Emerging artists descend on Ocean Beach for Springboard West

Orange County band Undecided Future at 2019’s Springboard West. (Photo by Collin Worrell Photography)

Danny is played by Jack Mason-Brase. (Photo by Kendra Sitton)

‘Danny’s Story’ of transphobia, assault breeds empathy in local high schools

“…and yet another instance of being othered while at the fictional high school he just transferred to in a play put on by Blindspot Collective.

Danny is othered while at the fictional high school he just transferred to in a play put on by Blindspot Collective.

Seaport Village revitalization continues

Dave Schwab | Downtown News

Plans to give Seaport Village a huge, distinctively San Diego “makeover” are still in play, though it’s taking longer than anticipated.

A project of this size and nature doesn’t just happen — it evolves over time,” said Yehudi “Gaf” Gaffen, managing partner of Protea Waterfront Development, the team behind Seaport San Diego, a re-imaging of the 39-year-old, 90,000-square-foot Seaport Village waterfront shopping and dining complex.

“Our vision is to create a vibrant, experimental-based attraction near the water,” said Gaffen. “Our goal is for this to be a legacy project for more than just San Diego, that’s going to be transformational for the whole West Coast.”

Years in the making, the long-term Seaport Village redevelopment’s two major new attractions, an aquarium and an observation platform, continue to anchor the project.

However, Gaffen noted there have been “enhancements” made to the overall project concept, which now includes construction of three, brand-new full-service hotels as well as a “new generation” student hostel.

Danny’s Story” details the experiences of transphobia and eventual sexual assault of a transgender high school student. Blindspot Collective.

“Danny’s Story” of transphobia, assault breeds empathy in local high schools

SEE DANNY’S STORY, Page 6

SEE MUSIC FEST, Page 15

SEE SEAPORT, Page 11
Downtown’s Finest Professionals

- Steven Kigoras
  Branch Manager
  DRE# 01893154
- Ken Baker
  DRE# 01344759
- Christine Baker
  DRE# 01628152
- Luci Bream
  DRE# 01499387
- John Cline
  DRE# 01840584
- Lily Cline
  DRE# 01840585
- Stephanie Erickson
  DRE# 01344325
- Lila Moore with
  DRE# 02010074
- Amy Alexander
  DRE# 01427539
- Christine Baker
  DRE# 01808132
- Lisa Moore with
  DRE# 02010043
- Ken Baker
  DRE# 01344769
- Stephanie Erickson
  DRE# 01344326
- Vincent Cline
  DRE# 01424078
- Addie Cline
  DRE# 01357181

Bankers Hill, 2BR/2.5BA | $1,650,000
Columbia District Downtown, 2BR/2BA | $630,000

Marina District Downtown, 2BR+Den/2BA | $1,149,000
Marina District Downtown, 1BR/1BA | $689,000 - $715,000

Gaslamp Quarter Downtown, 1BR/1BA | $399,000
Marina District Downtown, 2BR/2BA | $790,000

2875 Fifth Avenue, San Diego | 619.238.8065 | Info@willisallen.com
Steven Kigoras, Branch Manager | Andrew E. Nelson, President & Owner | DRE# 01204280
Plans in motion for major revamp of Children’s Park
City Council approves plans for $8 million improvement project

It has been touted as a project years in the making, but ultimately was made official after just minutes of discussion and unanimous support from San Diego decision-makers.

Children’s Park, a largely underutilized 1.4-acre green space at 326 W. Harbor Drive, is set to undergo $8 million worth of large-scale improvements that supporters say will give the site an opportunity to live up to its name.

According to city documents, the park’s refreshed array of features is to include a forest-themed playground area and picnic amenities. Also in the works is an adult exercise equipment area, off-leash dog running area and a vendor building that could serve as a platform for special events.

Additionally, the construction project, set to wrap in summer 2021, is to carve out new space for public art, a new walkway to the adjacent Civic Pond, a lawn area and attendant-staffed public restrooms.

The City Council on Dec. 17 issued several pivotal authorizations linked to the project, including approval of the overall plan and a compensation agreement with Civic San Diego, the agency that formerly handled all aspects of Downtown redevelopment.

Council member Chris Ward, whose district includes Downtown, said he believes Children’s Park and another closely aligned endeavor — construction of the first phase of the East Village Green park project — will net positive results in the years ahead.

“This was a big lift to get a monumental new park facility into the East Village community,” Ward said of the efforts to bring both proposals to reality. “This has been a very much ongoing project.”

Council member Scott Sherman also went on record in support of the projects before the formal vote was taken. Sherman said the use of such funding sources as park district revenues and development impact fees is a prudent use of the money.

