The Old Town Model Railroad Depot, a model railroad museum based in San Diego’s historic Old Town district, will remain open under new ownership. The Depot, which was founded in 2014 by Gary Hickok, was scheduled to close on Nov. 30. One month prior to the anticipated closing, David Lizerbram and Mana Monzavi, a married couple based in North Park, acquired the Depot, renewed the lease, and are keeping it open. Hickok will remain actively involved in the Depot, as will the many model railroad enthusiasts who operate their collectible trains on the O-gauge (Lionel size) tracks.

A scene inside the holiday-themed display at the depot. (Photo courtesy Old Town Model Railroad Depot)

South Park jazz musician brings joy to seniors

Marcia Forman makes her way through the day center of St. Paul’s PACE, a medical program for senior citizens. Carrying a saxophone case in one hand and a satchel stuffed with songbooks in the other, she walks toward a piano, greeting patients as they eat lunch. Unpacking her saxophone, Forman runs a hand over the piano keys. A few of the agency’s patients gravitate toward her. One complains he ate too much.

Marcia Forman plays outside The Big Kitchen in South Park. (Photo by J.M. Garcia)

Major CPG reforms clear hurdle

The City Council’s Land Use and Housing Committee voted to reform community planning groups (CPGs) on Dec. 5 that includes revisions from a maximum length of meetings to how elections are run. The reforms come after a city audit, a Grand Jury report and Circulate San Diego’s Democracy in Planning all raised serious concerns about how the groups are run. In response, a task force was formed that created 33 recommendations on how to improve the groups. Those recommendations were voted on by CPGs throughout the region as well as the Community Planners Committee before being brought to the San Diego City Council.

On a basic level, homeowners and renters have different needs to address labor trafficking

State to address labor trafficking

A Christmas Story still being told

A scene inside the holiday-themed display at the depot. (Photo courtesy Old Town Model Railroad Depot)

Season tamales are in

A scene inside the holiday-themed display at the depot. (Photo courtesy Old Town Model Railroad Depot)

Marcia Forman outside The Big Kitchen in South Park. (Photo by J.M. Garcia)

The advisory groups are filled with elected members who volunteer to weigh in on land-use issues in their neighborhood. They are meant to be the lowest rung of democracy, but critics worry they are often inaccessible to marginalized groups. Research has shown CPGs skew whiter, wealthier and older than the neighborhoods they represent. In addition, they are often filled almost exclusively with homeowners, even in areas where the majority of people rent. On a basic level, homeowners and renters have different needs.
signs, the Depot features a Santa Claus and his reindeer riding a Christmas-themed train for the holiday season. “We are thrilled to have the opportunity to help this wonderful museum live on for years to come,” said Lizerbram. “My father and I spent many hours working on our train layout when I was growing up in North County, and it’s an honor and a pleasure to share this hobby with our visitors from San Diego and around the world.” In September 2019, Lizerbram and Monzavi visited the Depot for the first time with their 2-year-old son, Miles. They fell in love with the museum and were upset to find out that it was soon to close. They couldn’t bear to see it disappear. A few weeks later, they found themselves in possession of the keys to one of San Diego’s hidden gems, with big plans for the Depot’s future. 

A visit to the Old Town Model Railroad Depot will take you back in time to the 1950s, where various trains travel over a 2,000-square-foot custom-built layout. The highlight is a city at night including more than 100 buildings with lights and flashing neon signs, a ballpark, zoo, depot, industrial district, and even a working drive-in movie theater. Continuing on your journey, you will pass a large farm, a quaint country town, a beautiful mountain range, a large lake (complete with sharks), and a dam with trestles traversing over a large gorge.

The Depot, located at 2415 San Diego Ave., Suite 107, San Diego, CA 92110, is open daily (except Tuesdays) from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Admission is free. Donations are encouraged. The Depot includes a retail store with train-themed gifts, books, and apparel. More info can be found at oldtowntrains.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.

Family owned and operated and having been in business for over 30 years, Chimney Sweeps Inc. is a fully licensed and insured chimney contracting company (License # 976438) and they are certified with the National Fireplace Institute and have an A+ rating with the Better Business Bureau.

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.

Inside the holiday-themed railroad layout (Photos courtesy Old Town Model Railroad Depot)
Lawmakers, social workers, attorneys, victims and advocates came together at San Diego Central Library to discuss the issue of labor trafficking and gaps in response to this form of human trafficking. Victims and advocates who spoke before a panel of public policy experts had one message: California must do more to treat labor trafficking victims equally to human trafficking victims. The public hearing was hosted by California’s independent government oversight agency The Little Hoover Commission on Nov. 21. Choosing San Diego as the location of the first statewide public hearing was intentional because of its proximity to the border. As commissioners and audience members learned, unlike sex trafficking (which often ensnares U.S. citizens), forced labor cases almost always contain an element of immigration.

California Senate President Pro Tempore Toni Atkins opened the hearing to discuss the efforts she has made at the Legislature to address human trafficking. She acknowledged that the focus since human trafficking was made a felony in California in 2005 has been on sex trafficking, and now it is time for people to turn their attention to labor trafficking since much less is known about it. Atkins said more temporary housing and specialized services are needed, as well as data on the issue. She shared findings from a 2012 study by SDSU researcher Sheldon Zhang on labor trafficking in San Diego County that showed 30% of migrant laborers are victims of trafficking and 50% of migrant laborers face abusive practices.

A Los Angeles man, who wished to remain anonymous, explained in an email exchange his own experience of labor abuse. He is in the U.S. on a student visa, which bars him working off of his college campus. When he took a job at a grocery store to pay for his living, he was subjected to less-than-grocery store to pay for his living. When he took a job at a campus. When he took a job at a U.S. on a student visa, which showed 30% of migrant laborers in the so-called “underground economy” are already in a precarious position: if injured, they would have to fend for themselves because they are not listed on the business’s workers compensation insurance.

“The workplace abuse faced by new immigrants leads us to feel that the employers were not even treated as human beings, but as slaves whose rights were ignored in lieu of the employer’s pursuit of economic success,” said the man.

After Atkins’ opening address, two survivors shared their stories publicly.

“My name is Angela and I’m a survivor of labor trafficking,” said Angela Guaman. She explained how when she immigrated, she was told she was working to pay off debt. She wasn’t familiar with labor protection laws so she didn’t know it was illegal to be forced to stay in the nursing home she worked at. She ended up being adopted by a family, in India. While there, she was cared for by other servants and allowed to leave the house. That all changed when the adult daughter of the family she worked for brought her to Texas to care for her children and do all the housework in the giant mansion they lived in. Zellars found her first panic attack at 11 when she asked to go to school and was rebuffed. She decided she wanted to return to India and searched for her passport, which had been taken from her. Zellars found it and ran to the mansion’s gate, where a woman who was waiting by while on a walk helped her leave the property. That woman wrapped her in a blanket later — Zellars said this was the first human touch she experienced since leaving India.

