San Diego experienced an unprecedented citywide blackout on Sept. 8.

Don Balch

America’s Cup returned to San Diego in November after a nine-year hiatus.

Paul Hansen

Will Irwin Jacobs move ahead with the Plaza de Panama plan or will park preservationists stand in the way?

Paul Hansen

Will an overhauled Convention Center really bring the promised economic growth to downtown?

COURTESY

Will San Diego finally have an iconic structure to call its own with the “Wings of Freedom” installation?

COURTESY

Occupy San Diego protesters have made their presence known in Civic Center Plaza since the beginning of October.

Paul Hansen

Business owner, nonprofit founder helps nourish a healthy San Diego

When Scott Lutwak, owner of Fit San Diego, launched his business in February 2008, he wanted to create much more than just a gym. He wanted to create a new generation of health-minded fitness enthusiasts, and he chose the East Village for his blank canvas, expanding his health-club concept from its beginnings in Houston, Texas.

“Life is what happens when you’re busy making plans,” said the Chicago native. “When it came time to expand Fit Houston, I realized that San Diego is one of the healthiest cities in America." He chose downtown’s East Village when he opened Fit San Diego.

Today, the San Diego location provides members with the opportunity to relax by the pool, take advantage of nutrition, and a history law — the first state law of its kind in the nation. Animals are also the source of greater protection, with laws shielding sharks and cracking down on abusive pet owners.

Every employer and employee will want to read the fine print of a compendium of new workplace-related laws that will help the world’s eighth-largest economy going for another year.

Here’s a look at just some of the new laws for 2012 that took hold Jan. 1.

CAR SAFETY

California has a new booster-seat law that requires children younger than 8 — or who are not yet 4 feet, 9 inches tall — to use a booster seat securely fastened in the back seat of the car.

The revised California Child Restraint Law, twice vetoed by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, was signed by Gov. Jerry Brown in October. It replaces the old law that required children who were 6 years old or younger — or who weighed at least 60 pounds — to be

SEE LAWS, Page 6

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“I took my family on vacation here and fell in love with this city,” said the Chicago native. “I knew when it came time to expand Fit Houston, I would relocate to San Diego. San Diego is considered one of the healthiest cities in America, and I wanted to establish the Fit brand here.”

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This Marina District South facing, top floor corner unit is filled with light and views of Pantoja Park. Vaulted ceilings create an open feel to this 1 bedroom, 1 bath home with an optional room loft upstairs that overlooks the living room. Do not miss out on this great unit!

PARK ROW
$385,000
This Marina District South facing, top floor corner unit is filled with light and views of Pantoja Park. Vaulted ceilings create an open feel to this 1 bedroom, 1 bath home with an optional room loft upstairs that overlooks the living room. Do not miss out on this great unit!

$510,000
Spacious 1 bedroom, 1.5 bath enjoys Eastern exposure with an abundance of morning sunshine and dazzling night light views. Neutral decor, beautiful miming and urban ambiance will allow you to lounge, dine, or entertain in this ample space!

MERIDIAN
$510,000
Spacious 1 bedroom, 1.5 bath enjoys Eastern exposure with an abundance of morning sunshine and dazzling night light views. Neutral décor, beautiful miming and urban ambiance will allow you to lounge, dine, or entertain in this ample space!

CITYFRONT TERRACE
$395,000
Classic “Brownstone” offers charm and sophistication as a walk-up style townhome unique to San Diego. This 1 bedroom, 1 and a half bath boasts vaulted ceilings, expansive windows, and unprecedented amenities. A perfect metropolitan unit with a bungalow feel.

PARK PLACE
$825,000
Experience the radiance of this established high rise community. Stainless appliances, granite counters, and unprecedented amenities compliment the spectacular westerly views. Don’t miss out on this beautiful 2 bedroom, 2 bath, home in the sky!

PINNACLE
$1,199,000
Come be a part of a prestigious community in the “Pinnacle” of Southern California living. With 2 bedrooms, 2 and a half baths, and additional den, this highly upgraded unit takes advantage of its location and incorporates chic contemporary living.

HARBOR CLUB
$4,295,000
This contemporary residence with captivating views accentuates its surroundings. With 3 bedrooms, 3 and a half baths, an additional optional bedroom, extensive storage built-ins and a private entry, you will have plenty of room to enjoy this dream home.

BAYSIDE
$769,000
Don’t miss out on this exceptionally upgraded home offering 2 bedrooms, 2 baths, plus den. In addition enjoy 2 large balconies, perfect for year round outdoor entertaining as well as essential site features like 2 side by side parking and storage units.
While there are still some skeptics out there who remain unconvinced, a downtown energy nonprofit continues to warn about climate change and what must be done to slow it down.

If the world doesn’t change its energy-consumption habits, Lindbergh Field and Mission Boulevard will be flooded during high tides in less than four decades, predicts Peter Meisen, president of the Global Energy Network Institute (GENI). At the same time, he warns, San Diego’s average temperatures will climb by as much as six degrees during the summer, sparking an increase in local wildfires.

Although the United States, Europe and China have plenty of energy now, “80 percent of it comes from some polluting source,” Meisen said.

The engineer started GENI 25 years ago to investigate a renewable-energy strategy for the world. The institute’s aim is a global “quality of life for everyone in a sustainable way.”

Meisen believes this can be accomplished with interconnected electrical networks between countries, with an emphasis on tapping renewable energy resources.

Besides decreased pollution from fossil and nuclear fuels, he predicts, the networks will produce such lofty benefits as improved healthcare, prosperity and even world peace. By working together and encouraging trade between neighbors, he contends, countries will be less likely to go to war.

Meisen said 98 percent of the scientific community continues to believe “addiction” to fossil fuels is changing our climate.

As for the inevitability of cyclical climate change, he said, “We have gone beyond a threshold of history in the last 60 years.” From 1960 until today, he said, the concentration of carbon dioxide emissions in the atmosphere—a primary cause of climate change—has increased 30 percent.

Meisen asks those who deny that human activity is a major contributor to global climate change: How many 100-year floods or massive droughts or rising sea levels do people have to experience before they start believing?

Currently, five staffers and 18 interns are conducting research and education programs for GENI and its World Center Resources Simulation project. While GENI focuses on electricity and renewable energy issues, Meisen said. The group also gets income from a limited partnership with the NGO Global Climate Index fund, which tracks 100 leading companies working to reduce carbon in their products and services.

Meisen likens the current global situation to the Titanic. “The unsinkable Titanic hits the iceberg and two-thirds of the ship’s passengers and crew were lost,” he said. “What if the captain had ample warning of the danger that lay ahead? The history of that fateful event would be altered forever.”

Today, he said, the ship is much bigger and we are all crewmembers, not just passengers.

“Do we have the capacity to mobilize before hitting the proverbial iceberg?” he asked.

The International Energy Agency has set the countdown clock to five years. Before then, Meisen said, “We need to turn the corner on carbon dioxide emissions or suffer dire consequences.”

Meisen, meanwhile, lives by what he preaches. His family powers their South County home with renewable energy, which they switched over to 10 years ago when it was still available, he said, and his wife drives hybrid cars; they fill their recycle bin higher than their garbage can and they have replaced their backyard lawn with a wild “meadow.”

In response to skeptics of climate change, Meisen has to ask: What if the smartest local scientists at Scripps Research Institute, UCSD and San Diego State are right about climate change?

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“Certainly the risk is there,” he said. “Why take the chance?”

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**Car2go signs on for downtown office space**

Car2go, San Diego’s only all-electric car-sharing service, has signed a five-year lease for a downtown retail and office headquarters at 615 Ninth Ave. Car2go began making its “smart fortwo” electric vehicles available for public use on Nov. 18. For a limited time, mem-

bership will be offered with no registra-

tion fee. The vehicles can be accessed at various locations throughout the city 24 hours a day and can be used for an unlimited amount of time. Parking, recharging, insurance and maintenance of the vehi-

cles is included in the cost. The service is designed to promote an environmentally friendly, walkable lifestyle to complement San Diego’s existing public transit system.

For more information, visit sandiegocar2go.com.

**— Staff**

**Changing the way we look at climate change**

Local institute research ways for countries to work together toward a ‘quality of life for everyone in a sustainable way’

By MARSHA KAY SEFF | DOWNTOWN NEWS

Peter Meisen in the lab of the Global Energy Network Institute, or GENI. The lab, or “innova-

tion facility,” located at Third Avenue and C Street, consists of one large room encircled by 84-by-84-inch wall-mounted computer screens. Photo by MARSHA SEFF | Downtown News

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High above the Marriott towers with sweeping views of the harbor and ocean this 32nd floor “Bubble” layout if fully furnished and fabulous at Harbor Club. Offered turnkey, there’s nothing to do here but move in and enjoy. $1,199,000

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Best price per square foot value in a top quality Marina District Tower! What an opportunity for a fabulous lifestyle at an affordable price! Colorful views of the lush pool terrace, sparkling skyline and a peak of the bridge. Reduced to $379,000.

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In Escrow

Reduced to $379,000. Colorful views of the lush pool terrace, sparkling skyline and a peak of the bridge.