“We’ve been looking at these projects for years and years, but they just really hit a wall in terms of where we can go from a standpoint of making it possible and viable,” Sherman said. “It’s for a good cause,” Sherman said. “I think it’s a win-win for everybody.”

According to city officials, none of the park’s $8 million worth of costs will be covered through the

A multi-use sport court and community room will support a wide range of public programming and events.

Enjoy à la carte menus, chef’s tasting menus, private dinners at the Chef’s Table, and a beautifully designed setting with an outdoor patio.

From homemade pasta dishes to prime cut steaks, fall in love with our chef’s recipes, transporting your senses to Italy. Match every dish with perfectly paired selections from a carefully curated wine collection. The bar proudly serves a unique, specially crafted cocktail menu with house-infused spirits, and fresh, organic ingredients.

Opening on February 14, just in time for Valentine’s Day! Make your reservation today by calling: 1(800) LEGACY9.
San Diego celebrates Zandra Rhodes, pets

Fashion Files
By DIANA CAVAGNARO

GASLAMP HOLIDAY PET PARADE
The 12th annual Gaslamp Holiday Pet Parade took place on Dec. 15, at Martin Luther King, Jr. Promenade. This year, the event was sponsored by Just Food For Dogs and had a pet expo with many vendors that were all pet-related. They had a fun contest to go around to all the booths and have your program stamped and then put into a drawing for many fun prizes. The first 350 pet entrants received a complimentary goodie bag.

All the furry critters came dressed in their favorite costumes, some matching their owners’ costumes and many of the participants put together creative floats. At 2 p.m., the parade marched up Fifth Avenue to E Street and came back down Fourth Avenue along with marching bands, dignitaries and pets and their owners. Not all the entrants were dogs, some pets were cats, chickens, bunnies, and pigs. When they arrived back at MLK Promenade, prizes were given for the best in the following categories.

This year’s awards went to:
• Best Ugly Holiday Sweater: Ollie, the West Highland Terrier, with handler Victoria Brunell.
• Cutest Critter: Chicka the chicken, Gingerale the chicken, and Waffles the rabbit, with handlers Mikey Johnson, Hunter Johnson and Grace Green (“Alice in Wonderland”).
• Best Pet Costume: Leuke, with handler Viki Solano.
• Best Non-Canine Pet Costume: Jazzy the dog, and Maya the cat, with handlers Greyfield Nguyen and Angela Aguilar.
• Best Pet Holiday Costume: Sir Ruffles Von Vicious (Ruffy), with handler Jan Aguilar.
• Best Costumed group: Kylo-Ren the dog, with handlers the Andrews Family (“Where’s Waldo”).
• Best Costumed Duo: Teensie Weensie Piglet and the Piglet, with handlers the Hoeberecht family.
• Best Pet Holiday Sweater: Winnie the Pooh.
• Best Pet Holiday Costume: Psychochick with handler Janet and Victorian Edwardian with handler Victoria.
• Best Pet Holiday Coat: Jax, the Australian Shepherd, with handler Jaimie Nguye.
• Best Pet Costume: Ollie the West Highland Terrier, with handler George Pisano (Harry Potter).
• Best Pet Holiday Sweater: Lucy the Boston Terrier, with handler Greyfield Nguyen and Angela Aguilar.

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CALI Strong
The California Sports Company
789 West Harbor Drive (next to Puesto)
San Diego, California 92101
Park in Seaport Village and we validate

San Diego Downtown News
January 2020
Conference rooms are available to rent.

Bikes are encouraged as a green alternative to cars.

Cross Campus caters to Downtown professionals

VINCE MEEHAN (FOR NEWSDAY)

Briana Tovey is the senior campus manager of Cross Campus, a coworking hub located in Little Italy where professionals can rent workstations or offices by the hour, day, week or even longer. She serves as the point person at this brick building that used to be a major furniture warehouse on India Street near Laurel.

The concept is simple: working professionals can have access to workstations and conference rooms without having to commit to a long-term lease.

There are a growing number of coworking spaces in San Diego and the nation. “Coworking spaces are set up for a lot of different reasons, one being smaller commitments for office space,” Tovey explains. “And there are also options for people to drop in and use us once a week, or a couple of times a month, so it’s flexible office space. We cater to startups who are growing and don’t know exactly where they’ll be in a year and don’t want to commit to a long-term lease, and we also cater to a lot of remote workers.”

These remote workers can be in San Diego on a business trip and need to book a conference room for a few hours or can be consultants that need a fast and easy workspace for the day. Many find these coworking spaces through phone apps such as Deskpass, which recently added San Diego to its network.

Sam Rosen is the co-founder and CEO of Deskpass and says that San Diego is a perfect target for its network.