The rest of Zellars’ story before she ended up being adopted by a woman in San Diego reveals the problem of not having laws and policies around labor trafficking. The 13th Amendment may have abolished slavery and involuntary servitude in 1864, but Texas in 1989 had yet to institute any consequence for people who enslaved others. The woman who trafficked Zellars was able to simply walk out of the police station to continue her career in law without issue because there was nothing to arrest her on. Meanwhile, Zellars was sent to juvenile hall because no one quite knew what to do with her.

Zellars is not alone in being a victim who was treated like a criminal. One of the accomplishments Atkins touched on was legislation treating all minors involved in the sex industry as victims of trafficking instead of criminalizing them for prostitution. For labor victims who were forced to work in illegal industries like human smuggling or drug dealing, they are still going to be jailed for their own abuse. They may also be less likely to attempt to escape or report crimes committed against them for fear of facing prosecution.

“If the criminal justice system looked at them as victims instead of criminals, more would be identified,” said Jamie Beek, the president and managing attorney of Free to Thrive. She brought up how homelessness, drug addiction and being undocumented are contributing factors for individuals who are forced into illegal labor but do not profit from that labor. She also discussed how people who are labor trafficked are at higher risk of being sexually assaulted; some face

State agency pushes new focus on labor trafficking
FROM PAGE 1

CPG REFORM

concerns when looking at new developments — one of the main purposes of CPGs. A typical renter might favor bringing in developments that keep rent down by adding more housing stock, while a typical homeowner might favor keeping developments out that could potentially bring down their property value.

“Planning Groups cannot represent their community if they do not look like their community,” said Maya Rosas, director of policy at Circulate San Diego, in a press conference before the vote.

To that end, the reforms include creating a distinct category between renters and homeowners and reserving at least one seat for renters to be represented on the board.

If the reforms are enacted, members of the CPG boards will have to fill out a demographic survey (which would not include religion, as members of Normal Heights Planning Group worried) and termed-out members must wait two years to be elected again. In addition, a compromise was reached that in order to qualify for the race, a person would have to attend three meetings before even being able to run for elections, people would have dedicated 10 hours without even knowing if they would be elected to a volunteer position.

The stringent rules to run for Uptown Planners played a role in the last election. Oscar Tavera’s application to run for the group was rejected because although he had proof he attended three meetings, at only two of them did he sign in on the official sheet. For the first meeting he went to, before he even decided to run, he failed to sign in. Despite showing GPS data that proved he was at the meeting, his run was still blocked.

“It was on a technicality that it was being rejected,” Tavera explained in a phone interview. “The measure isn’t in there to be inclusive of everyone.”

Tavera is a young Latino renter — in many ways he embodies the demographic that makes up most of Uptown yet is least likely to be a part of this democratic process.

Tavera was told the three meeting rule was present to make sure those elected to the board would be able to attend meetings.

“I’m lucky I work a 9-to-5 job, but there’s people that have a more fluid schedule. They have things that conflict. At other CPGs, you don’t even need to attend a single meeting,” Tavera explained. “It’s just the desire and ability to go and run. That’s all they really should need.”

He praised efforts to bring meetings down the meeting requirements in order to qualify for the race. “It’s more inclusive because it really lowers the requirements for people to come in and actually participate,” he said.

Tavera’s experience discouraged him from participating in CPGs, but other members of Rise Uptown helped him work through the rejection. Because he sees the importance of CPGs in the community, he plans to be involved in the next election cycle.

CPGs have seen little support from the city of San Diego in recent years. Few have staff from the Planning Department assigned to attend and answer questions. Even fewer have representatives from the City Attorney’s office ensuring the group is following the Brown Act — which means any question about the specifics of a project or the legality of an action requires significant discussion with officials not in attendance, sometimes delaying the process.

The new reforms include directing the Planning Department to closely monitor CPG actions and provide timely guidance to preclude requests for inappropriate project additions or modifications. The Planning Department is also tasked with providing resources to improve recruiting that could result in more diverse CPG membership. The city attorney will also be more involved in conducting disciplinary reviews if a CPG violates the Brown Act.

There will also be more transparency within CPG groups if the reforms are passed by the full City Council as the changes include deadlines on putting documents such as minutes, agendas, and rosters in a centralized location available for the public.
A Christmas Story, but this time it’s a musical

Jean Lowerison | Uptown News

What’s a kid to do when what he really wants for Christmas is an air rifle, but nobody wants to hear about it?

To be specific, 9-year-old Ralphie Parker (JP Wishchuk) wants a Red Ryder Carbine Action Range Model Air Rifle with a compass in the stock. But all he hears when he mentions it is, “You’ll put an eye out!”

Ralphie and his kid brother Randy (Abraham German) live with their parents Mom (Heidi Meyer) and The Old Man (Jake Millgard) somewhere in Indiana in the 1940s. The story is told by a narrator (actually Ralphie as an adult, played appealingly by Steve Gunderson), who reminisces about those good old days.

The story meanders around a bit and doesn’t bother pounding a Christmas message at you (kind of refreshing after the other holiday shows), mixing a fairly standard schoolboy story with preparations for the big holiday, minus the preaching.

So we see Ralphie and Randy going to school, where we find teacher Miss Shields (a funny Barbara Schoenhofer) trying to keep the little wretches in line.

Of course, we also have mean Scut Farkus (Jojo Eddington), the school bully, and his sidekick Grover Dill (Joshua Hitchcock). And Ralphie has a friend named Schwartz (Spencer Kearns), who teaches him bad words.

The kids do kid stuff, including one incident in which poor Flick (Mark Mahaffey) is crazy enough to put tongue to flagpole outside on a snowy winter day, causing “A Sticky Situation.”

“A Christmas Story” has had a checkered past, beginning as a film in 1983. It was rewritten as a stage musical and opened in 2009 in Kansas City. Then the music was rewritten by “La La Land” and “Dear Evan Hansen” composers Benj Pasek and Justin Paul; that version played on Broadway in 2012.

The latter is the version San Diego Musical Theatre presents through Dec. 29 at the Horton Grand Theatre.

It’s a sprightly show, featuring 25 people and some 18 songs, a nice 12-piece orchestra led by Don LeMaster, and some good choreography by Jill Gorrie.

Meyer is especially fine as Ralphie’s mom, and sings one of the best songs — “Just Like That.”

Millgard is always welcome, and has a star turn of his own as The Old Man (i.e., Dad), the self-proclaimed “Genius of Cleveland Street” — a crossword-puzzle freak. When he wins what is billed as “A Major Award,” things get really strange.

The award comes in an enormous box, and consists of a ... lazy’s leg? (plastic, of course) and a lampshade? Oh, yeah, it’s a lamp.

Remember those?

Mathys Herbert designed the nifty versatile dual-level set with a fold-out kitchen (I want one of those) and lots of movable stuff, including a cute little car.

