer competitive rates and prioritize local renewable energy sources. Because it is not a for-profit utility like SDG&E, it promises to make local job creation and investment a priority, Carnahan said.

Although the March launch will only include municipal buildings in the five member cities, commercial and industrial buildings will be phased in in June.

“This is where our heavy loads are — about 60% of our loads are in that category and about 10% of our customers,” Carnahan said. Residents will be added as early as this fall.

Hooven reported that the board adopted rates in January.

In the Tuesday, Feb. 9 meeting, the council voted to approve the measure which accomplishes two things, according to Parent. It would immediately ask staff to find a way for the meetings to include live audio testimony. Currently, most public comments are sent via email ahead of or during the meeting. In addition, the proposal calls for a sub-committee to be formed which would find ways to extend public participation even after coronavirus restrictions are ended and the city council resumes in-person meetings.

“The reason I think that is important is right now there are people participating in our meetings who wouldn’t otherwise in the beginning times because they don’t have childcare or they’re taking care of a loved one or they’re just not able to physically be at a meeting and now we’ve discovered there are ways to allow them to participate,” Parent said. “I wanna make sure we’re considering ways to allow them to do that even when it’s not required.”

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MesaView promotes the physical, social, and spiritual aspects of its residents’ lives, embracing cultures and celebrating their experiences. The well-trained and compassionate staff offer individualized care and support services to the residents. A short walk to local stores, restaurants, and coffee shops, MesaView offers independent living services for those who are able to live on their own but want to live in a community setting or prefer a living situation that includes housekeeping, social activities, dining, transportation, security, or the option of reminders of daily tasks or medical needs. Schedule a tour to learn more about MesaView Senior Assisted and Independent Living!

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For its basic product — electricity with a 50% clean energy portfolio — SDCP power generation rates are about 6% lower on average than that of SDG&E, which results in an average of 2.7% less on the total bill, she said. SDCP also offers a service that provides 100% clean energy that is on average equal to what SDG&E customers pay currently for an energy portfolio that is only 15% renewable.

In public comments, resident Lindy Maholic stated that she is “grateful and proud” that La Mesa adopted a community power plan. She also said she is looking forward to attending SDCP board meetings: something she said was “unattainable” with SDG&E.

David Harris states he looks forward to seeing revenue from the community power being reinvested in La Mesa with local green jobs.

Council member Akilah Weber asked whether SDCP would offer assistance for low-income residents. Hooven said that SDCP will offer the same programs as SDG&E currently does at first but will be looking to expand assistance with more targeted localized programs, rather than just spreading the assistance dollars over large area.

For more information about San Diego Community Power, including rate information, visit sdcommunitypower.org.

— Reach editor Jeff Clemenson at jeff@sdnews.com.

Learn more about MesaView Senior Assisted and Independent Living!
Water Authority
CONTINUED FROM Page 1

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

For more information, visit sdcwa.org/colorado-river-supplies-management.

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-Diane S, La Mesa
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Feb. 26 – March 25, 2021

La Mesa Courier
Editorial
Why community newspapers matter

Local newspapers play an important, irrelevant role in the grand scheme of things. Community newspapers cover high school and community sports. They keep track of events at schools and weddings. They may not be the biggest thing that makes communities great. They tell you what’s happening in your community.

They cover what’s happening and serve as watchdogs of local agencies. Do you want to go to every City Council or school board meeting and keep track of the happenings? If not, do you want someone to do it for you? Local newspapers do that. A local newspaper is much more authoritative than the local blogger.

In the last few years, many people were led to believe newspapers can’t compete with the internet. Not true. The real reporting of news on the internet, the coverage of government and well-written articles about events is far better than most to you, they almost all come from newspapers.

Local newspapers are where we turn when we need a broader focus. They’re where we turn when there is crime or a fire in our neighborhood. They’re where we turn when our child graduates from high school and we want to see photos. They keep us abreast about how our community is affected by the pandemic and how local businesses are doing their best to provide services through the rollercoaster ride of 2020.

Newspapers cover all those things. And you know what else? Newspapers pay reporters and photographers and editors. Newspapers pay receptionists and payroll clerks and the folks who design advertisements (so you don’t have to pay 100 percent of the cost). Newspapers pay the people who work the print press and those who make sure the newspaper gets delivered to your house.