Cross Campus features various amenities that young professionals gravitate to including wall-mounted bicycle racks, a fully functioning kitchen and dining area, and even beer on tap. The ambiance is fun and casual with many professionals choosing to work together at large tables as opposed to hiding in a cubicle.

The workers must provide their own computer, so the work tool of choice for the clients is typically laptops. However, if you require multiple monitors, Cross Campus can provide you with them. Tovey elaborated on how easy it is for workers to do this. “We don’t provide computers – most people work off their laptops – but we do lend people monitors. So if you come with your laptop, but you’re a graphic or web designer and you need two screens, you just check one out – it’s free – you borrow it for the day, you bring it back when you’re done.”

Tovey definitely enjoys her job at Cross Campus and her enthusiasm is infectious as she roams the large workspace. She checks in on people and makes sure that everybody is happy. She enjoys the camaraderie that Cross Campus intentionally generates for its workers. Large common areas bring workers together and creates a prime environment for collaboration. She adds that this brings a smile to her face when she sees it happen. “It’s a great place for cross-pollination because there are people here who do a little bit of everything. There’s a very wide array of ages and backgrounds represented here; I love it when I see people working together – it’s my favorite!”

—Vince Meehan can be reached at vinniemeehan@gmail.com.

RAIN, WIND, AND FIRE...

“The three menaces to any chimney, fireplace, or stove.”

Every year there are over twenty thousand chimney / fireplace related house fires in the US alone. Losses to homes as a result of chimney fires, leaks, and wind damage exceeds one hundred million dollars annually in the US.

CHIMNEY SWEEPS, INC., one of San Diego’s leading chimney repair and maintenance companies, is here to protect you and your home from losses due to structural damage and chimney fires.

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For a limited time, readers of this paper will receive a special discount on our full chimney cleaning and safety inspection package with special attention to chimney water intrusion points in preparation for the rainy season.
**Danny’s Story**

Collective created the piece and has taken it on two tours in San Diego high schools. Its latest tour finished with three shows at San Diego High School on Dec. 20. The play gives an intimate look for this new decade and if you want to be a part of this new era, you need to join the conversation,” Paloma said.

“Every process is completely open, and the right to edit letters for brevity and accuracy. Letters and postcards submitted do not necessarily reflect the views of the publisher or staff.”

**KATHY BURNS (Photo by Kendra Sitton)**

**OPINION / FEATURE**

The cast plays including Lady Gaga’s “Born This Way” as students file into the theater to see “Danny’s Story.” *(Photo by Kendra Sitton)*

**Declutter your life for a stress-free 2020**

By Katie Burns

2020 marks the beginning of a new decade and if you want to start off on the right foot, Paloma said, this is the perfect time to begin decluttering and organizing your life.

The average U.S. home contains more than 300,000 possessions. It is no wonder why we sometimes feel like our possessses are possessing us!

One thing I strive to bring to the community and well-being.

If you...
A local business owner and organ donor was honored posthumously in the Rose Parade on Jan. 1. He was born in Italy but came to San Diego on vacation and never left. Alessandro (Alle) Speroni owned Soleluna Cafe in Cortez Hill, where he met his wife Dana.

“Allie was the sun on a cloudy day. He could turn anyone’s day around with his charm and witty humor. He knew how to listen and really made one feel like there was no one else in the room,” Dana said. “He was a man you want to know and strive to be.”

In 2013 at age 41, Speroni died suddenly from an aneurysm while surfing—a tremendous loss for his wife, family and friends. Since Speroni was a registered organ donor, through his death, he was able to save four lives with the help of Lifesharing, who carried out his final wishes by finding recipients for his heart, liver, kidneys and pancreas.

“Being a donor family, to me, was a gift. It brought light to a very dark time. Losing a loved one is tragic and life-altering; there is very little I can say to describe the moment you hear that your loved one has passed. Devastating is an understatement. Knowing, however, that the one you love can change someone else’s fate is game changing. The overwhelming sadness turned into hope—the hope that Alle’s organs would remain strong enough to save someone’s life. The hope that he could prevent another tragedy, the hope that he could create a miracle. That is everything he did and more; he saved four people’s lives,” Dana Speroni explained. “I only hope they are living life the way he would have.”

The Donate Life float’s theme was “Light in the Darkness” and highlighted Southeast Asia’s Festival of Lights — Diwali.

“The greatest fear we have after losing our loved ones is that they will be forgotten. This is a memorable event that is watched by so many people. It gives me peace to know his memory continues to live on, his organs continue to live on, and that his smile can be shared with the world,” she continued.

A portrait of the cafe owner was featured in the Rose Parade in Los Angeles. Dana and family created the floral portrait out of coffee and spices. It showcases his famous smile.