But in the end, “It All Comes Down to Christmas,” and when it comes, everything seems fine. Just like it should.

— Jean Lowerison is a long-standing member of the San Diego Theatre Critics Circle and can be reached at infodame@gmail.com.

The family at the heart of ‘A Christmas Story’ (Photo by Ken Jacques)

There is a cast of 25 people in the show.

The award comes in an enormous box, and consists of a ... laby’s leg? (plastic, of course) and a lampshade? Oh, yeah, it’s a lamp.

Remember those?

Mathys Herbert designed the nifty versatile dual-level set with a fold-out kitchen (I want one of those) and lots of movable stuff, including a cute little car.

But in the end, “It All Comes Down to Christmas,” and when it comes, everything seems fine. Just like it should.

— Jean Lowerison is a long-standing member of the San Diego Theatre Critics Circle and can be reached at infodame@gmail.com.

The award comes in an enormous box, and consists of a ... laby’s leg? (plastic, of course) and a lampshade? Oh, yeah, it’s a lamp.

Remember those?

Mathys Herbert designed the nifty versatile dual-level set with a fold-out kitchen (I want one of those) and lots of movable stuff, including a cute little car.

But in the end, “It All Comes Down to Christmas,” and when it comes, everything seems fine. Just like it should.

— Jean Lowerison is a long-standing member of the San Diego Theatre Critics Circle and can be reached at infodame@gmail.com.

There is a cast of 25 people in the show.

The award comes in an enormous box, and consists of a ... laby’s leg? (plastic, of course) and a lampshade? Oh, yeah, it’s a lamp.

Remember those?

Mathys Herbert designed the nifty versatile dual-level set with a fold-out kitchen (I want one of those) and lots of movable stuff, including a cute little car.

But in the end, “It All Comes Down to Christmas,” and when it comes, everything seems fine. Just like it should.

— Jean Lowerison is a long-standing member of the San Diego Theatre Critics Circle and can be reached at infodame@gmail.com.

The award comes in an enormous box, and consists of a ... laby’s leg? (plastic, of course) and a lampshade? Oh, yeah, it’s a lamp.

Remember those?

Mathys Herbert designed the nifty versatile dual-level set with a fold-out kitchen (I want one of those) and lots of movable stuff, including a cute little car.

But in the end, “It All Comes Down to Christmas,” and when it comes, everything seems fine. Just like it should.

— Jean Lowerison is a long-standing member of the San Diego Theatre Critics Circle and can be reached at infodame@gmail.com.

There is a cast of 25 people in the show.

The award comes in an enormous box, and consists of a ... laby’s leg? (plastic, of course) and a lampshade? Oh, yeah, it’s a lamp.

Remember those?

Mathys Herbert designed the nifty versatile dual-level set with a fold-out kitchen (I want one of those) and lots of movable stuff, including a cute little car.

But in the end, “It All Comes Down to Christmas,” and when it comes, everything seems fine. Just like it should.

— Jean Lowerison is a long-standing member of the San Diego Theatre Critics Circle and can be reached at infodame@gmail.com.
District 53 Dispatch
Susan A. Davis

A new United Nations report released in November provided a serious warning regarding the climate crisis we face. Unless we act now, global temperatures will increase 4 degrees by the end of the century.

This year has been the hottest on record and we are seeing the impact. Superstorms devastating wildfires, droughts seem to be the new normal.

The good news is that solutions are not elusive and by working together there is a way to slow the rise in global temperatures.

While the House has taken action to address climate change, there is a new tool people are using around the country to better understand the challenges we face in creating viable solutions.

The En-ROADS initiative, created by MIT and the nonprofit, nonpartisan Climate Interactive, is a program that brings people together and requires them to engage as a group to craft climate change policy.

The nations of the world came together under the Paris Agreement with a goal of reducing global temperatures by 2 degrees by the end of the century.

With this in mind, the En-ROADS program looks to show how cooperation and a comprehensive approach can achieve the same outcome.

Mostly, it has been students who have taken up this challenge, but the creators of the initiative believe state, city, and local government leaders can participate to determine policies they can implement to stem the rise in global temperatures.

In fact, just last month members of Congress were briefed on this new program.

En-ROADS takes a group of people and divides them into small groups representing stakeholders, such as climate activists, developed nations, developed nations, energy efficiency, fossil fuels, and renewable energy.

They then set about coming up with policy solutions requiring each group representing differing worldviews, droughts lead to an approach that leads to a two-degree drop in global temperatures by 2050.

The groups eventually (usually through encouragement) then begin to negotiate with each other to come to an agreement.

The two big takeaways from these sessions: People are realizing how hard it is to reach the goal of reducing rising temperatures and there is no silver bullet to ending climate change. It’s going to take discussion, compromise, and a myriad of approaches to get the job done.

We cannot just look at reducing carbon emissions — while very important and a key component to reducing the effects of climate change.

We must look at sustainable communities. It’s not just cars with better gas mileage but how about fewer cars! Encouraging more bicycling through increased bike lanes. Making public transportation more accessible, reliable, and more affordable.

There is reducing our reliance on fossil fuels by increasing access to renewable energy. Looking at population and deforestation. Carbon pricing needs to be done.

Only together can we create a sustainable Earth for future generations.

— Congresswoman Davis represents central San Diego, including the communities of Granville, Allied Gardens, San Carlos, Del Cerro, Old Town, Kensington, Mission Hills, University Heights, Hillcrest, Bankers Hill, North Park, South Park, Talmadge, Normal Heights, as well as La Mesa, Lemon Grove, Spring Valley and parts of El Cajon and Chula Vista.

For life-threatening illnesses and injuries, you should always dial 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. If you aren’t sure if a visit to the emergency room is appropriate, your insurance company may offer a nurse line on the back of your insurance card to help you determine where you should get care. You also contact your health plan customer service department to find a nearby urgent care clinic or set up an appointment with your primary care doctor. It’s important to understand when a visit to the primary care doctor, urgent care or emergency room is the most appropriate.

A primary care doctor helps manage your health and provides the preventative care you may need. Your doctor can also treat minor illnesses and injuries — and refer you to a specialist, if needed. Your doctor can provide treatment for non-emergency illness and injury, like allergies and the flu, asthma attacks, broken bones, and cuts requiring stitches.

They are first come, first served and primary care physicians, nurses, and medical assistants are prepared and have a list of medications you may take on hand, a list of your allergies readily available, your phone and charger and your photo ID and insurance information.

In the emergency room, understanding your options beforehand and arriving prepared can help build a long-term relationship with a primary care doctor who can provide preventative care, treat minor illnesses and injuries, and connect you to specialists and understand medical history for improved health outcomes.

Whether you are able to schedule a visit with your primary doctor depends on your health issue or it requires immediate emergency room attention, it is important to have your photo ID and insurance information ready before you arrive home without it.