And trust me, while newspapers pay all those people, none of the employees are getting rich. If community newspapers were to go away, the first losers would be those who make a living there. But the biggest losers will be our communities, which will lose something impossible to replace.

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

Jacobs, UCSD epidemiologist address Dems at meeting

At the February meeting of the La Mesa Foothills Democratic Club, members were fortunate to have the opportunity to hear from sitting U.S. representative, Sara Jacobs (CA-50), and from an internationally renowned epidemiologist, Rebecca Fielding-Miller.

Rep. Jacobs described for members her harrowing experience when Trump fanatics, while supremacists and organized seditionists stormed the United States Capitol building. She and other representatives were trapped beneath their seats, and were instructed to don their evacuation hoods, to prevent against airborne chemical toxins. Despite experiencing first-hand a terrifying assault on our government and our democracy, Jacobs acknowledged that some Republican representatives, such as Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene (GA-14), continue to traffic in the lies, conspiracy theories and fascistic rhetoric that fomented and precipitated the insurrection.

Jacobs’ opportunity to strip Greene of her committee assignments, Jacobs supports an investigation by the evenly-bipartisan Ethics Committee, so that Americans can learn which members of Congress participated in the preparation and execution of violent attack on our government.

That need for accountability notwithstanding, Jacobs emphasized the opportunity to accomplish legislative achievements on a bipartisan basis. She singled out Republican representatives Peter Meijer (MI-3) and Blake Moore (UT-1) as examples of thoughtful and principled legislators, who act in good faith on behalf of their constituents, and who are willing to challenge the dangerous and destructive extremist elements in their party and in the Republican party.

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

The most important thing the Democrats can do with the mandate they have received from the American people, said Jacobs, is to enact the best possible legislation, a plan that makes a material difference in the lives of Americans, so many of whom are suffering from the nonfeasance and inaction of the previous presidential administration, and of the previous congress. Every American will need a COVID vaccine, and millions of individuals, as well as countless small businesses, desperately need economic relief. These are the priorities that the Congresswoman maintains will animate the Democrats’ first months in the majority.

On the topic of COVID vaccinations, Jacobs pointed out that Congress has oversight of the unprecedented mobilization to vaccinate America. If any local or state government fails to trouble getting information or assistance from state or county officials, the Congresswoman invited constituents to contact her office.

This offer of assistance from Rep. Jacobs dovetailed neatly...
members of our community re-airborne virus, so whenever any COVID-19 is a highly contagious, among various communities. instances of death or serious illness. clinical trials, there were zero in-public health, noting that in its evaluates that the Johnson & Johnson Moderna, Dr. Fielding-Miller spec-

While its clinical efficacy rate fully about the soon-to-be-autho-

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LMFDC CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

NCRWC CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

will seek to increase taxes and regulations even more. That’s why so many are leaving the state.

COVID response: It has been a disaster. Despite Newson’s recent, largely unexplained re-opening, California leads the nation in shutting down policies and COVID cases. Add to that Newson’s expensive, secret mask deal to buy masks from a well-connected Chinese electric car manufacturer.

Arrogance: The world now knows that Gov. Newsom imposed rules against restaurant dining and school shut downs while his children attended private schools and he dined at the most expensive restaurant in California, the French Laundry, with healthcare lobbyists. Newson then proceeded to lie about whether he was following social protocol while there. As arrogant as that is, his one-man rule style proves his unworthi-

california ignores public records request, keeps coronavi-

us data hidden — state health officials have said releasing the data would confuse the public. The geniuses, including Newsom, presiding over the worst COVID record of any state have decided that the citizens are just too dumb to be told the truth.

He must go and now is the time.

Getting the recall on the ballot is only half of the work. We must quickly get behind a candidate and begin campaigning. Please keep in mind that we are in a very liberal state and we will not be able to get a far-right wing candi-
ate elected. It would behoove us to seek out an eligible candidate with experience to ride to the ship. That being said, please re-
member that the Democrats are attempting to make our state mail-in ballot permanent. Please, when it comes to the special elec-

tion, do not use mail-in ballots. Let’s fight back against the fraud and go to the polls.

Lastly, we are most excited that we may be able to have our next meeting in person! The meeting is scheduled for March 9. Our speaker will be Wendy Hauffen from San Diego Gun Owners. She is a project manager for #NotMeSD, an ini-
tiated by SDCGO To stop sexual assault and domestic violence. #NotMeSD is a mentor ship pro-

The meeting is scheduled for March 9. Our speaker will be Wendy Hauffen from San Diego Gun Owners. She is a project manager for #NotMeSD, an initiative by SDCGO To stop sexual assault and domestic violence. #NotMeSD is a mentorship program designed to assist women in the journey to becoming a gun owner. We hope you all will join us and look forward to seeing you in person. Fingers crossed.