“I miss everything about him, but... I miss his smile the most. That was the smile that won me over. I met Alle at the coffee shop he owned across the street from my house. I was a regular and there was never a day I would walk in and not be greeted by that warm, affectionate smile. It was that same smile that both started

I hope through Lifesharing I can continue to honor Alle’s memory and encourage others to follow in his footsteps to become donors and give others the gift of life,” Dana said.

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

Cafe owner Alessandro Speroni

Dana Speroni volunteering to help make the float in the Rose Parade that honored her late husband.

In the heart of San Diego’s Little Italy

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EVERY SATURDAY 8:00AM - 2:00PM

LittleItalyMercato.com

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Dana Speroni and her brother Gil Pulde decorating the Donate Life Rose Parade float.

Dana Speroni creating the floral portrait of Alessandro Speroni. (Photo courtesy Lifesharing)
The newly opened Gaslamp Breakfast Company has replaced The Drive SKC, and it offers a menu of classic and creative dishes such as steak and eggs, bacon or vegan omlets, orange-thyme waffles, fried rice Benedict with crispy ham, and more. There are also craft beers and kombucha on tap, as well as cocktails made with assorted fruits and vegetables.

Situated in a 3,148-square-foot space, the restaurant is patterned after North Park Breakfast Company, which opened several months ago at 3337 University Ave. Both are owned and operated by the Rise & Shine Restaurant Group, which also runs Breakfast Republic, Fig Tree Cafe, El Jardin Cantina, and Feast & Fareway.

What was known as The Grand Lobby Bar inside Downtown’s towering Manchester Grand Hyatt has remodeled and renamed The Landing. The new, modern design features custom woodwork, marble tabletops and a glass centerpiece mural illustrating crystal-blue water. The beverage lineup now focuses on high-end wines, rare liquors and portobello mushrooms. 324 Seventh Ave., citytacossd.com.

The beverage lineup now focuses on high-end wines, rare liquors and portobello mushrooms. 324 Seventh Ave., citytacossd.com.

City Tacos will replace the now-shuttered Larry’s Deli near Petco Park in the next two months, according to a manager from the original North Park location. Over the past decade, the eatery has expanded into La Mesa, Imperial Beach and Encinitas. It is lauded for its unique saucers on high-end wines, rare liquors and portobello mushrooms. 324

A new place for morning fare in the Gaslamp Quarter (Alternatives Strategies) 

The Beverage lineup now focuses on high-end wines, rare liquors and portobello mushrooms. 324

Are you ready to explore Restaurant Week your way?

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The return of swank

Restaurant Review

By FRANK SABATINI JR.

In the occasional attempts made by San Diego restaurants (steakhouses in particular) to create luxurious atmospheres beckoning to the days of formal dining, something always seems amiss. Either the seats aren’t cushy enough, the lighting is harsh, the use of steel and concrete is excessive, or most often, soundproofing is sorely lacking.

Animae
969 Pacific Highway
619-432-1225, animaesd.com
Prices: Starters (hot and cold), $7 to $22; noodle and rice dishes, $16 to $34; meal and seafood entrees, $27 to $160

At the splendidly designed Animae, such faux pas are avoided. It’s where diners can sink their tushies into $5.5 million worth of comfort while sipping on pan-Asian cuisine stamped largely with big, complex flavors.

Heavy draperies and plush carpeting flow amid furnishings and décor that brilliantly mesh together accents from the Art Deco and midcentury periods. Compared to so many hyped restaurants that have hit the local scene over the past couple decades, Animae defies them all in style and comfort. Even in a full house, there’s enough space between tables and circular booths to allow for audible conversation.

Staying true to fine-dining haunts from a century ago, there is no open kitchen. So what you don’t see are the charcoal-fueled grill and oven working their magic on various proteins, or the noodle-making skills of executive chef Joe Magnanelli, who partnered with designer-entrepreneur Chris Puffer and celebrity chef Brian Malarkey to open Animae late last year.

The venture falls into the portfolio of the Puffer Malarkey Collective, which owns Herb & Wood, Herb & Eatery, Farmer & The SEALihorse, and Herb & Sea. It is anchored in Downtown’s spank

Cushy seating and swagged fabrics define Animae’s interior. (Photos by Dustin Bailey)

THANKS FOR TAKING
THE TIME
TO SAVE.

You did it, San Diego. More than 600,000 of you are thinking about energy differently. By using less electricity from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m., you’ve helped save energy and contributed to a cleaner environment for us all. Because of you, when is truly in. Visit us online for tips on how to continue your success with Time-of-Use.

(Photos by Dustin Bailey)

For the former San Diego Tribune.