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Port District sees Convention Center expansion as economically beneficial

Dr. JOHNNY MCDONALD | DOWNTOWN NEWS

The San Diego Unified Port District has given conditional approval to help fund the $550 million cost for the proposed San Diego Convention Center expansion.

Based on action taken by the Board of Port Commissioners at a special meeting on Nov. 29, it may contribute up to $3 million a year for up to 20 years.

The commissioners directed staff members to begin negotiations with the city on the terms and conditions of support agreements. Staff also was directed to "develop alternatives to address balancing the needs and benefits" in the Port District’s five member cities of San Diego, National City, Chula Vista, Coronado and Imperial Beach.

Details on when the port will begin making financial contributions will be worked out in future negotiations between the port and city.

"There is a lot of work left to do," said Scott Peterson, attorney for the Board of Port Commissioners. "We do some things to make money and we do some things for the community. This should provide a return on investment to the port."

The action is in response to a request by Mayor Jerry Sanders made before the Port District’s board on Nov. 8, when he suggested the contribution of $3 million a year, or $60 million over a 20-year period.

"The Port District will share in the $658 million in economic benefit to the region," Sanders said.

The port's staff had analyzed the revenue expected to be generated from the proposed expansion and a proposed $500-room expansion of the Hilton San Diego Bayfront Hotel.

It was concluded that the positive economic impact to the region was enough to support the development of 500 new hotel rooms to support the expanded Convention Center and that it would be a good investment.

Studies by consultants indicate the Port District could derive revenues ranging from a low of $1.5 million a year to a high of $6.2 million a year, depending on whether the Convention Center expansion and the Hilton addition are developed at the same time.

Port commissioner Dan Malcolm, who represents Imperial Beach, expressed concerns about two financial reports that forecast the revenue. He asked that additional studies be conducted to include a worst-case scenario, which other commissioners agreed to.

Commissioners also expressed reluctance to stipulate any Port District reserve funds to help fund the proposed expansion.

In addition, the Port District officials have said several potential issues may need to be addressed to ensure that any commitment does not compromise its ability to implement other important regional projects in its five member cities.

The issues include the return on investment, the timing of payments, the city's contribution and the impact on the Port District's credit.

Aside from the district's proposed contribution, the city suggests funding sources for the expansion that include $315 million in tax revenues from a proposed Convention Center Facilities District. The facilities district would levy taxes on hotels in the city and produce revenue that would cover up to 75 percent of the expansion cost, according to the city.

The expansion project is currently in the environmental review phase. The environmental impact report is scheduled for completion in February. Construction is anticipated to begin one year later. The city expects the expanded Convention Center to be completed in early 2014.

The Mayor's Citizen Task Force projects the expansion is expected to generate $698 million of economic activity annually in addition to the $1.1 billion a year the Convention Center already generates.

How to Sell Your House Without an Agent

SAN DIEGO, If you’ve tried to sell your home yourself, you know that the minute you put the "For Sale by Owner" sign up, the phone will start to ring off the hook. Unfortunately, most calls aren’t from prospective buyers, but rather from every real estate agent in town who will start to hound you for your listing.

After all, with all the great information, selling a home isn’t easy. Perhaps, you’ve had your home on the market for several months with no offers from qualified buyers. This can be a very frustrating time, and many homeowners have given up their dreams of selling their homes. But don’t give up until you’ve read a new report entitled "Sell Your Own Home" which has been prepared especially for home sellers like you. You’ll find that selling your home by yourself is entirely possible once you understand the process.

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Old Globe looks to future with new producer, summer series

Dr. JOHNNY MCDONALD | DOWNTOWN NEWS

The signature touch of departing executive producer Lou Spisto will be on stage with the Old Globe’s standout summer productions.

The three theaters will feature shows like "Divine Rivalry," "Inherit The Wind" and "God Carnage," plus two Shakespearean productions.

The Shubert Organization." said Spisto. "Adrian’s leadership of the Shakespeare Festival has been stellar, and next year will no doubt build upon the phenomenal success of the festival, one of the nation’s premier theatrical events."

I am also particularly excited for our audiences to see ‘Divine Rivalry.’ I was attracted to this work in part because The Old Globe is a theater set among great museums, and a play about the

rivalry between Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci is especially appropriate for us. I’m delighted to launch its San Diego premiere of Yasmina Reza’s Tony Award-winning play "God of Carnage" (July 27 through Sept. 2 in the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre)."
Located in the Marina District, this Penthouse offers uncompromising bay and city views. Seldom found, this 2,500 sq ft residence has 3 bedrooms, 3 full bathrooms and walls of glass. Amenities include front desk attendant, fitness center and pool. Offered between $1,250,000-$1,350,000
Francine Finn  858-518-5288  scottfinnhomes.com

This dramatic unit has an oversized balcony and sweeping views of the bay, Point Loma and the Embarcadero. Enjoy the resort like amenities and luxurious finishes including Viking appliances, Snaidero cabinetry, CaesarStone countertops and more! Offered between $1,398,000-$1,459,000
Carlos Pastrana  619-940-4505

Located in the Marina District, this Penthouse offers uncompromising bay and city views. Seldom found, this 2,500 sq ft residence has 3 bedrooms, 3 full bathrooms and walls of glass. Amenities include front desk attendant, fitness center and pool. Offered between $1,250,000-$1,350,000
Sarah Scott  619-840-2767  scottfinnhomes.com

New on the market and rarely available, this 2BD/2BA hip East Village pad boasts direct Southwest views of ocean/bay, Coronado bridge and sparkling city lights. Enjoy watching any event at Petco Park from your living room and/or balcony! Offered at $739,000
Jeff Nix  619-962-2471 sandiegorealestateconnects.com

New on the market and rarely available, this 2BD/2BA hip East Village pad boasts direct Southwest views of ocean/bay, Coronado bridge and sparkling city lights. Enjoy watching any event at Petco Park from your living room and/or balcony! Offered at $739,000
Raye Scott  858-229-5424 scottfinnhomes.com

This modern 1BD unit at Alta has spectacular north-facing city views! This unit is turn-key ready with hardwood flooring, new paint, and a walk-in closet. Alta is a luxurious building with a sunny lap pool, fitness center, and much more! $279,900
Jorge Castellon  619-259-5558 isellthecity.com

This 18th floor residence at Electra enjoys water and city views, 2 balconies, Bamboo flooring and a comfortable floor plan with over 1,400 sf. for a variety of lifestyles! Enjoy luxury living in downtown San Diego’s tallest residential high rise. Offered between $699,000-$749,000
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Rare opportunity to own an single story Penthouse at Pinnacle in the Marina District. The residential plan is 1 of only 2 in the building. Enjoy 300 degree views encompassing the mountains, bay & Coronado Bridge. 3BR plus den/2.5BA/2 large patios. Offered between $2,650,000-$2,950,000
Raye Scott  858-229-5424 scottfinnhomes.com

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This single level, 3BD adobe home has undergone a $1.5M remodel with no stone left unturned! The Spanish influences have been well preserved and enhanced with modern day appointments. This is a unique opportunity to own a stunning Weir Brothers home in the RSF Covenant. $3,099,000
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This modern 1BD unit at Alta has spectacular north-facing city views! This unit is turn-key ready with hardwood flooring, new paint, and a walk-in closet. Alta is a luxurious building with a sunny lap pool, fitness center, and much more! $279,900
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that required seat belts as a standard feature got federal legislation passed in 1966.

The seat belt can’t be tucked under an occupant. The shoulder portion of the seat belt is designed to fit over the chest and across the shoulders of the driver or passenger. The lap portion of the seat belt must be fastened around the thighs and below the abdomen, not above the belly button. Seat belts are required to be worn by all drivers and passengers in California. The law, signed by Brown and supported by law enforcement officials, does not affect the open carry of long guns as in rifles and shotguns—except where banned. Locations include schools, state correctional facilities, state park offices and federal buildings. Among those exempt from the law are law enforcement, individuals authorized to carry loaded weapons in public, and people carrying unloaded weapons at gun shows. The penalty for violating the law is a $1,000 fine in lines and up to six months in jail.

ALCOHOL AND SELF-SERVICE

This was a marriage that wasn’t meant to last. AB 183 bans the sale of alcohol at self-service checkouts and bars in California. The law, passed as part of a broader package of self-service reforms, is a victory for the California beverage industry, which had previously fought against the idea. The law affects more than 10 percent of California housing units, and is expected to cost landlords millions of dollars in fines and legal fees.

The purpose of the bill is to ensure that all alcohol sold in California is sold at a location where the guard is visible to the public.

INTERNET SAFETY TAX

AB 28 requires some online retailers based in California to pay a sales tax to the state beginning this summer. Online giants Amazon, which was hit by a recent lawsuit, and Facebook, which is currently under investigation, are among the companies that must pay the tax. The tax is part of a broader package of self-service reforms, and is expected to cost the state millions of dollars in fines and legal fees.