If you want to prepare in advance, be prepared and have a list of medications you take on hand, a list of your allergies readily available, your phone and charger and your health record. Emergency rooms also carry the potential for higher germ exposure, so don’t forget a medical face mask (check the front desk) and hand cleaner (usually available throughout the department).

Checking into the emergency room can be a stressful situation, so know your options beforehand and arriving prepared can help make your stay as brief as possible.

— Kevin Kandalaft is chief executive officer of UnitedHealthcare Community Plan of California.

Understanding the ER: Know where to go for care

Kevin Kandalaft | TenthAnheal

Sustaining an injury or feeling the sudden onset of sickness can be an alarming experience. In many instances, we instinctively seek out the emergency room as a vital provider of immediate care. However, according to a study from Mercer Human Resources Consulting, 35% of emergency room users were unaware that they had alternatives for care. When experiencing a change in health, knowing when to visit the emergency room, understanding your care options, and having access to other resources available can save an unnecessary and uneconomic use of the emergency room.

The number of hospital emergency departments has remained steady since 2001, while utilization has grown about 13% in the last decade. This means more time spent at the emergency room is getting longer. The California Health Care Foundation report, which tracked use over a 10-year period, found the average stay for patients not admitted to the hospital was almost three hours in California. For patients being admitted to the hospital, they spent almost six hours in the emergency room beforehand. In fact, the Office of Statewide Planning and Development reported in 2017 that about 352,000 California visits ended after seeing a doctor, but before care was complete, as a result of crowded hospital emergency departments.

For life-threatening illnesses and injuries, you should always dial 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. If you aren’t sure if a visit to the emergency room is appropriate, your insurance company may offer a nurse line on the back of your insurance card to help you determine where you should get care. You also contact your health plan customer service department to find a nearby urgent care clinic or set up an appointment with your primary care doctor. It’s important to understand when a visit to the primary care doctor, urgent care or emergency room is the most appropriate.

A primary care doctor helps manage your health and provides the preventative care you may need. Your doctor can also treat minor illnesses and injuries — and refer you to a specialist, if needed. Your doctor can provide treatment for non-emergency illness and injury, like allergies and the flu, asthma attacks, broken bones, and cuts requiring stitches.

They are first come, first served and primary care physicians, nurses, and medical assistants are prepared and have a list of medications you may take on hand, a list of your allergies readily available, your phone and charger and your photo ID and insurance information.

In the emergency room, understanding your options beforehand and arriving prepared can help build a long-term relationship with a primary care doctor who can provide preventative care, treat minor illnesses and injuries, and connect you to specialists and understand medical history for improved health outcomes.

Whether you are able to schedule a visit with your primary doctor depends on your health issue or it requires immediate emergency room attention, it is important to have your photo ID and insurance information ready before you arrive home without it.

If you want to prepare in advance, be prepared and have a list of medications you take on hand, a list of your allergies readily available, your phone and charger and your health record. Emergency rooms also carry the potential for higher germ exposure, so don’t forget a medical face mask (check the front desk) and hand cleaner (usually available throughout the department).

Checking into the emergency room can be a stressful situation, so know your options beforehand and arriving prepared can help make your stay as brief as possible.

— Kevin Kandalaft is chief executive officer of UnitedHealthcare Community Plan of California.
businesses collaborate to address homelessness in North Park

It’s a big day for Steve. After living on the streets of North Park for two years, he is getting ready to move into a sober living facility in East County. He has been in and out of prison for nearly 40 years, struggled with drug addiction, and experienced periods of homelessness throughout his life.

Dressed in a sharp sweater vest and immaculate white socks, Steve looks as though he might be on a job interview. He shares insightful observations about the current political landscape drawing comparisons to his experience growing up in Louisiana in the 1950s. He is drafting a book on theology. He is clearly ready for a fresh start. But Steve didn’t get here alone. By his side for several months has been Jessie Angeles, homeless outreach coordinator at People Assisting the Homeless (PATH), an organization working to end homelessness for individuals, families and communities. Funded by Mid City Homeless Collaborative partners North Park Main Street, City Heights BIA, City Heights CDC and Price Philanthropies, as well as City Council members Chris Ward and Georgette Gomez, this neighborhood-based street outreach has yielded results above and beyond expectations.

Angelas, a San Diego native with a passion for helping people transform their lives, has worked with people experiencing homelessness. “I am able to really look at people where they are right now and focus on that person, not the person they were in the past,” said the 30-year-old as he gets ready to drive Steve to the facility. “I’m going to be here for him throughout this process.”

Helping Steve transition into housing is part of the Mid City Homeless Collaborative’s strategy to reduce homelessness in the Mid-City area. “We don’t want to just shuffle people along or give them a bus ticket to another part of San Diego, we want to make real and meaningful change in the community,” said Angela Landsberg, executive director of the nonprofit organization. “Business and property owners contribute funding for programs aimed at making North Park an inviting place to shop, dine and do business. Our job as the nonprofit representing these businesses and property owners, is to create programs that increase the quality of life for people in the community and this means addressing the impacts of people experiencing homelessness in North Park.”

This type of work takes time and patience. Angeles said it can take months to earn trust from people who may have been severely traumatized by life events. At PATH, she currently has a roster of 27 clients, all of whom work with him voluntarily. He buys them coffee, listens to what they need, and tries to connect them with services that will help them transition into housing. Since late January, Angeles has assisted nearly 30 people moving toward permanent housing, residential treatment and addiction services, and shelters.

“We know our communities needed a strategic outreach effort led by a trusted individual who meets people experiencing homelessness where they were, rather than asking them to connect with numerous and changing services all over town,” said Enrique Gandarrila, executive director of the City Heights Business Association.

Once paperwork is signed and a person experiencing homelessness agrees to engage with the Mid City Homeless Outreach Program, Angeles and PATH are all in. This sometimes means accompanying clients to appointments like the one Steve is on today.

Steve will get settled in later that week and meet his housemates, also recovering from addiction. “This program is a valuable investment in North Park,” said Landsberg. “There are a lot of homeless outreach programs in the city, but this program is focused on building relationships that extend beyond the relationship-building component of the process. The Mid City program has had great success because we operate a program that recognizes that it takes trust and dedication to help people who have often been cast aside by the system that is supposed to support them. Our program aims to treat people with dignity and respect in order to gain their trust because we know that real change can only happen at the speed of trust. That’s who North Park is as a community. We’re not saying, ‘move over to another community’ — we’re saying how we can help get this person off the streets for good.”

30th Street bikeway gets a new option

The city of San Diego’s Mobility Board voted 8-2 last week to recommend the city adopt a new plan for a protected bike lane along 30th Street. The plan, referred to as Option A, is a new compromise, and an expansion, of previous plans to add a protected bike lane along a two-mile stretch of 30th Street. Instead of just existing commercial loading zones, timed parking and accessible parking spots in the design. There is a loss of 449 parking spots.