—Frank Sabatini Jr. is the author of ‘Secret San Diego’ (ECW Press) and began his local writing career more than two decades ago as a staffer for the former San Diego Tribune. You can reach him at fsabatini@san.rr.com.
Some buildings naturally take your breath away, but the interiors turn out to be less stellar. Others are largely utilitarian on the outside but are quite lovely on the inside. The Watts-Robinson Building, San Diego's first Chicago-style skyscraper, is both. I am, of course, referring to the second Watts-Robinson building. Although the first building was no slouch, it could not rival the elegance and splendor of the second structure. Early owners of the lot were Judge Charles B. Richards, later director of the San Diego Savings Bank and Dr. Thomas C. Stockton, the physician who assisted Nurse Anna Scheppe at the Davis-Horton House. By 1885, the property was owned by Robert Johnson, who set about constructing the first building at the site. It consisted of a 48-foot frontage on Fifth and an 80-foot frontage on E Street. The first floor was divided into two large stores with the upper floor divided into eleven offices. Unfortunately, Mr. Johnson became ill and passed away before his project was finished. All of his property was sold after probate and the new owner was Henry Watts.

Mr. Watts continued to rent out the upper floors as offices, while half of the ground floor now housed a wholesale liquor store and the other half served as a grocery store. The land boom of the 1880s encouraged real estate speculation, and several real estate offices also opened in the building.

Although business was booming, Mr. Watt's health was apparently suffering, and he passed away on Feb. 25, 1889, at the Florence Hotel. He promptly turned the property to H.C. Watts. Under Watts, a variety of clientele occupied the building. They included dentists, the Postal Telegraph Company, and a theosophist. Upon his death in 1889, his son Florence Hotel. His estate passed away on Feb. 25, 1889, at the

The Watts-Robinson Building from across the street

The Watts-Robinson Building

Reaching for the stars

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: Romanesque Revival

HISTORY

Early owners of the lot were Judge Charles B. Richards, later director of the San Diego Savings Bank and Dr. Thomas C. Stockton, the physician who assisted Nurse Anna Scheppe at the Davis-Horton House. By 1885, the property was owned by Robert Johnson, who set about constructing the first building at the site. It consisted of a 48-foot frontage on Fifth and an 80-foot frontage on E Street. The first floor was divided into two large stores with the upper floor divided into eleven offices. Unfortunately, Mr. Johnson became ill and passed away before his project was finished. All of his property was sold after probate and the new owner was Henry Watts.

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Although business was booming, Mr. Watt's health was apparently suffering, and he passed away on Feb. 25, 1889, at the Florence Hotel. He promptly turned the property to H.C. Watts. Under Watts, a different type of clientele occupied the building. They included dentists, the Postal Telegraph Company, and a theosophist. Upon his death in 1889, his son Nathan, a real estate agent, took over the building. Nathan rented to a variety of clients and also opened the building to several service firms, including the Chicago Barber Shop, a photographer's studio, and the Blockman Banking Company.

By 1912, Nathan aspired to something grander. He completely demolished his 26-year-old building to make way for an imposing 11-story building in the style of the Chicago School of Architecture. The projected structure would have 10 stories above the ground and two below. The basement excavation alone cost $4,357, with the building contractor, the F.O. Engstrom Company, receiving $142,000. The Thomas Haverty Company was the plumber and charged the sum of $18,446, while the Van Emon Elevator Company received the bid for installing elevators for $2,975,000.

The depth from the street level to the footings was 35 feet, making it the deepest of any business in the city. The sub-basement housed all of the building machinery, which included the boiler room, vacuum cleaning systems, compressed air plant and elevator apparatus. The San Diego Savings Bank secured the entire basement and first floor, as their new banking quarters.

The building was of steel reinforced concrete and hollow tile. The exterior was finished with cut limestone and granite and cement plaster. The 130 offices above the first floor were equipped with hot and cold water and special waste outlets. Additionally, there were compressed air, gas and electric outlets for the use of doctors and dentists. Additional amenities included steam heat, mail chutes, vacuum cleaning systems and two high-speed elevators with uniformed attendants. The interior corridors were wainscoted with white marble and Australian gumwood and featured tiled floors. The halls and offices were well-lit and ventilated. The San Diego Savings Bank opened its doors on Nov. 22, 1913, although the date of completion is listed as Dec. 11, 1913. Thousands of visitors thronged the magnificent new headquarters of San Diego's foremost financial institution, which stayed at this location until 1927.

In 1926, Nathan Watts died and his sister, Pauline Watts Settle, a prominent socialite, took over the property. It was her father-in-law, Judge Charles B. Richards, later director of the San Diego Savings Bank, who nominated General Ulysses S. Grant for the presidency. She can be reached at swillett@gsampqua.gov.
Seaport
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

which he described as “a magi-
cal, educational and entertain-
ing experience for both kids and adults.”

Additionally, Gaffen noted the number of hotels in the project has now grown from three to up to six.