The penalties for violations include a $250 fine for a first offense, and a $500 fine for a second offense. The penalties can be increased to $1,000 for a third offense. The fines can be increased to $2,500 for a fourth offense. The fines can be increased to $5,000 for a fifth offense. The fines can be increased to $10,000 for a sixth offense. The fines can be increased to $20,000 for a seventh offense. The fines can be increased to $50,000 for an eighth offense. The fines can be increased to $100,000 for a ninth offense. The fines can be increased to $200,000 for a tenth offense. The fines can be increased to $500,000 for an eleventh offense. The fines can be increased to $1 million for a twelfth offense. The fines can be increased to $2 million for a thirteenth offense. The fines can be increased to $5 million for a fourteenth offense. The fines can be increased to $10 million for a fifteenth offense. The fines can be increased to $20 million for a sixteenth offense. The fines can be increased to $50 million for a seventeenth offense. The fines can be increased to $100 million for an eighteenth offense. The fines can be increased to $200 million for a nineteenth offense. The fines can be increased to $500 million for a twentieth offense. The fines can be increased to $1 billion for a twenty-first offense.
‘Red Bull: New Year. No Limits’ returns to San Diego for extreme double feature

Dr. MARKO LAMB | DOWNTOWN NEWS

Whether on television or in person, San Diegans might have noticed two high-flying vehicles zooming across the San Diego skyline on New Year’s Eve.

Snowmobiler Levi LaVallee and motocross daredevil Robbie Maddison piloted their machines concurrently in a jump over 300 feet of water at the Embarcadero Marina Park downtown, smashing two records in one fell swoop.

LaVallee broke his own 361-foot record by launching his snowmobile 412 feet. Maddison broke his existing certified world record of 351 feet by more than 30 feet, landing 378 feet from his take-off ramp. Maddison also unfailingly eclipsed the current motorcycle jump world record of 391 feet at a practice for the Dec. 31 event.

Last year, LaVallee, a seven-time Winter X Games medalist and champion Snowcross racer, was injured during a trial run of the jump, postponing his attempt at the record during the 2010 “Red Bull: New Year. No Limits.” challenge.

“I am so pumped to be able to come back to ‘Red Bull: New Year. No Limits,'” LaVallee said before the jump. “Last year obviously didn’t go the way I was hoping it would and I am excited to have another chance at this amazing opportunity.”

Maddison, an accomplished freestyle motocross rider with an X Games silver medal in Moto X Best Trick and two wins on the Red Bull X-Fighters World Tour, reiterated his excitement for the challenge as well.

“Jumping long distances is a passion of mine, and I’m excited to come back for New Year’s Eve and sail over San Diego Harbor,” he said. “It’s not all about getting the world record to me. It’s more about understanding this feat and the commitment ahead to achieving what most would consider an impossible jump.”

After the record-breaking event, LaVallee expressed exhilaration at his success — and relief that he landed in one piece.

“I’m as excited as I think a person can be,” said LaVallee. “I just landed an over 400-foot jump. I’m not sure how the sled’s doing, but I’m OK, so it was good. It’s an amazing feeling. You have no idea how pumped I am.”

Maddison, too, was happy with the result.

“It’s a cool feeling to do what I do and have the backing I do,” said Maddison. “I was confident we were going to go a long way tonight and we’re going to come back and go even further.”

NEWSbriefs

City gives Christmas trees new life

San Diego’s Environmental Services Department will host the 38th annual Christmas Tree Recycling Program beginning through Jan. 23.

Sixteen drop-off locations are available to residents, as well as curbside pickup for those customers with curbside yard waste collection.

Only “clean trees” are accepted at city recycling locations. Before depositing trees, residents must remove all tree stands, lights, ornaments, tinsel and non-recyclable materials.

Downtown residents can drop trees off at 2:300 Golf Course Drive in Golden Hill. For a full list of dropoff locations, visit www.recyclingworks.com.

East Village businesses get wild on Wednesdays

Got post-holiday blues? Head over to the East Village for Wild Wednesdays for the cure. Every Wednesday beginning on Jan. 11, several East Village Association member businesses will take 20 percent off the bill for locals. Simply by mentioning they are residents of San Diego County, locals can receive the discount at the following locations:

- Bootlegger, 804 Market St.
- Bub’s at the Ballpark, 715 J St.
- Bub’s at the Ballpark, 715 J St.
- Bub’s at the Ballpark, 715 J St.
- Bub’s at the Ballpark, 715 J St.
- Dragon’s Den, 313 10th Ave.
- East Village Tavern + Bowl, 930 Market
- El Viral, 815 J St.
- The Fleetwood, 639 J St.
- The Kitchery, 777 J St.
- Knotty Barrel, 844 Market St.
- Mission Brewery, 1441 L St.
- SaladStyle, 807 F St.
- Saloon Identity, 418 10th Ave.
- San Diego Restaurant Supply, 1202 Market St.
- Table 509 in Hotel Indigo, 509 9th Ave.
- The Slappy, shoptheslappyinfo
- The Village at 631 Coffee & Wine Bar, 631 Ninth Ave.
- Toast Enoteca & Cucina, 927 J St.
- Certain restrictions apply.

Organization aims to make community AWARE

Nonprofit organization AWARE, which opened downtown’s first recycling collection center in October, announced plans to initiate its “Communities for Communities” charitable recycling program over the coming year.

Funds generated through neighborhood recycling will be pumped directly back into the community to fund their immediate needs, like providing free daily breakfasts and dinners for neighborhood kids; creating and maintaining community gardens; and organizing free dental and medical clinics.

For more information, visit www.awarerecycling.com.
Birds to the event and various rescue kids. Sky Hunters will be bringing exotic pets and owners as well as activities for blessings will take place between 12:30 mals that make our lives so special. The Mark Campbell, but all faiths and convic-

Animals on Sunday, Jan. 15, from noon to is hosting the third annual Blessing of the Animals Returns January 3rd Annual ‘Blessing of the Animals Returns January

Old Town San Diego State Historic Park is hosting the third annual Blessing of the Animals on Sunday, Jan. 15, from noon to 3 p.m. The Blessing is led by Monsignor Mark Campbell, but it is a community event that is open to the public. The Blessing will take place on the lawn of the Old Town Hall, located at 2050 Market St. in Old Town San Diego.

The Blessing of the Animals is a long-standing tradition in many countries around the world. It is a time to give thanks for the animals that share our world and to show kindness and love to them. The Blessing of the Animals is also a time to ask for the animals' protection and to remember the importance of caring for them.

This year's Blessing of the Animals will be led by Monsignor Mark Campbell. He will be joined by other religious leaders and community members. The service will include a reading from the Bible, a prayer, and a blessing of the animals. The animals will be blessed with holy water and prayers of protection and love.

The Blessing of the Animals is a family-friendly event. People of all ages are welcome to attend. Children will enjoy the opportunity to bless the animals and to learn about the importance of animal rights and kindness.

After the service, there will be a pet expo with treats for the animals, as well as a pet adoption fair. The expo will include a variety of vendors, including pet food, toys, and grooming supplies.

The Blessing of the Animals is a special event that brings people together to show love and respect for animals. It is a time to remember the importance of kindness and compassion for all living beings. So mark your calendars and join us for the third annual Blessing of the Animals on Sunday, Jan. 15, from noon to 3 p.m. in Old Town San Diego State Historic Park.
College preparedness program put to the test at City College

According to the San Diego Community College District, many high school students who enter their first year of college are not prepared to meet the demands and expectations of the rigorous college-level coursework. In response to that alarming assertion, San Diego City College (SDCC) San Diego high schools and other stakeholders including the Foundation for California Community Colleges, Jobs for the Future and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation are teaming up to provide students with the tools necessary to succeed in their first year of college through an Early College High School Collaboration (ECHS) program.

The ECHS program focuses on developing college readiness and reducing remediation by partnering high school and college faculty, aligning curricula to focus on college readiness skills, offering summer programs for 10th and 11th graders to reinforce key cognitive strategies and offering accelerated math, English and business courses for high school students.

In the spring of 2009, SDCC professors Gauri Brown and Chris Baron launched the program, offering 17 area high school students the opportunity to earn one college credit through an English 12 course. The self-paced course focuses on reading, writing and critical thinking skills designed to raise students' proficiency and college readiness skills, and help them achieve higher test scores in the required California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) and standardize college entrance tests like the SAT.

The professors use Pearson MySkillsLab, a user-friendly online learning platform, as the core curriculum for the course. Students enrolled in English 12 begin the course by taking a series of pre-diagnostic tests to determine areas of strength and weaknesses, work through an individualized study plan customized exclusively to improve their skill weaknesses then end the course by taking a series of post-diagnostic tests to determine the students' levels of retention.

Baron said one of the commonest benefits of the program is the initial diagnostic that provides an immediate and clear understanding of students' individual knowledge base and needs.

"MySkillsLab enables us to target our teaching from Day One of the term," said Baron. "With the help of the diagnostic, we are able to create specific strategies for each student that we can use to help them achieve their academic goals." The program is designed to prepare students for the CAHSEE test, and students can continue practicing for it on their own through the program.

"MySkillsLab has helped some basic-skills students to re-enter a rigorous course of study, and we are seeing high school students who were at risk of failure able to pass the CAHSEE," said LEADS Executive Director Jeffrey Douglass.