—Laura Crittelle writes on behalf of the Navajo Canyon Republican Women of California.
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This event is put on by the San Diego Architectural Foundation, whose mission this year is to explore the intersection of design and community. San Diego is an official Open House Worldwide city and only four cities in the nation participate. This year, a multitude of locations in San Diego will be showcased in addition to La Mesa. In support of La Mesa’s involvement with the event, La Mesa City Council has approved a $500 sponsorship to the program. It is not only an investment into this organization but also into the city’s architecture and heritage. According to co-chair of Oh! La Mesa and architect Militante, “We looked at La Mesa and we just saw this rich history of a very tight-knit community. We want people to come in, even if it’s your own neighborhood and you’ve been there before, to really learn about what these buildings are and what their history is.”

Militante and the foundation want to celebrate the various time periods represented specifically in La Mesa’s buildings. James Newland from the La Mesa Historical Society conveys how versatile La Mesa is when it comes to architecture. “La Mesa has a very similar architectural heritage to other well-known communities (like La Jolla, Coronado, etc.). We have small homes from the early 1930s and 40s to custom modern homes and Victorian ranch houses,” he said. “La Mesa’s architectural heritage rivals any other community in the county.”

To further clarify the richness of the city’s history, Newland explained that the vast majority of historical landmarks in the county and incorporated areas are in Grossmont and Mount Helix (which the La Mesa Historical Society covers).

In reality, “It’s one of those hidden things that we hadn’t paid attention to before. If we dig hard enough, look what we find,” he added. Militante and the foundation made it really comfortable and made these events that anyone could go to,” she said.

In addition to the tours that will be occurring in person and virtually, La Mesa will also be having a panel of speakers discuss the future of La Mesa, growth planning, and sustainability. To top off the event, a short film will be available to the public on Mar. 5. It features James Newland and Michele Hottel from the La Mesa Historical Society, local business owner, Toran Grays, who owns Extraordinary Banana Pudding, and La Mesa citizen and film producer Stephen Brucher. The purpose of the film, according to Militante, is to highlight actual stories from the community.

Newland and Militante project that more people, after attending this event, will learn about La Mesa and all it offers as a historic town and connected community. “We would really like people to come away with learning more about their community, their history and really going back to our mission of learning how to get involved with our built environment and the built environment being connected with ourselves,” Militante said.

—Elaine Alfaro is an editorial intern for the San Diego Community Newspaper Group.
A look at Grossmont High School in the 1950s

The 1950s Foothill Echoes, the student newspaper, reflects Foothiller campus life during that decade as well as the impact of a changing society.

In the Jan. 11, 1950 Foothill Echoes, the column “Featuring Foothillers” begins: “Ellen Wessel, 18 year old senior, is called Lena by her mother. She is 5 foot 1 inch, has brown hair and blue-gray eyes, and plans to be a dental assistant. While eating tacos and drinking root beer, Ellen likes to listen to ‘Lovely Bunch of Coconuts’ by Danny Kaye and read ‘Seventeen.’ Ray Milland and June Allyson are her favorite movie stars and Earl Peck is her one and only. ‘My most embarrassing experience,’ blushes Ellen, ‘was once when Tad Geiger asked me what held up my strapless sundress.’”

In the Oct. 11, 1951 first page article “Explosive Noises Are Chemists, Not Russia” reminds us of the Cold War fear that gripped the nation after World War II. “Grossmont students, who, last week, thought the Russians were attacking, don’t need to worry any more. The explosions they heard were coming from the chemistry lab where, under direction of Mr. Daggs, head of the chemistry and physics department, students were generating small quantities of hydrogen.

Mr. Daggs said: “I’m only using the explosions to punctuate my remarks so they will be more clearly imprinted on the students’ minds.” Mr. Daggs insists that the fact the noise woke up students who were catching a little extra shuteye in class, was only secondary.”

And they’re off! 2021 cross country team in their first meet at west hills.

Preparing and protecting your home or business in the event of a wildfire is a reality for those who call San Diego home.