The mayor’s office brought the new plan before the advisory group during the first time it was made public. In May, Mayor Kevin Faulconer ordered the city to implement Option A as the street is resurfaced after installing the 30th Street Pipeline Replacement Project, a project to replace nearly six miles of water main. Even City Councilmember Chris Ward, who was recently honored by the San Diego Bike Coalition in its annual Golden Gear Awards, did not support that option. Instead, he released a letter in July voicing support for an alternative that compromi- se that created floating parking spots in the business district. North Park Main Street joined Council member Ward in support of Option B this summer.

The group’s president, Angela Landsberg, said in a statement that they still support Option B. "North Park Main Street, sur- rounding businesses and residents and the majority of businesses and residents in the area oppose this new plan called A+,” Landsberg said. "The fact that the Board’s vote is a compromise that compro- mise to a site like Yelp. Others mentioned partnering again with labor unions, which used to be on the forefront of fighting human trafficking in California until the focus shifted to sex trafficking. "Businesses and unions are dis- advantaged by labor trafficking, "Beier said. Educating the public and foster parents was also proposed, along with incentivizing prosecutors to bring labor trafficking cases to trial. The Little Hoover Commission will put together a report next year based on the findings of the public hearing and further studies on labor trafficking. Beier pointed out the recommendations of a previous report on the under- ground economy have yet to be implemented. "Labor trafficking is to be better addressed in the state Legislature, it will require coordination." Beier said. "More victims who are thought to be criminals. That’s wrong," Beier said. “It’s amazing we’ve got a point to where hu- mans are treated like chattel, like property.” — Kendra Sitton can be reached at kendra@sdnews.com •

FROM PAGE 3

labor trafficking

the same issues as people who are sex trafficked.

Behr argued against lumping all victims together, but she did point out a few commonalities many share, including their immigrant status and how many face psychological coercion and manipu- lation. In addition, she submitted that labor trafficking victims are more isolated from society than sex trafficking victims, which is less likely to know they are victims.

“There is no one story of ex-plotation,” Behr said.

He shares a little out- reach to victims from nonprofits; additionally, law enforcement depends on victims to identify themselves.

There is no proactive identi- fier of victims, said Colleen Owens, the former senior research associate at the Urban Institute. She cited the results of one study she conducted which found 100% of victims she looked at were im- migrants, and came from 29 orig- inal nations. Three top sending countries sending labor trafficking victims were located across Asia and in Mexico and the top indus- tries targeted were domestic work, agriculture, construction, restaur- ant and janitorial work. Owens said in most crimes, you can point at criminals, “but in labor traf- ficking you have to point back at yourself.”

The only outreach to potential victims occurs in jails and prisons. Behr urged the commission to look at outreach to vulnerable popula- tions. San Diego District Attorney Summer Stephan echoed this lat- ter when she broached the idea of leveraging the State Department to educate immigrants using cer- tain work visas on U.S. labor laws when they first enter the country.

In her presentation, Stephan explained that due to the difficul- ties in bringing up actual charges of labor trafficking, her team now focuses on finding money laun- dering, tax evasion and other more related crimes labor traf- fickers commit because of their greed.

However, Nancy O’Malley, the district attorney of Alameda County, disagreed with Stephan’s approach, and said they shouldn’t rely on the Al Capone method of prosecution and ignore poten- tial labor trafficking charges. O’Malley noted that there is a spectrum of labor trafficking from one individual exploiting another they see in a vulnerable position (such as when recent immigrants are forced into unpaid domestic work for a single household, like what happened to Zellars), to ma- jor operations exploiting many people at once (as was the case of dozens of men in Alameda County coerced to work in agriculture). She explained that in just 13 cases over the last several years, more than 700 victims were represented.

While the criminal justice aspect of labor trafficking, human rights violation seemed the focus of the Nov. 21 hearing, some of the advocates who spoke urged public officials to actually support victims with wraparound services after they are free from la- bor trafficking. Those who worked directly with victims complained that they don’t always have funding barred many people from re- ceiving necessary housing, food and care because they didn’t fit the malum proprium scope of each of those individual programs. Beck want- ed a standardized screening and centralized services while others just addressed barriers to accessibility in government funding.

There were many other ideas presented urging a multi-faceted approach to identify and combat labor trafficking. Commission member David Beier asked about the legality of naming and sham- burglarizing people, such as going to practice a site like Yelp. Others mentioned partnering again with labor unions, which used to be on the forefront of fighting human trafficking in California until the focus shifted to sex trafficking. "Businesses and unions are dis- advantaged by labor trafficking, "Beier said. Educating the public and foster parents was also proposed, along with incentivizing prosecutors to bring labor trafficking cases to trial. The Little Hoover Commission will put together a report next year based on the findings of the public hearing and further studies on labor trafficking. Beier pointed out the recommendations of a previous report on the under- ground economy have yet to be implemented. "Labor trafficking is to be better addressed in the state Legislature, it will require coordination." Beier said. "More victims who are thought to be criminals. That’s wrong," Beier said. “It’s amazing we’ve got a point to where hu- mans are treated like chattel, like property.” — Kendra Sitton can be reached at kendra@sdnews.com •

District Attorney Mara Elliot during the public hearing (Photo by Kendra Sitton)
Are you full? Forman asks unpacking her songbooks. "Me too. I had too big a lunch.)

For nearly 12 years, as an adjunct professor for San Diego Community College Continuing Education Emeritus Program, Forman, 62, has played music for senior citizens in programs that provide physical rehabilitation and care for patients with Alzheimer’s and dementia.

She first played for the elderly at Windsor Gardens Convalescent Center of San Diego in 1985. She started with “Satin Doll” by Duke Ellington and noticed people tapping their toes and thought: “This is it. I want to bring people back, I want to make people happy.”

“Okay, time’s up,” Forman says when she finishes “Round Midnight,” “Christmas songs. ‘Tis the season, you know. Or, we could play jazz. Up to you.”

Forman grew up in New York state and when her improvisational style and took up the saxophone when she was 10. She liked the sound of the instrument in the rock ‘n roll songs she heard, the way its sound traveled, the different pitches and notes. In 1980, she moved to San Diego and worked at The Big Kitchen, a South Park restaurant. Forman then went to San Diego Community College to study music and worked full-time at the restaurant with The Marcia Forman Band, a group she formed in 1973.

Occasionally, they dance. Forman points skyward. “Twist my arm. How about ‘Up there and through me,” she says. “It was my father’s favorite. The only song he could play.”

Forman grew up in New York state and when her improvisational style and took up the saxophone when she was 10. She liked the sound of the instrument in the rock ‘n roll songs she heard, the way its sound traveled, the different pitches and notes. In 1980, she moved to San Diego and worked at The Big Kitchen, a South Park restaurant.

It is a long time ago, Forman says. It was her favorite song. "Misty," she thinks of her mother. "Carolina in the Morning" was a favorite. He’d get up and dance. He died in May. "Sentimental Journey" and "You Are My Sunshine." Whenever she plays "Misty," she thinks of her mother. It was her favorite song.