"We saw the potential of the classes as preparing students for the writing conversions of the English 12 course, so we incorporated MySkillsLab during the fall semester," Baron said. "The class was used as a supplement to and reinforcement of the California language arts standards and reading and writing strategies taught in our 10th grade curriculum."

"Her students have made improvements in test scores since using the program. She said of 99 students who took the CAHSEE, 78 percent of them passed the language-arts portion and 48 percent of them scored either proficient or advanced — quite an improvement over two years ago when the teachers used other teaching methods," Baron said.

In addition to quantitative results, Wauny has noted other ways her students have benefited from the course.

"Improving on City’s campus, they feel like college students. Most of the students take the course very seriously and their behavior tends to be very mature and cooperative," she said. "The coursework is rigorous, and the students begin to understand the challenges of a college-level course. However, most rise to the occasion and are very proud of their accomplishments.

"MySkillsLab is also used as courses by San Diego City College students themselves to reduce the need for remediation of college courses, support English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students in their courses, or prepare non-English majors for other certifications or tests.

Results from individual pre- and post-diagnostic tests have proven to be a success with 100 percent retention by the first 37 students enrolled in 2009 and a 92 percent retention rate by the second wave of students.

The first wave of high school students who first utilized the program two years ago as San Diego has only begun entering colleges this year, testing the advantage of the ECHS program in preparing high school students for their first year of college.

Windermere Signature Properties is going ‘Green’

In this world of paper, especially in the Real Estate business where there are about 200 sheets for a closing file, it’s important to go paperless! Since embracing this ideal using a customized system for their transaction management, the Windermere Signature Properties’ downtown office is more productive and green.

Advantages include the ability to access important documents from computers, laptops, and mobile devices. Title reports, escrow instructions, terms and home inspection reports will be delivered instantly via e-mail to all parties in the transaction. Additionally, the office provides a complete transaction backup for Clients on a C.R.D.Rum and archives data online and on the transaction management system for 5 years. Even their Broker file review uses digital approval.

For those companies that insist on providing documents in paper, the office uses a local recycle service which picks up the paper in an electric car and shreds the documents for security purposes. The office kitchen uses silverware, plates and glassware that can be washed, thus eliminating huge amounts of plastic waste.

Finally, the Windermere Signature Properties embraces the local shared car system, Car2Go. Perfect for “driving around downtown” for short distances. Smart cars placed throughout the metro area in handy locations. Their size makes the electric vehicles easy to park and don’t require parking meter money.

"These steps are only part of a whole process that continues to be addressed as we all look at ways to "simple down" so that future generations can live here with a quality of life that San Diego has to offer," states Broker Jeffrey Douglass.

Windermere Signature Properties is located in the Mari District, 560 First Avenue (between Market and Island) 619-481-6300.
Downtown in January

**January 7**


**January 10**

**“Cats” opening night performance, 7 p.m., Croc Theatre, 1100 Third Ave., runs through Jan. 15, (619) 570-1100, www.broadwaysd.com, $17.50-$77.50**

**January 11**

**“A Hammer, a Bell, and a Song to Sing,” 7 p.m., (619) 544-1000, www.sdyp.org, $37**

**January 14**


**January 18**

**San Diego SAVVY, 6 to 8:30 p.m, AIRE Urban Fitness, 101/4 Fifth Ave., Sto. 120, women-only event powered by Chic CEO, www.sadiesavvy.com, $20 nonmembers at the door, $15 nonmembers pre-registration, $5 members**

**January 20**

**Introduction to genealogical resources workshop, 2:30 p.m., San Diego History Center, 1649 El Prado, Suite 3, (619) 232-6203, www.sandiegohistory.org, $5-$10**

**February 17**


**February 21**

**Jackyl, 8 p.m., 4th and B, (619) 231-4343, www.4thandbevents.com, $25-$35**

**February 25**

**Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, 7:30 p.m., Copley Symphony Hall, 750 B St., (619) 533-7000, www.sdopera.com, $32-$375**

**March 5**

**“Cook, Melt, Sip: European Three Voyages to Paradise,” 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., Mad House Comedy Club, (619) 231-2886, www.sandiegomuseumofart.org, $30-$100**

**March 9**

**“Mozart Masterworks, 2 p.m., Balboa Theatre, 868 Fourth Ave., (619) 570-1100, www.sandiegomuseumofart.org, $15 general admission, $20 Red Ribbon Orchestra seating in the first 15 rows and a special post-concert ice cream “Sunday”**

**March 13**

**“Ballet Barocco, 8 p.m., Copley Symphony Hall, 750 B St., (619) 533-7000, www.sdopera.com, $32-$375**

**March 19**

**“Introduction to Fiction,” 7 p.m., The Inkspot, 710 13th St., Sto. 310, www.sandiegowriters.org, $180 nonmember, members and children free**

**March 20**

**“The Complete History of America (abridged),” 7 p.m., Casa del Prado Theater, 1600 Village Place, (619) 239-8305, www.juniortheatre.com, adults $11-$14, children and seniors $6-$11**

**March 23**

**San Diego Women’s Club open house, 12:30 p.m., John Muir High School, 404 Third Ave., (619) 232-7931, www.sdchm.com, $4 general admission standing, $20 reserved seating**

**March 29**

**“Sea Rex 3D,” “Sharks 3D,” “Ocean Oasis,” various hours daily, San Diego Natural History Museum, 1788 El Prado, (619) 570-1100, www.sdichm.com, $6-95 per adult**

**March 30**

**“Sea Rex 3D,” “Sharks 3D,” “Ocean Oasis,” various hours daily, San Diego Natural History Museum, 1788 El Prado, (619) 570-1100, www.sdichm.com, $6-95 per adult**

**March 31**

**Mothman, 6 p.m., 4th and B, (619) 231-4343, www.4thandbevents.com, $31 general admission standing, $41 reserved seating**
Whale-watching season offers chance to see San Diego in a whole new way

Dr. KENDRA HARTMANN | DOWNTOWN NEWS

Every year, San Diego plays host to an event that provides tourists with another reason to enjoy the city. In addition to beaches and parks and the weather that (sort of) cooperates enough to enjoy them year-round, San Diegans get to take advantage of living in an area boasting incredible biological diversity. One of the most impressive environments in which to see mother nature at her best is that property-value-increasing expanse of blue to the west. And this time of year, it is home to a truly fascinating natural phenomenon. The gray whale migration is once again upon us.

To provide a first-hand account of what one can expect when becoming an amateur whale watcher for an afternoon, The Downtown News took to the high seas aboard the Hornblower Adventure to observe the California gray whale as the species makes its annual 5,000-mile journey from the frigid waters of the Arctic to the sunny lagoons of Baja California.

The most obvious thing one expects to see on a whale-watching cruise is a whale. This, however, may not happen, and most local companies — Hornblower included — prepare for this with a guarantee: see a whale or get passes for another cruise.

Upon boarding the boat, most passengers anxiously anticipate the sight they’ve been promised, hoping they haven’t just paid for one of the few cruises for which the whales choose not to make an appearance. What most don’t expect, however, is what also happens while on board: they have fun, whale or no whale (some might even find themselves hoping they don’t see a whale so they have a free chance to come on board again).

As it turns out, our oceans are both full of life and passengers would be hard pressed not to find themselves marveling at all the myriad components of our aquatic ecosystems, however large or small. At one point during our cruise, a pod of bottlenose dolphins decided to join us, riding our bow wave — jumping out of the water, turning in circles and spiraling alongside us for a couple of miles. And while, yes, “whale watching” was printed on our tickets, we were perfectly satisfied with this display, whether or not it was the cetacean we had paid for.

Another pleasant surprise awaited us: a group of friendly sea lions, puttering around San Diego Bay and out into the open ocean just off our coast provided an unexpected opportunity to view the city in a way we don’t normally see it.

As for our cruise, we did get the opportunity to see a whale. Not long after we passed through the busy baying of the bay, the captain spotted a spout from a few miles out. We followed it, and were able to find and stay with one gray whale (or possibly two — they look remarkably alike to the layperson), which twice granted us full view of its fluke (or tail) as it headed down for deep dives. We learned, both from the captain and from the on-board volunteer naturalists — trained by the San Diego Museum of Natural History — that gray whales breed every other year, and with a gestation of 12 months, the pregnant females heading down to Mexico at this time of year are likely the same ones we saw last year heading down to breed. They’ll come back this way in the spring with their newborns. We also learned the gray whale gets its namesake not from a naturally occurring color. In fact, the whales are born almost black, but eventually, barnacles that attach themselves to the whale and the skin as they fall off, leaving behind a mottled, whitish-gray coloration.

Whales also have dominant sides of their body just like humans. Whales that favor their right side tend to have more scarring on that side of their body, and just like humans, “left-handed” whales are in the minority: roughly 15 percent of whales favor their left side.

There’s also the possibility, while out on a whale-watching cruise, that passengers might observe some man-made “Whales.” Our ship happened upon a helicopter and a Navy submarine — complete with a visibly happy, home-bound topside crew — cruising into the bay.

The views will change for each individual cruise. Some may see one whale, some may see 20 whales and others may see none at all. Some might encounter pods of playful dolphins while others might happen upon frisky sea lions. But one thing is guaranteed: the experience gives locals one more reason to love calling San Diego home.