Meanwhile, the transition from old to new at Seaport Village continues. In October 2018, the Port of San Diego became the owner/ landlord of Seaport Village, with Protea Property Management, Inc. (Protea) managing and operating the shopping and dining center.

“Working in close collaboration with our partners, the Port of San Diego is revitalizing and enhancing the experience at Seaport Village for residents, visitors and the businesses that operate within it,” said Garry Bonelli, San Diego Board of Port Commissioners. “Our goal is to create excitement and energy within Seaport Village, and also strengthen our relationships with our tenants while maximizing revenues for the public’s benefit.”

The port is presently revitalizing Seaport Village through a variety of new and established entertainment, shopping and dining options, along with site enhancements and operational improvements.

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**Saturday, Jan. 11**

**Pasta Making Class**
Explore the art and learn the craft of making fresh pasta in an intimate and small setting. The cost is $65 to 100. 5-8 p.m. at the Wine Pub, 2807 Shelter Island Drive.

**Friday, Jan. 10**

**Shadow Man**
Shadow Man is a local open-format DJ, host and music producer. General admission starts at $15. Fluxx Nightclub, 500 Fourth Ave., San Diego. 9 p.m.-2 a.m.

**Saturday, Jan. 12**

**Sunrise Saturdays: Community Workout**
Come sweat with us! Studies show when you work out with a group, you are more likely to succeed! Every Saturday morning at 7-8 a.m., we get our adrenaline pumping at the SD Convention Center stairs! The workout is led by CPT Josh Honour. It's free and fun! Come out and start your weekends right!

**Sunday, Jan. 13**

**New National Bagel Day**
Join us on Harbor Drive for the 40th annual Martin Luther King Jr. Parade. This is one of the largest celebrations of its kind in the United States in honor of MLK, Jr. The parade is filled with dazzling floats, phenomenal bands, drill teams, and more. Come and experience the excitement and help continue the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The free event is from 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

**San Diego Sunroad Marina Boat Show**
San Diego Sunroad Marina Boat Show is back by popular demand. Hosted by the Sunroad Resort Marina, the annual San Diego tradition will be held Jan. 23-26, 2020, and will be offering this event with the addition of more floating docks to moor several larger vessels. In addition to the tremendous boats, there will also be a plethora of marine vendors and electronics with the latest nautical products and services, boating seminars, free boat rides, as well as food and beverages vendors — making a great time for all to enjoy a day on the San Diego Bay. The San Diego Sunroad Boat Show will be held at the Sunroad Resort Marina located on Harbor Island at 955 Harbor Island Drive. Show hours are Thursday, Jan. 23, from noon to 6 p.m.; Friday, Jan. 24, from noon to 6 p.m.; Saturday, Jan. 25, from 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; and Sunday, Jan. 26, from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. General parking is located at the corner of Harbor Drive and Harbor Island Drive, shuttle service included. Entrance fees are as follows: $15 for adults. Children 12 and under, free. Military, EMFit’s, police and fire personnel are free on Thursday, Jan. 24, and Friday, Jan. 25, with valid ID.

**Thursday, Jan. 16**

**Downtown at Sundown**
Visual and performing arts converge at the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego's after-hours offering, Downtown at Sundown. On the third Thursday of every month, enjoy free museum admission and exhibition tours. 6-8 p.m. Free entry at SDSU Downtown Gallery, drink specials at the adjacent Stone Brewing Company, and so much more. 8-11 p.m. 1100 and 1001 Kettner Blvd.

**San Diego Restaurant Week**
The 16th annual San Diego Restaurant Week returns Sun.-Sun., Jan. 18 through Sunday, Jan. 26, 2020 for an edible extravaganza to ring in the new year! This foodie-focused festival is the perfect time to take a culinary tour through the diverse and thriving food culture of San Diego. More than 180 participating restaurants will offer three-course prix-fixe dinner menus for $20, $30, $40 or $50 per person and/or two-course prix-fixe lunch menus for $15 or $20 per person. The participating restaurants span across the county from the South Bay to East County and to the borders of Oceanside and Fallbrook to the north. Tickets are not necessary for this delectable week of discounted dining, but reservations are recommended! Visit SanDiegoRestaurantWeek.com for more information.