When she completes “Jingle Bells,” a patient named Peggy starts singing. Forman notices a woman she hasn’t greeted. "What’s your name?

"Sarah.”

"Oh, I see you for two days and I didn’t know your name. Nice to meet you.

"My left hand is kind of numb." "Is it?” Forman says. “But you look good.”

"Yes you do."

In the mid 2000s, Forman would travel to New York to visit her parents, who were then in a nursing home. Friends played music for them and she would join them in renditions of “Sentimental Journey” and “You Are My Sunshine.”

Where Does Your Property Go If You Die Without a Will or Trust?

Except where your title is additional or a joint tenancy, or you named your beneficiaries under an insurance policy, retirement plan, or IRA, if you die without leaving a written instrument called a “trust” called (also known as “intestate”), your entire estate will pass with accordance to what is called the “law of intestate succession.”

Assume you own a home and some mutual funds, and you die intestate, here what would happen.

If you or your spouse and no children. Your estate would pass to your next of kin, in order, to your parents, then to your siblings. If none surviving, to your uncles and aunts, then to your cousins. If none surviving, to your grandparents; if none surviving, to your brothers and sisters; if none surviving, to your parent(s). If none surviving, to your uncles and aunts, then to your cousins. If none surviving, to your grandparents. If none surviving, to your brothers and sisters. If none surviving, to your parent(s). If none surviving, to your uncles and aunts, then to your cousins.

This is a major win not only for our students, but for all our students that will benefit.”

The Marcia Forman band plays at The Blarney Stone Pub in Clairemont every other Tuesday and at The Big Kitchen every Sunday morning.

— J.M. Garcia is a freelance writer/photographer in San Diego. He can be reached at j46_garcia@hotmail.com.

Augustinian Promise opens doors for St. Pat's students at high school

Situated just half a mile apart from each other in North Park, St. Augustine High School and St. Patrick School, both operated by the Order of St. Augustine in the Province of St. Augustine in California, have finalized details for a new initiative to promote Catholic education in San Diego and strengthen their Augustinian relationship.

The Augustinian Promise is a guaranteed admissions program for eighth-grade boys graduating from St. Patrick School to St. Augustine High School if they meet certain criteria, including maintaining a 2.5 GPA in middle school and attending St. Patrick School for five years.

While many students from St. Pat’s have gone to St. Augustine High School in the past, the new agreement formalizes their relationship. This program will start with the 2020-21 school year.

Jim Horne, principal of St. Augustine High School, initiated this program in cooperation with Hernán Valdivia, principal of St. Patrick School and graduate of Saints Class of ’93, in order to promote enrollment and advance the Augustinian mission, which emphasizes values like friendship, community, love, and respect.

“Both schools share the same mission, this program represents our commitment not only to Catholic education in North Park, but to the advancement of our Augustinian charisms of unity, truth, and love that are at the heart of both communities,” said Horne.

In addition to the Augustinian Promise, the effort to strengthen the relationship between Saints and St. Pat’s also includes collaboration in the areas of curriculum development, shared use of facilities, and joint opportunities for service and ministerial formation for students.

“This is a tremendous opportunity for our students,” said Valdivia. “We’ve always had a great relationship with Saints and this program looks to build on that. This is a major win not only for our boys, but for all our students who will benefit.”

Founded in 1922, St. Augustine High School is the only all-boys Catholic high school in the Diocese of San Diego.

Founded in 1944, St. Patrick School has taught more than 7,000 students with great biacks in Catholic elementary education in North Park. St. Patrick School has recently undergone other changes, including a schoolwide cooling system, music lab and organic garden.
North Park historian publishes children’s chapter book

KENDRA SITTON / Uptown News

North Park’s Katherine Hon has recently released a children’s book called "Mrs. Fluffernut’s Perfect Hat.” The book is dedicated to grandmothers everywhere and features one grandmother’s efforts to win a local hat contest with the help and ingenuity of her grandkids.

Hon has written a long-standing history column for Uptown News and is currently working on a book about the history of North Park. This beginning chapter book is her first foray into children’s literature though. Still, her history chops are evident in the pages as the book is illustrated in a college style with photos from North Park, including the North Park Toyland Parade in 1955.

Despite the local photos, the book is not technically set in San Diego, but rather a fictional Persnickety Town. The newspaper clipping and photos seem like hidden Easter eggs grounding the story in reality, or rather in San Diego history.

“There are a lot of hidden history lessons in the book,” explained Hon. For instance, there is an historic photo of McKinley Elementary School that’s name in the book is Millard Fillmore Elementary School because the original name for University Ave. was ‘Fillmore’ for the 13th president when the area was mapped as University Heights in 1888.

The charming book is meant to be read out loud as a family. Although young readers will delight in the hijinx of the Finest Hat contest, it would be helpful to have an adult with them to help define the challenging vocabulary present in the chapter book.

“Mrs. Fluffernut’s Perfect Hat” is available for $10 from the author at khon@honconsultinginc.com or at Verbatim Books, 3793 10th St.

— Kendra Sitton can be reached at kendra@sdnews.com.
For the love of Naples

Restaurant Review
Frank Sabatini Jr.

Among our city’s latest wave of restaurants headed by dashing entrepreneurs from Italy is Siamo Napoli, which was introduced this summer in the heart of North Park by Flavio Piromallo and his brother, Giovanni. The siblings are from Naples, and their sleekly designed restaurant immediately transports you there when stepping inside.

Behold the charming Neapolitan accents of the personable brothers as they greet customers and assist staff in running plates of ragu and fast-cooked pizzas to the tables — foods they grew up with in a city famous for its exquisite use of tomatoes and bread dough. Pasta, too, is a main staple.

Some of the employees such as chef Alfonso Fisacane are also Neapolitan. And they’re as equal-ly endearing.

The visuals throughout the dining areas further attest to the restaurant’s name, which translates to “we are from Naples.”

A wall-size photograph of Sophia Loren shows the renowned actress in the prime of her beauty. Loren grew up outside of Naples and later starred in films set there. There is also a tiled wood-burning oven imported from the Motherland. It’s a 900-degree inferno designed specifically for cooking Neapolitan-style pizzas. Just beyond that is an inviting semi-enclosed dining section with yet another giant photograph. This one affords you a fabulous view of Naples from a hilltop.

And then there’s the attention-grabbing cuisine.

A basic arugula salad with shaved fennel, orange sections, dates and goat cheese, for example, carried as much depth as a salad containing twice the number of ingredients.

From the antipasti category, where you’ll find potato-risotto croquettes and lightly fried calamar-ri, case mozzarella that’s made in-house.

As we dunked puffy cubes of fennel sausage. Red sauce goes missing on this pizza, al-though you might want to ask for a side of it as a dip for the marvel-ously chewy crusts. Ravioli con melanzana turned up as delicate pasta purses filled plumply with eggplant, which is oven roasted and then pureed. Simple and light, they took on even greater appeal in the cherry tomato and Parmesan ‘londue’ enveloping them. These are rav-oli at their best.