Pudgy Pet Dangers

Whether you have a pudgy pooch or a flabby tabby you need to get the pounds off to add years to your pet’s life, it is estimated that at least 40% of all dogs and cats are overweight. Being overweight is not just a cosmetic issue. Recently, a ground-breaking study revealed that pets fed fewer calories actually lived on average 2 years longer! Just like us, obese pets are more likely to have health problems than their leaner counterparts. Obesity can lead to heart disease, diabetes, joint disease, respiratory disease, cancers and many other serious diseases. Many are guilty of giving our pets table scraps and extra food. Excess caloric intake is the most common cause of obesity in pets. Lack of exercise and certain diseases such as hypothyroidism can also lead to obesity. Fortunately, there are steps you can take to help your pet lose weight. See your veterinarian for an examination and discuss diet and blood tests to rule out underlying diseases. During the examination your veterinarian will use a body condition score to determine whether your pet is overweight. A quick test to check your pet for obesity is to try to feel your pet’s ribs on both sides of their chest. There should only be a small amount of fat over the ribs. If your cannot feel the ribs then your pet is most likely overweight! Ask your veterinarian about the appropriate amount and type of diet and treats to feed your pet. Avoid table scraps and excess treats. Exercise your pet at least twice a day to help your pet shed those extra pounds. Keeping your pet lean will help your furry friend live a longer, happier, healthier life.
San Diego rings in the new year with style

A sampling of celebrations welcoming 2012 around downtown

San Diego rings in the new year with style. Vin de Syrah held a New Year’s Eve masquerade ball, providing each guest a mask to embrace the theme. A DJ and burlesque-style singing trio delivered entertainment, while guests enjoyed tasted of some of the wine bar’s top champagnes served with food pairings.

Meanwhile, Big Night San Diego at the Hilton San Diego Bayfront offered 12 themed party areas, 10 bands and DJs, three dance floors, a free buffet, and several massive balloon drops throughout the night. Themes ranged from Mardi Gras and Las Vegas casino to retro and electronica. Organizers aimed to provide an all-inclusive night, offering unlimited drinks and food.

The National Comedy Theatre in Mission Hills presented a special improvisational comedy performance and party with cast members. With laughs, champagne and food provided, this party sold out weeks before New Year’s. Andaz San Diego hosted “Euphoria NYE 2012,” spanning four venues of their expansive property: Ivy Nightclub, Ivy Rooftop, Ivy Winebar and Andaz Ballroom. DJs got the crowd moving while dancers added a visual fascination. The Gaslamp hotel’s aim was to provide a perfect state of euphoria as attendees entered the new year.

The Inspiration Hornblower chartered 1,000 guests around the bay during the sixth annual New Year’s Eve Yacht Party. Guests could choose from 12 bars across three climate-controlled decks with pulsing music from a different genre on each, including 1980s, dance club and easy listening. Tickets included unlimited top-shelf drinks, hors d’oeuvres, and a scenic view of the San Diego Harbor.

The National Comedy Theatre in Mission Hills, above, presented a special improvisational comedy performance and party with cast members. With laughs, champagne and food provided, this party sold out weeks before New Year’s. Andaz San Diego, left, hosted “Euphoria NYE 2012,” spanning four venues of their expansive property: Ivy Nightclub, Ivy Rooftop, Ivy Winebar and Andaz Ballroom. DJs got the crowd moving while dancers added a visual fascination. The Gaslamp hotel’s aim was to provide a perfect state of euphoria as attendees entered the new year.

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San Diego Marriott Gaslamp Quarter played host to “Bottoms Up NYE 2012.” Kicking things off in the hotel’s restaurant, Soleil 101, and street-level bar, Latitude Lounge, the party expanded upstairs to the rooftop bar, Altitude Sky Lounge, above, for views of the city’s skyline. Whether guests were on the first or 22nd floor, a DJ and champagne toast brought them into the new year.

The California Restaurant Association | San Diego County Chapter

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DINNER
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Experience cuisine that delights your palate and defines the art of dining in San Diego. Held twice annually, this beloved culinary tradition features discounted prix fixe menus from more than 180 of San Diego’s best restaurants in 12 unique regions throughout San Diego County.

SanDiegoRestaurantWeek.com

Scan here to Enter to Win online!
Take a bite out of the new year with restaurant deals across the county

San Diegans might want to put that New Year’s resolution diet on hold for another week or two, as San Diego Restaurant Week will ring in the new year with great deals on two-course prix-fixe lunch options for $10, $15 or $20 and three-course prix-fixe dinner deals for $20, $30 or $40 from Jan. 15 to 20 at participating restaurants across the county.

The biannual weeklong event offers discounted prices on cuisine options from around the world without having to leave the comfort of your own backyard — whether that be in La Jolla, Old Town or downtown, North County or South County — San Diego Restaurant Week offers culinary delights to cater to any palate.

Here’s a taste of some of the options around the downtown core:

**GLOBE**

**Contributed From Page 4**

and Harvey White Theatre) will be directed by Seer.

Noble will return for his third season as the artistic director of the Globe’s Summer Shakespeare Festival and will direct Shakespeare’s “As You Like It” and the Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee classic “Inherit the Wind.”

Presented in repertory in the outdoor Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, the festival will also include “Richard III” directed by Lindsay Posner, former associate director at London’s Royal Court Theatre, All three shows will run June 17 through Sept. 29.

Completing the winter schedule will be “Dividing the Estate,” which runs from Jan. 14 through Feb. 12, “The Recommendation” (Jan. 21 through Feb. 26), “A Room with a View” (March 2 through April 8) and “Anna Christie” (March 10 through April 15).

The Old Globe produces a year-round season of 15 productions of classic, contemporary and new works on its three Balboa Park stages: the 600-seat Old Globe Theatre and the 250-seat Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, which are both part of The Old Globe’s Conrad Prebys Theatre Center and the 603-seat outdoor Lowell Davies Festival Theatre.

More than 250,000 people attend Globe productions annually and participate in the theater’s education and community programs.

Tickets to the Globe’s 2012 summer season are currently available by subscription only, and prices range from $66 to $317. Subscription packages may be purchased online at www.ThelOldGlobe.org, by phone at (619) 234-GLOBE or by visiting the box office.

Playwrights Robert E. Lee and Jerome Lawrence and Lee’s “Inherit the Wind,” directed by Adrian Noble, will run June 17 through Sept. 2 as part of the Old Globe’s 2012 Summer Shakespeare Festival.

Photo courtesy of the Old Globe

**Popular Ocean Beach Newbreak Cafe Opens Downtown**

Established in 1993, Newbreak has remained a well-known brand in Ocean Beach. With two thrilling locations in the heart of Ocean Beach, Newbreak serves a delicious full flavor fare paired with amiable customer service and enthusiasm. For years, Newbreak has been the local cafe for Oceaniers, tourists, and other San Diegans. Its family-oriented and homey feel gives customers a reason to continually patronize Newbreak.

It serves delicious breakfasts, bagels and homemade spreads, healthy options, sandwiches, wraps, smoothies, espresso drinks and much more.

For breakfast, enjoy hearty menu items such as the well-known favorite, the Sunny Side Sandwich, which is compiled of scrambled eggs, bacon, sausages and cheddar cheese on a bagel. The breakfast burrito is another delectable item, which includes eggs, bacon, onions, roasted chilies, and potatoes, served in a wheat or tortilla. Birchrimsed our yogurt and fresh fruit recipe has been named as one of the “25 things you must have before you die” by the Union Tribune.

Savory lunch selections include the Pesto Melt, which is a vegetarian’s delight. Recommended on a Ciabatta, it includes egg, bacon, onions, roasted chilies, and potatoes, served in a wheat or tortilla. Birchrimsed our yogurt and fresh fruit recipe has been named as one of the “25 things you must have before you die” by the Union Tribune.

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**NEWS**

**JANUARY 2012**

**SAN DIEGO DOWNTOWN NEWS**

**1. Choose Your Entrée**

Fillet of Sole
Salmon
Chicken Breast
Sea Bass
Mahi Mahi
10oz. Pork Chop

**2. Choose Your Preparation**

Macadamia Crusted
Blackened
Lemon Caper Butter
Teriyaki Glaze
Pesto Cream Sauce
Grilled

**3. Choose Your Side**

Baked Potato
Garlic Mashed Potatoes
Rice Pilaf
French Fries
Cottage Cheese
Steamed Vegetables

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**NEWBREAK COFFEE & CAFE**

**Blue Point Coastal Cuisine, 565 Fifth Ave., (619) 234-6962, www.bluepointcoastal.com, $30 dinner**

**Buster’s Beach House & Longboard Bar, (619) 231-4400, www.bustersbeachhouse.com, $20 dinner**

**Crab Hut, 1007 Fifth Ave., Ste. 101, (619) 234-0628, www.crabhutsd.com, $10 lunch, $40 dinner**

**CUCCINA urbana, 505 Laurel St., (619) 239-2222, www.cuccinaurbana.com, $10 lunch, $10 dinner**

**FOX Sports Grill, 1 Park Blvd., (619) 231-9000, www.foxsportsgrill.com, $15 lunch, $20 dinner**

**Gaslamp Strip Club, 340 Fifth Ave., (619) 231-3140, www.culinerestaurants.com, $30 dinner**

**Hornblower Cruises & Events, 1800 N. Harbor Drive, (619) 668-8715, www.hornblower.com, $40 dinner**

**Indigo Grill, 1536 India St., (619) 234-6802, www.culinerestaurants.com, $30 dinner**


No tickets or passes are required to take advantage of the deals. Simply show up at a participating restaurant location or call ahead to make a reservation.