**Thursday, Jan. 23**

**San Diego Sunroad Marina Boat Show**
San Diego Sunroad Marina Boat Show is back by popular demand. Hosted by the Sunroad Resort Marina, the annual San Diego tradition will be held Jan. 23-26, 2020, and will be offering this event with the addition of more floating docks to moor several larger vessels. In addition to the tremendous boats, there will also be a plethora of marine vendors and electronics with the latest nautical products and services, boating seminars, free boat rides, as well as food and beverages vendors — making a great time for all to enjoy a day on the San Diego Bay. The San Diego Sunroad Boat Show will be held at the Sunroad Resort Marina located on Harbor Island at 955 Harbor Island Drive. Show hours are Thursday, Jan. 23, from noon to 6 p.m.; Friday, Jan. 24, from noon to 6 p.m.; Saturday, Jan. 25, from 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; and Sunday, Jan. 26, from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. General parking is located at the corner of Harbor Drive and Harbor Island Drive, shuttle service included. Entrance fees are as follows: $15 for adults. Children 12 and under, free. Military, EMFit’s, police and fire personnel are free on Thursday, Jan. 24, and Friday, Jan. 25, with valid ID.

**Through Sunday, Jan. 16**

**‘Going to a Place Where You Already Are’**
Is there a heaven? Joe says no; there’s a hell, but with a happy ending. Joe, Roberta, has always claimed to agree. But lately she’s beginning to wonder, especially when they find themselves in church a lot, having reached the age when funerals are more frequent than weddings. Their granddaughter, Ellie, doesn’t have time in her own business to ponder the afterlife. But when mortality confronts them, her grandmother’s claim to have gone to heaven and back doesn’t sound so silly any more after all. With thoughtful storytelling and wit, Brunet explores the beginning, endings — and an enigmatic angel. On Stage Playhouse’s latest production plays Jan. 17-Feb. 16. Tickets start at $25. Written by Bekah Brunstetter; directed by Hannah Logan. 291 Third Ave., Chula Vista, 91910.
Danny’s Story
CONTINUED FROM Page 6

Zaragoza is proud to be in the play because this is the first time she has seen trans and nonbinary identities talked about in a way aimed at young people in San Diego, even though she grew up here. She has witnessed pushback from schools unsure about welcoming the piece onto their campuses, but students’ reactions to the shows have made her more committed to doing theater for social justice work.

“Of the most magical parts every day is seeing these young people come to the realization about these things in life, whether it’s LGBTQ+ rights, or sexual assault, or the other topics we bring up, but seeing them come to those realizations is what makes it worth it,” Zaragoza said. “Danny’s Story” is Blindspot Collective’s second school tour play since it was founded three years ago to bring theater of the oppressed and social justice theater to San Diego. Their first educational play, “Safa’s Story,” is about racism and immigration and is aimed at a primary school-age audience. Unlike “Safa’s Story,” which is based almost entirely on one student’s account, “Danny’s Story” was developed after a group of local LGBTQ+ high schoolers and young adults shared their stories over two days. After the listening session, Schrock took what she heard and developed a script that delved into some of the common experiences many of the participating trans youth shared.

“We started because we were interested in new work and new voices, and interested in theater at the intersection of social justice and artistic development. We are interested in topics and issues that are in the blind spot of society,” Schrock explained. “We show the impact of oppression is tragic. Only we can then change that. We can change our own lives, we can change the lives of others.”

Blindspot Collective is currently developing a new piece of vital theater that will focus on the community in National City through interviews. Schrock hopes to open it this summer.

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

Zandra Rhodes
CONTINUED FROM Page 4

called “The Golden Hour” on Nov. 7. The event began with a social hour celebrating Zandra Rhodes’ 50 years in fashion. This amazing fashion show revealed the “Golden Hour” collection on the runway. Different designs throughout Rhodes’ 50-year career were shown to the delight of the audience. Rhodes is a British fashion designer who is known for fabulous textile designs and is recognized for her pink hair. The theme for the Pink Parade Luncheon was named by Jeanne Jones and created by executive chef Fabrice Hardei. After the show, guests were very excited to have a book signing with Rhodes. They lined up to have Rhodes sign her new book “50 Fabulous Years.” Following the book signing, a Zandra Rhodes pop-up shop was set up and guests could come and try on the garments. Proceeds went to The American Friends of the Zandra Rhodes Museum in London. Currently, this museum has an exhibit named “Zandra Rhodes 50 Years of Fabulous” and runs until Jan. 26, 2020.

—Diana Cavagnaro is an internationally renowned couture milliner based in the historic Gaslamp Quarter. Learn more about our hat designer, art lover and blogger at DianaCavagnaro.com.

Sofia Zaragoza’s character, Gionni (right), is a bystander as Danny (Jack Mason-Brase, left) is bullied by Adam (Marc Caro-Willcox, center left). Later, students will stand in for Zaragoza to practice how a friend could stand up for someone being bullied. (Photo by Kendra Sifton)

The community center’s gymnasia features an operable wall in a glass façade to create a seamless relationship with the park.

A pet-friendly café space overlooks separate dog parks for large and small dogs. (Courtesy photo)
ensembles – including seven San Diego bands – perform through the event’s “springboard effect” to launch careers that otherwise may never materialize.