A top priority for Cox during a natural disaster is to keep customers connected so they can stay informed, check in with family and friends, and access their shows away from home.

Cox also works to keep business customers, including hospitals and emergency responders, connected so they can continue to serve our communities.

Wildfire season now begins earlier and ends later, so Cox prepares all year long, reviewing its business continuity plan and running mock emergency events so employees know their roles and responsibilities during a disaster.

When strong winds and other weather conditions create an increased risk for wildfires, the power company may notify their residential customers, and business customers like Cox, that they’ll be implementing a Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS).

During a PSPS, Cox services may be interrupted in a neighborhood where the electric company shuts off power. During a wildfire or PSPS, Cox works closely with the power company and public safety agencies to monitor the situation and ensure the safety of its network and facilities to keep residential and business customers connected.

There are also some things customers can do to prepare.

Have a charged backup battery and corded phone. Most cordless home phones require electricity and won’t work in an outage.

Make sure you have a corded wireline phone available for use during a power outage.

In addition, power is needed for your other telephone equipment to place and receive calls. If Cox’s network is operating during a power outage, make sure you have a charged backup battery to help ensure you can receive a Reverse 911 call. Purchase a backup battery by calling 855-554-7905 or visiting a Cox Solutions Store.

Get updates on Cox’s Twitter handle. During a PSPS or a disaster, Cox posts outage updates and other information on Twitter. Customers can follow Cox at @coxcalifornia.

Download Cox apps before a wildfire or PSPS occurs:
- Cox Mobile – Manage your account; receive outage notifications from the app when there’s an outage in your area and when the outage is over.
- Cox Contour app – Turn your smartphone or tablet into a portable TV; access programming available with your Cox subscription while away from home.
- Cox Voice Everywhere app – Your home phone away from home. Make or receive calls on up to four devices.

Consumer Disaster Protections

Customers whose residential phone service is impacted during a state of emergency declared by the California Governor’s Office or the President of the United States may be eligible to receive disaster relief protections such as a waiver of one-time activation fees for establishing remote call forwarding, remote access to call forwarding, call forwarding features and messaging services. For more information about these consumer disaster protections, visit cox.com/CaliforniaAssist.

For more helpful information and tips, visit cox.com/CaliforniaAssist.
The Helix community suffered a great loss with news of the passing of Mrs. Peggy Crabtree. She has been a staple at Helix, graduating in 1967, then rejoining as a staff member in 1994. Since then, Mrs. Crabtree served the Helix community with honor and distinction as Library support personnel. Over the years, everyone entering the Library had the pleasure of being greeted by her with a smile and advice or some remembrance of some bit of Helix history or life in general.

We are all heartbroken at this sudden loss and understand that this will impact our staff, our students and community greatly. There are few words to say that can embody Peggy’s impact on our campus; she was truly a Scottie and will always be remembered as such.

The Helix High School Foundation has started a scholarship in her name. Mrs. Crabtree would be honored to be able to continue to help Helix students pursue their goals. To donate, visit helixhighschoolfoundation.com.

The Helix community remembers Peggy Crabtree

Campus update: With public health guidance and guidelines changing all the time, it can be hard to keep up with the latest information. Currently, Helix students are participating in academic support programs on campus, as well as athletics or other after-school/co-curricular activities. Any updates regarding students participating in on-campus activities can be found on the Helix website, helixcharter.net. 2021-22 enrollment: It is not too late to enter the lottery for enrollment at Helix for the 2021-22 school year. All new students wishing to attend Helix next year need to participate in the lottery process. Interested families can access a recorded meeting through the Helix website, helixcharter.net. After watching the meeting, email helix2025@helixcharter.net for further instructions. The deadline to apply is March 5 at 1 p.m. Anyone applying after that time will be placed on the waiting list.

Highlander Open Golf Tournament: After a one-year hiatus, the Helix High School Foundation will once again host the Highlander Open Golf Tournament. The tournament will take place on May 22, 2021, at the Chula Vista Golf Course, located at 4475 Bonita Road in Bonita. Sponsorship opportunities are available, starting at just $100. For more information, or to register, visit helixhighschoolfoundation.com.

Hall of Fame coach: Helix Speech and Debate coach Gregg Osborn has been voted into the California High School Speech Association (CHSSA) Hall of Fame. The CHSSA Hall of Fame was established in 1985 to celebrate the dedication and hard work of coaches in California that have served for a minimum of fifteen years in the activity and have shown leadership outside of their respective schools. Osborn has coached hundreds of Helix students over his 22 years in the position. Five team members have become state champions, and dozens have finished in the top 15 in the state. Osborn will be inducted this year during the Virtual CHSSA State Championships.