For a complete list of participating restaurants, visit www.sandiegorestauranweek.com.

— Marta Lamb
This New Year’s, resolve to refine your bar-going etiquette
Tips from a pro on how to get in good with your bartenders

By Adam Stempler

With the end of 2011, the new year brings us an opportunity to set new goals and resolve to be a bit brighter in 2012. Whether it is going to the gym more, spending more time with your loved ones, or drinking less coffee and more water, you can be an amazing catalyst for self-improvement. On behalf of bartenders around the country, I am encouraging your list of resolutions to include better social etiquette when attending restaurants, bars and nightclubs.

Although the common man may simply see his local bar as the place to let go of all inhibitions in the process of defusing anger created by the work week, it is important to realize that a bar is a business just like any other. Just because alcohol is being served does not give you a hall pass on decency, nor does it mean you’ve just entered a modern-day Wild West that is void of any codes of personal conduct. Rebellious or not, following this guideline while likely improve the quality of your experience as a consumer as well.

Here is your 2012 guide to better bar etiquette.

You are very important but not special

This may be contrary to everything your mother told you, but with a brand new year underway, it’s a perfect time to mix things up and try something different. Take, for example, Downtown’s exciting Sunday brunch scene. Instead of sticking to the typical breakfast haunts, why not get a little crazy and give your taste buds a real thrill? Here are some haunts, why not get a little crazy and give your taste buds a real thrill? Here are some haunts, why not get a little crazy and give your taste buds a real thrill? Here are some haunts, why not get a little crazy and give your taste buds a real thrill? Here are some haunts, why not get a little crazy and give your taste buds a real thrill? Here are some haunts, why not get a little crazy and give your taste buds a real thrill? Here are some haunts, why not get a little crazy and give your taste buds a real thrill? Here are some haunts, why not get a little crazy and give your taste buds a real thrill? 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Here are some haunts, why not get a little crazy and give your taste buds a real thrill? Here are some haunts, why not get a little crazy and give your taste buds a real thr...
The impressions of old ticket windows can be seen along the wall at 15th and E streets, once the home of San Diego’s Friday night fights. Boxing’s future elite performed in the smoke-filled Coliseum Athletic Club.

It was a gathering place for San Diego’s leading citizens, gamblers and occasional visitors by Hollywood celebrities, stopping off en route to a weekend of horse racing at Agua Caliente. They didn’t seem to mind that the old metal and wood flip-down chairs were in constant need of repair. As long as two men were willing to pound away for four to 10 rounds of boxing, they were satisfied.

The symmetrically shaped 3,521-seat arena sprang up in 1924 when professional boxing and wrestling were legalized in California. Around part of the perimeter were “cheap seat” bleachers, called the gallery.

The Coliseum became one of Southland’s three major boxing marquees, along with the Hollywood Legion Stadium and South Los Angeles’ Olympic Auditorium. The scene inside the old clubs was like nothing that can be found today. The raucous atmosphere where fighters exited a cramped dressing room and walked down an aisle to the ring is missing from today’s matches staged in nightclubs, hotels or casinos.

Inside, mystic sounds might echo the florishing days of the 1920s and 1930s. The tiny dressing room became the headquarters and a springboard for future world champions Jimmy McLarnin, Tommy Loughran, Henry Armstrong, Celerino Garcia and Jimmy Braddock. In later years, there would be Archie Moore and Ken Norton.

Fans would congregate around a concession stand outside the arena before the fights and during intermission. The management finally cared, removing some blight, building a concession stand inside, which almost became the club’s undoing when an unattended stove was responsible for a fire in 1938 that destroyed the interior. Fortunately, the gangster stood up and took a bow.

“I’d like to introduce you to Al Capone.”

Nothing but the outside impressions of the old dressing room — remnants of a far-gotten era — remain.

In its heyday, however, the Coliseum saw no shortage of big names, both in the ring and in the bleachers. Curley Morgan, the ring announcer from 1927 to 1941, the trio of Hugh Nichols — a Hollywood wrestler — Grady Skelton and Travis Hatfield made the most of it through the war years.

“We run around 50 shows a year and probably had between 10 to 12 sellouts when we had to turn people away,” Platner once said. “And we had some great fighters. They were looking for work, we were looking for talent.”

The glamour long gone, the Coliseum today is just another bland section of a huge warehouse, the interior gutted of chairs, boxing ring and dressing room. Nothing but the outside impressions of the ticket windows — remnants of a forgotten era — remain.

AT HOM

When you step into AT HOM, you’ll see that its not just a furniture store, its a furniture store with expert interior designers that can help you turn your house into an extraordinary home! AT HOM has vintage and contemporary furniture featuring unique designer furniture collections, some of which are exclusive to their stores in San Diego and Palm Springs. The furniture accents and accessories are spectacular and enhance any space from living room to bedroom.

Shopping for new and vintage can be a challenge because there are mostly new furniture stores or vintage stores and very rarely both. Searching for just the right items can be a challenge however AT HOM has a perfect blend of vintage and new that make achieving that special look easy.

AT HOM combines fine art, sculpture, unique accents, fine leathers and woods that are all hand picked with careful attention to quality. With over 20 years of experience, the team has the credentials to help you with interior design, staging techniques, and creating dynamic spaces. ATHOM’s goal is to create a truly pleasant, unique environment in which you live every day so that you feel like you are at home.
Frosted Robin Cupcakes owner Sherie Harrison’s job function drastically changed course when she went from being the global director of marketing for an international law firm in the Cayman Islands to becoming the owner of a charming cupcake café in Seaport Village.

Instead of requiring employees to meet hard-hitting deadlines, she now encouraged her staff to make moist,centered cupcakes to perfection and finesse the aesthetic and flavor factor of the delectable desserts.

“Preparing for my move to San Diego from the Cayman Islands with my husband and two children in July 2010, I decided to take a new path and start my own business,” Harrison said. “We had previously visited San Diego and fell in love with Seaport Village. Recognizing the continuing market demand for cupcake cafés and the fact that there wasn’t such an offering at Seaport Village, opening Frosted Robin Cupcakes was a perfect match.”

She said the quaint, family-focused atmosphere of Seaport Village provides a perfect setting for a nostalgic treat like cupcakes. “I think that cupcakes are so popular because people are busy, and they often yearn for feelings and special family gatherings in our childhood,” she said.

The homely atmosphere of the café is reminiscent of a French country kitchen and often transports customers back in time to a treasured memory of time spent with family or friends in the kitchen.

On the café’s website, Harrison cites fond childhood memories of gathering in the kitchen while her mother cooked as the inspiration for the feel and atmosphere of Frosted Robin Cupcakes.

“The concept for our café’s design was born from the fact that my family’s favorite gathering spot was always our kitchen,” the website states. “My mom would cook and my brother: three sisters and I would sit on the floor or on the counters and talk about anything and everything. Some of the best of my life happened in that little kitchen.”

The best compliment Harrison received about her store came from a child telling her friend who was about to walk into the café, “You can’t go in there, that’s someone’s house!”

“Though the shop itself is a treat, it’s what’s inside that articulates the salty-sweet flavor of the delectable desserts. “Our more than 40 flavors of gourmet cupcakes are the crown jewel,” she said. “The best part is that they’re far more than just food. They’re a magic set of things up a notch by transforming a simple cupcake into a gourmet delight that we make in-house. The most delectable dessert being the Robin Egg was a knock out as a cupcake to go,” she said.

Harrison said she and her husband, Guy, are excited to launch the cupcake café as a franchise, allowing entrepreneurs to open Frosted Robin Cupcake Cafés across the country and even across the world.

For more information or to set up a tea party or special event, visit www.frostedrobincupcakes.com or call (619) 702-7188.

The large mahogany bar in the restaurant was purchased from the estate of actress Joan Crawford and legend has it you can still see the divots from her high-heeled shoes as she danced on top of it during parties. The ceiling and chandeliers are original and help maintain the character of the World War I-era construction.

The kitchen is small compared to today’s standards for a restaurant its size, however, they are able to do a great job of cooking and delivering meals in a timely manner, so people on the streets are taking pictures of the bikes, which boast top views of downtown.

Every time we take the bikes out, the passengers feel like celebrities, because people on the streets are taking pictures of the bikes, which boast top views of downtown.

The Social Cycle is open 24 hours a day, as well as brunch and dinner menus and a seafood bar. In addition, they offer a full bar.

Brian’s 24 is located at 828 Sixth Ave. For full menu, more information, or to make reservations, visit www.brians24.com.