Coffing, a music industry phenom, remains determined to help other bands “break through,” while sidestepping the “mistakes” he made.

“Earlier in my career, I thought having talent was enough,” he said. “I could sing, write and produce songs. I made an incredible record with my own money. I knew it was a hit, but I didn’t play the game so I didn’t go very far.

“I couldn’t let what happened to me happen to anyone else,” he continued. “Don’t get me wrong, I love the music business. But, the game’s rigged. Music’s a team sport. It’s not just about talent. It’s about having a good manager, a great producer, and excellent co-writers. Even The Beatles didn’t make it alone.”

Coffing added that “no matter how talented, no band ever hits a No. 1 single out of the gate.”

“Music professionals will help budding artists get halfway across the street, but after that, there isn’t much help,” he said. “These bands have the talent, the perseverance, and the strength, but they’ve never had the opportunity to prove themselves or learn what’s needed to progress within the industry. And that’s what we do, along with giving fans a front row seat to the action.”

Coffing described Springboard West as a “junk filter” for industry professionals. Applicants are capped at 1,000 and whittled down to 300 before 40 are chosen.

“We go through 3,000 bands to say hey, here’s 40 we think you should take a look at,” he said. “We find talent before and after they’ve been featured on ‘American Idol’ or ‘The Voice.’ But while ‘American Idol’ and ‘The Voice’ focus on making a television show, I focus on making a rock star.

Coffing mathematically defined a band’s profile in “quarters.” Twenty-five percent are “good to go,” 25% have “pure talent” but lack a business acumen; 25% have “lots happening” with some needs that can’t be pulled back; and 25% have an “Achilles heel,” a missing element that’s hindering their progression.

Talent arrives to the festival from all over the globe including Australia, Canada, the Republic of Georgia, and even Vietnam.

“We extend invitations on the off chance that they can make it. As travel’s often a hurdle for everyone in this business,” he said. “The smaller markets can’t find a team to complete them while the industry needs to find new blood and fresh talent that’s not just from three cities. Springboard removes that barrier.”

The event kicks off with a two-day Board Bootcamp replete with panels, workshops, one-on-one interviews, and “moment of truth pitch sessions” with industry notables. The truth panels are noted to be current within an ever-evolving industry.

“Our industry professionals aren’t just talking supervisors here because of what they did 10 years ago,” said Coffing. “We’re current and active within an industry that’s constantly changing.”

Coffing moderates to learn “along with everyone else.”

“The more I learn, the more I can help,” he said. “These bands are our clients.”

Bands are guided with brutal honesty.

“The talent isn’t here to be showered with compliments or given a pop talk,” explained Coffing. “Every band’s wonder-ful and talented. But we’re here to ask truthful questions. We’re here to get these bands to break through.”

The Texan native modeled Springboard music festivals after South by Southwest, a musical marriage that gets bigger every year.

“Talent arrives to the festival after everyone remembers what it felt like to then be shared with everyone else,” added Valentin. “We’re not taking any of this lightly. We’ve worked exensively to give the audience of mentors a totally wonderful, unforgetta-ble, and fun performance.”

Valentin is working with Fisher to “build more than a music medium.”

“We’re building a universe to let everyone know that they can go as deep as they’d like to enjoy head bopping music,” he said. “Everyone’s welcome.”

“Our connection is meant to glean that useful spirit where everyone remembers what it felt like to be a kid and have that childlike wonder and fascina-tion with the world,” concluded Fisher. “Digital Lizards of Doom is a very safe place to experience something fun and unique.”

—Lucia Viti can be reached at lucia@roadrunner.com.

Downtown’s Digital Lizards of Doom

Digital Lizards of Doom is an alternative rock duo that features Gabriel Valentín on guitar, strings, and vocals and Gallie Fisher on mandolin, keys, and vocals. Their debut album, “Lizards and Labyrinths” sold 25,000 copies worldwide.

The singer-songwriters from America’s Finest City were touted in Forbes Magazine for their work as producers and perform-ers within the genres of rock, dance, electronic and folk mu-sic as well as the world of pop culture.

Valentín created the “sci-fi thriller-inspired band” based on his storybook characters from his graphic novel “Digital Lizards of Doom” as a “massive love letter to everything pop culture and all things nerdy.”

“Earlier in my career, I thought having talent was enough,” he said. “We find talent before and after they’ve been featured on ‘American Idol’ or ‘The Voice.’ But while ‘American Idol’ and ‘The Voice’ focus on making a television show, I focus on making a rock star.”

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Neuman & Neuman Real Estate successfully represented more buyers and sellers in 92101 than any other agent, team, or brokerage during the past 12 months with 93 closed transactions.