—Jennifer Osborn writes on behalf of Helix charter High School.

Mrs. Peggy Crabtree (Courtesy photo)

To order your tile, visit dona- tionbricks.com/ghs100yearschal- arships. Or write a check payable to GHS Educational Foundation and mail to Connie and Lynn Baer, 5990 Avenorra Dr., La Mesa, CA 91942. On the check memo, please indicate “scholarship fund” and include the text of your tile with your check (up to three lines, 20 spaces each). Also, if you would like to order a GHS 100th Anniversary commemorative ornament, facemask, t-shirt, hoodie, and more, please visit foothillfoundation.com and download the 100th Anniversary Newsletter on the home page and make your purchases.

Due to the coronavirus restric- tions, the GHS Museum is currently closed, but we are checking our emails at ghsmu- seum@guhsd.net and our phone messages at 619-668-6140.

—Connie and Lynn Baer write on behalf of the Grossmont High School Museum.
The chefs make dough in-house daily for their hand-tossed, East Coast-style pizza pie. Hand thrown pizza crusts ensure a non-uniform, flatter and crispier crust, tender in some spots and crispy in others. By the slice or by the 18-inch pizza pie, you have your choice of both unique and standard pizzas. The front counter has a variety of fresh pizzas that you can order just a slice or two and try some of the different ones.

They are currently offering a great deal called the “Come Back Special.” For $7.95, you get two slices of pizza and a canned drink or for $14.95 for a pizza pie with one topping. Well worth the surfari to La Mesa Boulevard.

**PIZZA PIES**

Try their signature pizza pie, the Surfrider. It is roasted garlic, white sauce, gorgonzola, Roma tomatoes and fresh basil.

The Dirty Dom is their exclusive white jalapeño “dirty” sauce with bacon, jalapeño, Roma tomatoes and fresh cilantro.

If you’re vegetarian, try the Spicy Vegetarian Pizza Pie.

Pepperoncini, jalapeño, artichoke hearts, Roma tomatoes, cilantro, red onion, roasted peppers and the exclusive white jalapeño “dirty” sauce. Another option is the Pesto Spinach Deluxe; Basil pesto, spinach, artichoke hearts, roasted red pepper and ricotta.

For people who are gluten free or gluten sensitive, they offer a pizza crust made of cauliflower and is surprisingly tasty. You would never know it isn’t a regular flour crust.

**STROMBONI AND CALZONE**

Stromboli is a type of turnover sealed by rolling it in a spiral and folding some extra dough back over it. Calzone is folded in half and...
Bonnie Owen

It wasn’t until 2012 when Bonnie Owen retired that she could devote her time to painting. Having had a busy career as sales and catering manager for the La Jolla Beach & Tennis Club for many years and raising two children, time for painting was scarce. Eventually her love of art led her to go back to school at UCSD to become a graphic artist/illustrator.

Owen’s work as an illustrator has been featured in books and magazines and she has done graphic work for several universities and private corporations. Although she still does some computer illustration, painting is her real passion. Since retirement she has enjoyed taking classes from many artists in a variety of media and techniques. Currently her media of choice is acrylic on canvas and her style is a painterly realism.

Her series of paintings of women who have overcome obstacles has won acceptance into the San Diego Museum of Art Guild. Like many animal lovers, Owen has been deeply affected by the ever-growing number of endangered species. Her latest paintings are of some of the animals in jeopardy of extinction.

—Bonnie Owen is editor of Footnotes, the monthly newsletter of the Foothills Art Association.

STUFFED CHICKEN THIGHS

If you make this for dinner, you will feel like it’s a special occasion! Very easy and tasty.

INGREDIENTS:
• 6 boneless skin on chicken thighs
• 1 cup Ricotta cheese
• 2 eggs beaten
• 8 ounces frozen chopped spinach, thawed and liquid squeezed out
• 1 teaspoon salt
• Pepper to taste
• 2 minced garlic cloves or 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
• 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
• 1 teaspoon each dried oregano and thyme
• Olive oil for brushing chicken skin

DIRECTIONS:
Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Combine all ingredients except chicken in bowl and mix well. Stuff each chicken thigh under the skin with the mixture. It will be tight. Brush the thighs with olive oil and lightly salt and pepper with a bit more of each. Bake covered with foil for 25 minutes. Uncover and bake an additional 25 minutes until meat is golden and no longer pink, or internal temperature is 180 degrees. I would recommend buying a meat thermometer. It takes the guess work out of knowing if your meat is cooked. I like the Javelin instant read.