Social Cycle provides a new way to see downtown

The 16-passenger touring bicycle is powered by its pedaling riders and steered by a professional Cycle driver. Cycle tours include East Village, the Gaslamp Quarter, Marina/Seaport Village and Little Italy, with plans to expand to Hillcrest, University Heights, North Park and South Park, as well as Orange County, Long Beach and the Los Angeles area.

Owner/operator Laura Rovick was inspired by Pedal Pub, started by two men in her hometown of Minneapolis, Minn., who learned the idea back from New York. “I thought that if I could have a huge successful company in Minnesota (where they only get a max of six months of weather when they can run the bikes) that I could have it here in San Diego,” Rovick said. “I’m just starting a small business group,” she said. “I’m just starting a small business group.”

“Every time we take the bikes out, the passengers feel like celebrities, because people on the streets are taking pictures of the bikes, which boast top views of downtown.

The Social Cycle can be rented by the hour and requires a two-hour minimum. Regular price is $99 for a 4-hour tour and $289 (or $12.50 per person filling each of 16 seats) on Fridays through Saturdays.

For more information, visit socialcycle.com.

Hungrily Come in anytime

Brian’s 24 caters to round-the-clock diners

Brian’s 24 saw a need — fast at all times of the day and night — and went for it.

Brian’s 24 is located at 828 Sixth Ave. For full menu, more information, or to make reservations, visit www.brians24.com.
Laughs are a dime a dozen at downtown’s newest comedy club

Horton Plaza becomes host to a madhouse of comedians

Dr. MARK LAMB | Downtown News

For those in San Diego seeking a fun-filled night out on the town — but aren’t exactly looking for a bump ‘n’ grind club or an expensive evening dinner — the Gaslamp Quarter’s newest Madhouse Comedy Club has hit the scene to cater to a night filled with side-splitting laughter and fun.

“This is the first X club to hit San Diego in many years and is unlike any comedy club San Diego has ever experienced,” said Shelley Griffin, Madhouse Comedy Club’s talent coordinator.

Being labeled an “X” club, she said, involves certain elements, like being a standalone comedy club with full-service restaurant and bar, housing at least 200 seats, providing ample parking and featuring nationally-known headliners each evening.

“One unique element that the Madhouse has which no other ‘X’ club in the country has, is there is no two-item minimum ever,” she said.

Other enticing features include a full “five star” dinner menu at three-star prices, an outdoor bar and patio area to mingle with the talent, and free four-hour parking — an unheard of contribution ever,” she said.

Since there has not been an ‘X’ club in San Diego in many years and is unlike any other ‘X’ club in the downtown's newest comedy club

being downtown, Madhouse Comedy Club is run only by comedians and comedy industry professionals with a total of 24 years and two weeks experience,” Griffin said. “The Gaslamp is known for its entertainment significance and value and represents San Diego nightlife. There is an abundance of life in the Gaslamp with tourists and locals alike looking for a fun evening.”

Madhouse Comedy Club held its grand opening in November with national headliner Gene Pompa from Conan O’Brien, Comedy Central and the Latino Laugh Festival. Griffin assures there are many more celebrity comedian appearances at the club in the year ahead.

“Expect to see some big names in the coming year that you would normally have to pay a high-dollar ticket price to see at a large theater or casino,” she said. We are excited to be able to let San Diego get up close and personal with our comedians. Many of the comedians will even meet audience members after the show in a meet-and-greet” where they will sign autographs and sell merchandise or DVDs — something larger venues rarely offer without an additional VIP charge.

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The Madhouse Comedy Club is located at 502 Horton Plaza, on the top level of the mall across from Nordstrom and is open seven days per week for lunch, dinner, drinks and shows.

The club features national headliners on Friday and Saturday nights at 8 and 10:30 p.m. and the best of San Diego comedic talent nightly during the week at 8 p.m.

For tickets and information, visit www.madhousecomedyclub.com or call (619) 702-6866.

laughs are a dime a dozen at downtown’s newest comedy club

An Anthology House Band, a unique San Diego sound

SHELLEY GRIFFIN

Comedy club owners Robert and Mike Lariviere chose the Gaslamp as its new location because, they said, San Diego was in dire need of a few laughs.

“Since there has not been an ‘X’ club in San Diego in many years and is unlike any other ‘X’ club in the country has, is there is no two-item minimum ever,” she said.

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Jazz, an Old Canadian Classic and Boogie-woogie Blues

Jazz nightclub Juny's has a sec- ond location in the downtown area, with shows now Wednesday through Friday at 98 Bottles. On Jan. 14, the venue hosts a perfor-

mance from pianist Paul Keeling, who will be performing music from his debut album. The Farthest Reach. Keeling is cur-

rently based in Vancouver but is a Bob Marley

mature, down to local jazz fans as

part of Gilbert Castellanos’ ensemble during

the mid-1990s. While definitely jazz in the

tradition of Kenny Barratt and Art Meth-

eny, even non-jazz music fans will find

much to enjoy, including unique rein-

terpretations of such rock classics as Prog-

elm’s “Dream On.”

You don’t have to be a classic rock aficionado to enjoy the music of Los Romero, who perform at Anthology on Jan. 28 (7:30 and 9:30 p.m.)

known as the "Royal Fam-

ily of the Guitar." The

Romeros have been resi-

dents of San Diego since

the late 1970s. While their

world tours keep them from performing locally very often. The group’s collective virtuosi-


ty is breathtaking and wonder-ful to hear on any of their releases. The group live is a whole different thing. If you are in any way interested in the artistry of guitar play-

ing, this rare performance from some of the best musicians to ever hold the instrument is an absolute must to attend.

Los Romero’s: Saturday, Jan. 28 at

Anthology, 1337 India St. 7:30 & 9:30 p.m. and up. $13 - $69. www.anthologysd.com

Paul Keeling performs at Anthology at 7 p.m. on Jan. 14.

THE BEAUTIFUL VIEW

The Beautiful View: Thursday, Jan. 12 at

The Casbah, 2950 Kette Rd. 9 p.m. and up. $15, www.casbahmusic.com

The Beautiful View opens the 7th annual San Diego ’s Got Talent contest with a fresh take on classic ballad style songs like opener "The Houseman." toll

MUSICHIT

It can be tough to get in mid-week some-
nes of Thursday, Jan. 19, from 6:30 p.m.

featuring R&B titans Lady Dotte & the

Diamons, plus the Beautiful View, Sundrop Ecol-

ogy, and Full Speed Ahead. Start at $20, www.broad-

waysd.com, (619) 235-0804.

THE LIVELY ARTS

Charlene Baldridge

Put away the tree, the toys and the tin-

sel and fulfill your New Year’s resolutions

to see more live musical and theatrical performances in the new year. January has plenty to offer.

Civic Theatre, 1200 Third Ave.

• Jan. 10 through 15, Broadways San


• Jan. 28, 31, Feb. 3 and 5, San Diego Opera opens its season with four perform-

ances of Richard Strauss’s incendiary “Salome,” the self-centered daughter of King Herod, has a crush on John the Baptist and when spurned, per-

forms the Dance of the Seven Veils in ex-

change for his head on a silver platter.

SOLD OUT, www.sdopera.com or (619) 544-1000.

Copley Symphony Hall, 750 B St.


• Jan. 25, San Diego Symphony pre-

sents the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in a spectacular concert comprised of the renowned Charles Dutoit and featur-

ing Joanna Yu’s Thais ballet in Saint-Saens’ Piano Concerto No. 5 (?’Egyptian’) and Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No. 5.

The Old Globe, 1363 Old Globe Way

“Cats” plays at the Civic Theatre Jan. 10

through 15.

CALL 619.235.0800 OR VISIT sandiegosymphony.org

MUSICCALENDAR

JANUARY 2012

SAN DIEGO DOWNTOWN NEWS

18
**Zoe brings easy glamour**

Reality star, designer and stylist Rachel Zoe became a household name when her show, "The Rachel Zoe Project," became an instant hit on Bravo. Zoe, who works with celebrities on the red carpet and is known for matching celebrities and wardrobe and sometimes did our own hair, make-up and wardrobe and sometimes even on stage with what we were wearing. Zoe said of one of her recent favorite styles, "I love everything I do and won’t do it unless I am passionate about it. The reward is making people feel good about themselves and hearing them say they never felt so pretty."

**Wonderland collection**

Grace Slick, known for her icy-cool voice in Jefferson Airplane and Jefferson Starship, came to Alexander Salazar Fine Art on Dec. 2 to show an exhibit of her paintings titled "The 420 Collection." Singer, composer and artist Grace Slick made an appearance at Alexander Salazar Fine Art on Dec. 2 to show an exhibit of her paintings titled "The 420 Collection." Slick was in town for an exhibit of her latest series of paintings (The 420 Collection) and to support medical marijuana. "If people were to wake up, we could actually cure California’s monetary problems," she said of one of her reasons for supporting the cause. In addition to The 420 Collection, the exhibit showed some of her most recent surrealist paintings, along with some of her best-known works from her own collection, many of which share Alice in Wonderland themes. Visit Alexander Salazar Fine Art at 640 Broadway or visit www.alexandersalazarfineart.com for more information.