Fitting of a Mediterranean (and San Diego) winter is the carne alla Genovese, a braised bone-in beef shank saturated in cabernet wine reduction and festooned in soft-cooked onions. The dish suggests a French influence, although the sidekick of ziti pasta cooked al dente sends it back to Italy. Like everything we tried, it was skillfully composed, simple and highly coddling to the palate.

Siamo Napoli’s allure is ev-ident by the full houses it sees. Walk-ins are accepted, although reservations are recommended on weekend evenings.

The restaurant also offers an inviting happy hour from 4 to 6 p.m. daily (and also 9 to 11 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays). It’s when you can imbibe on select beers, classic cocktails and pro-secco at prices ranging from $5 to $8 per drink. Several dishes are also discounted, such as calamari fritti, arancini, a few pizzas, and those incredible squash blossoms. 

— 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 fsaba-tini@san.rr.com.
Food that is “prepared and cooked as though you were in the Mediterranean” is coming to Mission Valley, in the space previously occupied by Tuddruckers inside the Westfield Mission Valley shopping center.

The eatery, Panini Kabob Grill, is slated to open by late February with a menu of wraps and panini sandwiches using fresh-baked breads, grass-fed and hormone-free meats, European-imported cheeses, and organic eggs. The offerings extend to soups, salads and appetizers such as caprese and hummus trios, and with the availability of beer and wine.

Founded in 1995 in Corona Del Mar, the company used to be known as Panini Cafe prior to adding kabobs to its menu. There are currently 20 locations, all in California, including those in Del Mar and Carlsbad. Another is planned next year for Westfield UTC as well. The Mission Valley location will be at 891 Camino De La Reina, paninikabobgrill.com.

Joanne Sherif, the owner of Cardamom Cafe & Bakery, is opening a new eatery. (Photo by Chad Thompson Photography)

Food is “prepared and cooked as though you were in the Mediterranean” is coming to Mission Valley, in the space previously occupied by Tuddruckers inside the Westfield Mission Valley shopping center.

The eatery, Panini Kabob Grill, is slated to open by late February with a menu of wraps and panini sandwiches using fresh-baked breads, grass-fed and hormone-free meats, European-imported cheeses, and organic eggs. The offerings extend to soups, salads and appetizers such as caprese and hummus trios, and with the availability of beer and wine.

Founded in 1995 in Corona Del Mar, the company used to be known as Panini Cafe prior to adding kabobs to its menu. There are currently 20 locations, all in California, including those in Del Mar and Carlsbad. Another is planned next year for Westfield UTC as well. The Mission Valley location will be at 891 Camino De La Reina, paninikabobgrill.com.

Joanne Sherif, the owner of Cardamom Cafe & Bakery, is opening a new eatery. (Photo by Chad Thompson Photography)

Food that is “prepared and cooked as though you were in the Mediterranean” is coming to Mission Valley, in the space previously occupied by Tuddruckers inside the Westfield Mission Valley shopping center.

The eatery, Panini Kabob Grill, is slated to open by late February with a menu of wraps and panini sandwiches using fresh-baked breads, grass-fed and hormone-free meats, European-imported cheeses, and organic eggs. The offerings extend to soups, salads and appetizers such as caprese and hummus trios, and with the availability of beer and wine.

Founded in 1995 in Corona Del Mar, the company used to be known as Panini Cafe prior to adding kabobs to its menu. There are currently 20 locations, all in California, including those in Del Mar and Carlsbad. Another is planned next year for Westfield UTC as well. The Mission Valley location will be at 891 Camino De La Reina, paninikabobgrill.com.

Joanne Sherif, the owner of Cardamom Cafe & Bakery, is opening a new eatery. (Photo by Chad Thompson Photography)

Food that is “prepared and cooked as though you were in the Mediterranean” is coming to Mission Valley, in the space previously occupied by Tuddruckers inside the Westfield Mission Valley shopping center.

The eatery, Panini Kabob Grill, is slated to open by late February with a menu of wraps and panini sandwiches using fresh-baked breads, grass-fed and hormone-free meats, European-imported cheeses, and organic eggs. The offerings extend to soups, salads and appetizers such as caprese and hummus trios, and with the availability of beer and wine.

Founded in 1995 in Corona Del Mar, the company used to be known as Panini Cafe prior to adding kabobs to its menu. There are currently 20 locations, all in California, including those in Del Mar and Carlsbad. Another is planned next year for Westfield UTC as well. The Mission Valley location will be at 891 Camino De La Reina, paninikabobgrill.com.

Joanne Sherif, the owner of Cardamom Cafe & Bakery, is opening a new eatery. (Photo by Chad Thompson Photography)

Food that is “prepared and cooked as though you were in the Mediterranean” is coming to Mission Valley, in the space previously occupied by Tuddruckers inside the Westfield Mission Valley shopping center.

The eatery, Panini Kabob Grill, is slated to open by late February with a menu of wraps and panini sandwiches using fresh-baked breads, grass-fed and hormone-free meats, European-imported cheeses, and organic eggs. The offerings extend to soups, salads and appetizers such as caprese and hummus trios, and with the availability of beer and wine.

Founded in 1995 in Corona Del Mar, the company used to be known as Panini Cafe prior to adding kabobs to its menu. There are currently 20 locations, all in California, including those in Del Mar and Carlsbad. Another is planned next year for Westfield UTC as well. The Mission Valley location will be at 891 Camino De La Reina, paninikabobgrill.com.

Joanne Sherif, the owner of Cardamom Cafe & Bakery, is opening a new eatery. (Photo by Chad Thompson Photography)

Food that is “prepared and cooked as though you were in the Mediterranean” is coming to Mission Valley, in the space previously occupied by Tuddruckers inside the Westfield Mission Valley shopping center.

The eatery, Panini Kabob Grill, is slated to open by late February with a menu of wraps and panini sandwiches using fresh-baked breads, grass-fed and hormone-free meats, European-imported cheeses, and organic eggs. The offerings extend to soups, salads and appetizers such as caprese and hummus trios, and with the availability of beer and wine.

Founded in 1995 in Corona Del Mar, the company used to be known as Panini Cafe prior to adding kabobs to its menu. There are currently 20 locations, all in California, including those in Del Mar and Carlsbad. Another is planned next year for Westfield UTC as well. The Mission Valley location will be at 891 Camino De La Reina, paninikabobgrill.com.

Joanne Sherif, the owner of Cardamom Cafe & Bakery, is opening a new eatery. (Photo by Chad Thompson Photography)

Food that is “prepared and cooked as though you were in the Mediterranean” is coming to Mission Valley, in the space previously occupied by Tuddruckers inside the Westfield Mission Valley shopping center.