“That is one great thing in this world.... There are always sure to be more beautiful springs!” —L.M. Montgomery

—Robin Dohrn-Simpson is a local freelance food and travel writer. Reach her at dornsimpson@hotmail.com.

NAME THAT COOKIE CONTEST

The exciting news is that they are adding a new line of gourmet cookies. These ingredient-rich half-pound cookies, like pizzas, are for sharing. They are decadent. Really. Wow! Now, your assignment: they are looking for a name for these delicacies. Something unique that resonates with La Mesans. Email your ideas to jeff@dinecrcg.com.

—Robin Dohrn-Simpson is a local freelance food and travel writer. Reach her at dornsimpson@hotmail.com.

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Books to fill gaps in quarantine life

As our months-long quarantine continues, there are many things we miss from our regular lives. Can books fill in those gaps?

No. Can they help take some of the edge off? Maybe. Let’s find out.

Missing your family and loved ones? To help you remember the closeness and eccentricity of families, you can check out David Sedaris’ “Dress Your Family in Corduroy and Denim.” A series of autobiographical short stories and essays by the famed humorist. In it, the author shares a variety of funny, touching, and sometimes troubling tales about this family and relationships. This book has the potential of filling you with nostalgia, melancholy, and gratitude.

If your love of travel is hampered by restrictions, you could try one of the great travel books of all time: J.R.R. Tolkien’s “The Hobbit.” It is the story of a comfortable homebody stepping very much outside of his comfort zone for a road trip to the mountains with a very colorful

SEE BOOKS, Page 17

You should be connecting with customers within a 5 mile radius of your location!
Unplug with a library scavenger hunt

For the last decade, National Day of Unplugging (NDU) has been celebrated the first weekend in March with thousands of in-person, unplugged events engaging hundreds of thousands of participants around the world. Plans for NDU during the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated a new approach.

As people are restricted from larger-scale in-real-life experiences, the conversation about limiting screen time has to be more nuanced. Unplug Collaborative, the team behind the awareness campaign, is careful not to add guilt or shame on top of the anxiety people are already feeling after a year of unprecedented chaos.

This year’s NDU efforts will focus on safe, in-home, and outdoor small group activities, along with contests and charitable partnerships aimed at amplifying social impact. With a list of 50+ things that you can do on NDU ranging from the simple to the adventurous — there is an access point for anyone looking to answer the collective call to unplug for 1 hour or 24 hours.

San Diego is leading the way as a model community collectively unplugging with five neighborhoods organizing Little Free Libraries (LFL) scavenger hunts on March 6. Each hunt will have between seven and 20 stops. Locations include La Mesa, North/South Park, Santee, Clairemont Mesa and Coronado. La Mesa has a repurposed outhouse at the first stop! Local authors Richard Louv, Sebastian Sloven and Nick Carter are partnering with Book Fairies, hiding their books (on digital wellness and nature) in LFLs.

Addresses of the first stop of each hunt to be revealed on March 4 on the NDU website, bit.ly/37KKrG4. Hunt kick-off is March 6, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. at all locations. People can pick up instructions and maps to all other stops at that time. Can’t make the hunt then? Many stops will keep the clues up until March 12.

How does a LFL scavenger hunt work? A clue is taped to a little library at each stop. People will look for clues at each of the stops and if they feel comfortable, they can pick up books and other goodies that some stops will be putting out along the way (book marks, bike safety items, craft kits to take home, etc.). A participant can visit as many stops as they would like and at the end go to the NDU website to check answers and to get a link to a recorded story time reading by “Nocturnal’s” author Tracey Hecht.

Participants can register for this free event at bit.ly/37MXtCW.
group of strangers. Okay, one of those strangers is a wizard, they get attacked by goblins and giant spiders, and it’s a prequel to the fantasy epic “The Lord of the Rings.” But otherwise, it’s totally a typical summer like “Eat, Pray, Love,” but with more dragons and magic swords.