**The Siren, The Muse and The Goddess**

M.Dot Design Studio presented a holiday fashion show on Dec. 2 at the W Hotel San Diego. Guests arrived early for a social hour and showed off some of the pop-art handbags and trunk show. The pop-art handbags were created by Michelle Aquino and was themed The Siren, The Muse and The Goddess. Models showed off the holiday collection with a variety of classic chic styles and evening-wear, accessorized with Leoluca handbags, which boast high-quality, U.S.-made workmanship. Aquino announced she is the new fashion insider for the W Hotel San Diego, which means she will be the go-to girl for anything fashion, art, music and food-related. M.Dot Studio makes cut-and-sew garments, limited editions and custom orders. The studio is located downtown at 941 E St. To make an appointment, call (619) 255-3305.

**Upcoming events**

- **Jan. 29 — Winter Bridal Bazaar and fashion show presented by Gretchen Productions at the San Diego Convention Center (three shows presented throughout the day).** For more information, contact Bridal Bazaar at (760) 314-5500.
- **Jan. 29 — Burl Ives Tribute and Inside Our Costume Closet** from 3 to 6 p.m. at the San Diego History Center in Balboa Park. Tickets are $20 for Reserved & Costume Council members or $25 general. Reservations are required at (619) 232-6203 ext. 129 or gsei@sandiegohistory.org.
- **Feb. 22 — Nordstrom Designer Preview** at the Port Pavilion on Broadway Pier. Cocktail reception and boutique shopping will be at 6 p.m. and fashion show at 7 p.m. For ticket information, call (619) 728-1112.

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**San Diego fashion meets reality stars and celebrities**

The creations — which could be described as easily wearable — included maxi skirts paired with tailored jackets or leather blazers. Some favorites were the animal prints — especially a cobalt-blue halter-top and maxi skirt.

"I like to use elements from every decade," she said, when asked if she pulled inspiration from the 1940s. Zoe’s latest news is the launch of the Zoe Media Group, which will add the newsletters Zoe Beautiful and Access-20Rities to the already-successful Zoe Report. Asked what she loved most about what she does, Zoe said, “I love everything I do and won’t do it unless I am passionate about it. The reward is making people feel good about themselves and hearing them say they never felt so pretty.”

The costume for Woodstock was white bell-bottoms and a lace-up vest with 16-inch fringe. Slick was in town for an exhibit of her newest series of paintings (The 420 Collection) and to support medical marijuana. “If people were to wake up, we could actually cure California’s monetary problems,” she said of one of her reasons for supporting the cause. In addition to The 420 Collection, the exhibit showed some of her most recent surrealist paintings, along with some of her best-known works from her own collection, many of which share Alice in Wonderland themes. Visit Alexander Salazar Fine Art at 640 Broadway or visit www.alexandersalazarfineart.com for more information.

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**M. Dot Studio fashion and Leolucha handbags**

M. Dot Studio fashion and Leolucha handbags, which boast high-quality, U.S.-made workmanship. M. Dot Studio makes cut-and-sew garments, limited editions and custom orders. The studio is located downtown at 941 E St. To make an appointment, call (619) 255-3305.

**Maxi skirts and halter tops**

Maxi skirts and halter tops were the top trends at the Rachel Zoe fashion show at Nordstrom Fashion Valley on Dec. 15. Zoe, far left, narrated the show.

**San Diego fashion shows**

The fashion show was put together by Michelle Aquino, who was themed The Siren, The Muse and The Goddess. Models showed off the holiday collection with a variety of classic chic styles and evening-wear, accessorized with Leolucha handbags, which boast high-quality, U.S.-made workmanship. Aquino announced she is the new fashion insider for the W Hotel San Diego, which means she will be the go-to girl for anything fashion, art, music and food-related. M.Dot Studio makes cut-and-sew garments, limited editions and custom orders. The studio is located downtown at 941 E St. To make an appointment, call (619) 255-3305.

**San Diego art and fashion show**

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It’s not a resolution. **IT’S A LIFESTYLE.**

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SAN DIEGO’S PREMIER ATHLETIC CLUB

350 10th Ave. Suite 200, San Diego, CA | 619.764.5348 | fitathletic.com
The tantalizing aroma of Italian food fills your nose as you walk up the wooden stairs to Grant Pecoff’s art gallery, located at 1825 India St., in the heart of Little Italy restaurant district.

The second-floor gallery space is filled with Pecoff’s colorful, abstract landscape paintings, many of places you will recognize, like San Francisco’s Bay Bridge or our own downtown. These paintings are not made with photographic realism in mind, but are curvy, childlike and animated, with swaying buildings and sparkling waters.

Pecoff said he is not interested in precise realistic representation, but rather in capturing the essence, energy or spirit of an object. He is after the moment and the flow, the spiritual vibrancy, or feeling of his subject.

“My paintings are spiritual and point to the flow of life. Each painting has a vibe. They aim at bringing the viewer into the present moment of awareness and appreciation.

“As for the curvy, swaying lines you see in my paintings, they arise from the question I have been pondering, which is: How do you express the “chi” (Chinese for energy) of life in a line? I find it is best expressed with a curved line.”

Pecoff is not a painter who paints out of discipline. Rather, he needs the inspiration to create something.

“I look for places and things that inspire you on the spot,” he said. “To make a painting I need to feel it. I paint places and things that I feel in my body.”

He wants his viewers to feel, also, he said, and he wants to draw them into his painting on an emotional level.

Born in Olivenhain, on the outskirts of Encinitas, Pecoff grew up in a geodesic dome house on a dirt road. His father, whom he describes as a “mad scientist,” was a fan of Buckminster Fuller and worked as a horticulturist, specializing in drought-tolerant species, traveling the world and bringing back strange plants, untold numbers of photographs, costumes and garb from exotic cultures, which he shared enthusiastically with his family—including his son.

As a child, Pecoff, enjoyed drawing and martial arts. From age eight, he practiced various forms of martial arts, eventually earning a black belt in American Kempo. Martial arts, he said, taught him patience, respect and discipline, and he was so taken by the various disciplines that he almost chose to become a martial arts instructor instead of an artist.

Pecoff received training in art at Palomar College and The American Institute of Art in San Francisco, but he never finished a degree program because, as he said, “I have always wanted to do what I wanted to do when I wanted to do it.”

Pecoff paints in his studio at 1825 India St. and invites the public to come watch him work.

Grant Pecoff, below left, paints animated pieces with curvy, swaying lines, often depicting twisting buildings and sparkling waters. Pecoff paints in his studio at 1825 India St. and invites the public to come watch him work.

Photos by WILL BOWEN | Downtown News

Curves in Little Italy
It’s time to come clean

By Connie Cook | Guest Columnist

2011 is outta here! It’s time to clean up your act and clean out your system. You’ve been a happy passenger on the highway of holiday binges for quite some time and now you probably feel like you’ve headed straight to Shugville. It’s time to hit the brakes on this toxic road trip and get back on a better path to cleaner living.

Welcome to Detox City. As you enter the new year, you get another chance to see the light and get it right. Like it or not, the leftover sludge from last year’s sins may still be hanging out in your internal engine. The food you ordered from a window instead of a table is probably one of the culprits (remember the KFC half-spicy crispy chicken meal with macaroni and cheese, potato wedges and biscuit you thought was a good idea on that late night run?). Then, of course, there’s the hangover and beer at the sports games, nachos and drinks containing “artificial flavors,” and on and on. All these “sins” may still be hanging out in your gut, slowing you down, making you feel crappy and keeping you from experiencing the best YOU can be.

Let’s do away with the sluggish and guilty digestive tract running smoothly and eating raw foods like vegetables and fruit. And let’s cut out the alcohol for at least some times of the day. The six juices contain fruits and vegetables, providing more nutrients, minerals and enzymes than the average American consumes in a year’s time, she said. “To add even more power to your juice punch, all of our juices are freshly pressed, producing 70 percent more nutrients than the common cylindrical method of juicing, and are digested easier and faster.”

Each juice is formulated to release the toxins of a different organ at certain times of the day. The six juices contain varietals of fruits and vegetables, which guarantee optimal nutritional value and the power to your juice punch, all of our juices are freshly pressed, producing 70 percent more nutrients than the common cylindrical method of juicing, and are digested easier and faster.

A healthy juice cleanse can give your digestive system a much-needed break and by eliminating added sugar, saturated fats and alcohol,” Cason said. “It also aids your diet of things that can worsen health issues.”

Feeling the heat in a sauna can be a good way to cleanse the body of toxins that can accumulate after a prolonged period — like the holidays — of consuming less-than-healthy food and drink.

If you’re considering a detox plan, then that’s one step in the right direction to a more efficient digestive system and a revitalized and energized you. Be sure to get the OK from your doctor before you start any cleansing program. Enjoy the new year and enjoy your health.

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MEET A FRIEND. HEAD DOWN TO THE BOARDWALK. TAKE A QUICK COFFEE BREAK. RUN BACK TO THE OFFICE. CHECK OUT A MUSEUM AT BALBOA. GO TO THE DOCTOR’S APPOINTMENT. GET TO A MEETING. STOP BY THE BANK. WORK ON YOUR BICEPS. DROP OFF THE LAUNDRY. TAKE A STROLL AROUND THE GASLAMP.

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