With the pandemic altering social habits, Parker’s book, “Gathering,” the author discusses how psychological human needs play into this change. When events like funfuge whilst trying not to be recognized; gathering of sitting down and eating food at a table, shows signs of social gathering, a woman getting stuck together in an elevator. The woman invites the man to join her. He is her boyfriend at an upcoming wedding. They have a turbulent long-distance relationship while trying to figure out what they want. How do they explain it? They give you a hint: there are four more books in this series.

Many of us are missing the simple pleasures of sitting down and eating food at a restaurant. What if you were to use the phrase “Garlic and Sapphires” by Ruth Reichl? A memoir of her time as a New York Times restaurant critic for much of the 1990s, the book features vivid descriptions of her dining experiences, written in a way that makes the reader feel like they are sitting at the table with her. Reichl’s writing makes you appreciate the beauty of food and the art of dining out. This is a perfect read for anyone who is missing the experience of eating out with friends and loved ones.

Perhaps most of all, many people are missing spending time with other people at events. At Priya Parker’s “The Art of Gathering,” the author discusses how psychological human needs play into our desire for social events. With examples of many types of real-life gatherings (BBQs, business meetings, dinner parties, etc.) Parker gives concrete steps to make these events more meaningful on a personal level for all participants. And when the time comes, both her tips and our long loss will make our experience more enjoyable again.

If you want to pick up some of these titles yourself, be sure to visit a branch of the San Diego County Library during limited in-person services. Check out our Event calendars and more at sdcl.org.
Cuyamaca College breaks ground on Student Services building

A ceremonial groundbreaking ceremony was held Feb. 5 for a new, three-story Student Services Building at Cuyamaca College that promises to be a welcoming gateway to the campus and a central, go-to location for students to get help in multiple ways.

A small group of college and district administrators and construction representative gathered for the ceremonial dirt toss at the Rancho San Diego campus livestreamed for public viewing.

College President Julianna Barnes described the 36,000-square-foot center as a long-awaited hub for students to engage and receive support services, such as counseling, financial aid, admissions, disability support, and Extended Services and CalWORKS.

“Despite its size, this building is led by a PGA professional and licensed recreation and physical therapists. All are designed to sharpen your motor skills and strengthen your body,” she said, adding that the estimated $14.2 million construction project includes new sustainable landscaping and re-construction of pathways to meet ADA accessibility standards.

Chancellor Lynn Neault, who spent many years as a student services administrator before her current post at the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District, recognized the center’s significance to the campus.

“What an exciting day to celebrate the 40-plus-year history of Cuyamaca College and, thanks to taxpayers, to be able to continue building its future,” she said. “I’ve dedicated my entire career to serving students and I know how important this state-of-the-art building will be for our students.”

PROP. V FUNDING

Construction, which is expected to continue till summer 2022, will be funded by Proposition V, a $398 million bond approved by East County voters in 2012.

Bond funds have enabled the district to continue the work on the college campuses that began after the 2002 passage of Prop. R, which resulted in the construction or renovation of 13 major facilities. Recently completed Prop. V projects include a $4.4 million Performing and Visual Arts Center and $13.2 million Phase 1 of the Science Math and Career Technology complex at Grossmont College, and at Cuyamaca College, a $4.2 million Student Center and Veterans Services renovation, and $17 million renovation currently underway of the Ornamental Horticulture Complex and Building M.

In a statement read by the chancellor, Governing Board President Brad Monroe thanked taxpayers for their continuing support and noted that a recent economic impact study reflects the mutual benefit to the public and the college district.

The report found that the district has added more than $1.1 billion annually to the regional economy.

“This Student Services building will demonstrate to the community that their investment in us was well spent,” Monroe, a retired founding faculty member of the college, said. “This building will serve tens of thousands of students in the years to come.”

Vice President of Student Services Jessica Robinson said the facility is one the college community has dreamed about for years as a way to make student services a more centralized function.

“Our new building will now be connected by a bridge to our Student Center and in the main area of campus,” she said. “Right now our Student Services offices are clear across the other end of the campus and isolated from the campus hub and activities. Student Services plays a huge role in our students’ educational journey and success. As a Cuyamaca alumna I can attest to the quality of support students receive at Cuyamaca. Our team works hard to provide help to students both in and out of the classroom and this building will ensure we have a supportive, one-stop facility for all our student needs for decades to come.”

Cuyamaca College has served the community since 1978 and currently enrolls about 9,000 students annually.

For more information about the colleges and the district, go to gc.edu.
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