The eatery, Panini Kabob Grill, is slated to open by late February with a menu of wraps and panini sandwiches using fresh-baked breads, grass-fed and hormone-free meats, European-imported cheeses, and organic eggs. The offerings extend to soups, salads and appetizers such as caprese and hummus trios, and with the availability of beer and wine.

Founded in 1995 in Corona Del Mar, the company used to be known as Panini Cafe prior to adding kabobs to its menu. There are currently 20 locations, all in California, including those in Del Mar and Carlsbad. Another is planned next year for Westfield UTC as well. The Mission Valley location will be at 891 Camino De La Reina, paninikabobgrill.com.

Joanne Sherif, the owner of Cardamom Cafe & Bakery, is opening a new eatery. (Photo by Chad Thompson Photography)
Associate Director Christian Tordahl, the Hillcrest Wind Ensemble, will feature Schreker’s “Kabale und Liebe” (Kabale and Liebe, or The Art of Love) on their final holiday performance of the season on December 14th. This captivating piece, known for its dual narrator and full orchestra, tells the story of a courtship gone wrong. The performance will take place at 7:30 p.m. in the Balboa Park and San Diego Museum of Art will also provide a variety of locally grown produce, fresh food and handmade arts and crafts, 3-7:30 p.m. at 3000 North Park Avenue in North Park.

Santa's Orders
“Dr. Seuss’s How the Grinch Stole Christmas!” is a wonderful, whimsical musical based on the popular animated movie of the same name. This classic Dr. Seuss book, back for its 22nd incredible year, has delighted children for decades. The musical features the songs “This Time of Year,” “Santa’s A Day,” “You’re a Mean One, Mr. Grinch,” and “Who Stole Christmas.” The show runs from December 6th through January 1st. Tickets range from $12-$40 and can be purchased at the door.

Winter Holiday Celebration: Hubbard Concert
Local family favorite Hullabaloo is back to kick off the holidays! Bring your holiday cheer to this amazing, foot-stomping, rollicking concert filled with Yuletide storefronts, 5:30 p.m. at the Mission Hills-Hillcrest/Knox Library.

Highland Hills Wind Ensemble: Migrant Posada
The eclectic San Diego vocal performance ensemble Sacra/Profa, known for their seasonal performances of the holiday season with a holiday concert. The program will feature music by various composers and settings and new takes on an canon of both sacred and secular holiday music from two premier world music groups. Gener¬

Saturday, Dec. 19
"S.T.E.A.M. Works: The Christmas Carol"
The most famous radio play in the world. This year, the family classic is being performed with full orchestra in an effort to win a trip to the United Kingdom. “Build a Better World Science Fair.” Rap and hip-hop are a staple of this unique show in this fun, musical STEAM themed event. A ticket is set to inspire a new generation of makers with the debut of the world’s first 3D-printed puppet character in a live puppet show! 10 a.m. at North Park Library.

Thursday, Dec. 26
A Christmas Carol
Cygnet’s holiday smash hit is back for its sixth Christmas season. The family classic is a haunting tale of Ebenezer Scrooge’s transformation as he learns to swap all that he gave for something more meaningful. Don’t miss this holiday tradition as Scrooge’s Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present, and Future visit him in an effort to save Christmas. 7:30 p.m. at the Old Globe Theatre.

Friday, Dec. 27
Santa’s A Day
"Dr. Seuss’s How the Grinch Stole Christmas!” is a wonderful, whimsical musical based on the popular animated movie of the same name. This classic Dr. Seuss book, back for its 22nd incredible year, has delighted children for decades. The musical features the songs “This Time of Year,” “Santa’s A Day,” “You’re a Mean One, Mr. Grinch,” and “Who Stole Christmas.” The show runs from December 6th through January 1st. Tickets range from $12-$40 and can be purchased at the door.

Saturday, Dec. 28
A Christmas Carol
"Dr. Seuss’s How the Grinch Stole Christmas!” is a wonderful, whimsical musical based on the popular animated movie of the same name. This classic Dr. Seuss book, back for its 22nd incredible year, has delighted children for decades. The musical features the songs “This Time of Year,” “Santa’s A Day,” “You’re a Mean One, Mr. Grinch,” and “Who Stole Christmas.” The show runs from December 6th through January 1st. Tickets range from $12-$40 and can be purchased at the door.

Sunday, Dec. 29
"Dr. Seuss’s How the Grinch Stole Christmas!” is a wonderful, whimsical musical based on the popular animated movie of the same name. This classic Dr. Seuss book, back for its 22nd incredible year, has delighted children for decades. The musical features the songs “This Time of Year,” “Santa’s A Day,” “You’re a Mean One, Mr. Grinch,” and “Who Stole Christmas.” The show runs from December 6th through January 1st. Tickets range from $12-$40 and can be purchased at the door.

Monday, Dec. 30
Holiday Food Truck Festival
About 175 vendors offer a variety of locally grown produce, fresh food and handmade arts and crafts, 3-7:30 p.m. at 3000 North Park Avenue in North Park.

San Diego Museum of Art will also provide a variety of locally grown produce, fresh food and handmade arts and crafts, 3-7:30 p.m. at 3000 North Park Avenue in North Park.

San Diego Museum of Art will also provide a variety of locally grown produce, fresh food and handmade arts and crafts, 3-7:30 p.m. at 3000 North Park Avenue in North Park.

Welcome to the new San Diego Uptown News and Uptown Calender!
Act-compliant parking. A true compromise was presented by the city and supported by the community. This Option B plan offered protected bike lanes and retention of the majority of parking within the business district. Option A+ is not a compromise but rather a result of a poor decision-making process, failed communication between City Council member Ward and the mayor’s office and an attempt to use our community as a pawn to promote the city’s commitment to the climate action plan.

In the wake of the vote, Ward released a statement urging the mayor’s staff to continue ensuring the area is ADA accessible as well as continuing to do outreach in the community.

How much community outreach is done is limited by the timeline of the project, which coincides with the resurfacing of the street after the pipeline is installed—a project which is already underway.

While business groups and some residents continue to push back on the planned bikeway, it still has the support of climate and bike activists.

San Diego Bike Coalition executive director, and chair of the mobility board, Andy Hanshaw, voted in favor of the plan which will connect North and South Park and contribute to a fully connected bikeway network throughout the city. He said the bikeway is important in improving biker safety, multi-modal transportation, and helping the city meet its climate action plan goals. “Option A+ is good for businesses and good for the community.”

Data in other cities that have added protected bike lanes, including Los Angeles, Salt Lake City and New York city, show sales increased and commercial real estate sale prices rose. With the sudden loss of hundreds of spaces, business leaders fear the same will not happen in North Park.

Few San Diegans commute by bike to work, something both advocates and detractors of protected bike lanes point to. Opponents argue that fact shows building infrastructure to accommodate cyclists is unnecessary, while proponents say biking numbers are low because of the dangers of riding without infrastructure.

The Adams Avenue Business Association (AABA) has been reaching out to cyclists, most recently by winning a bid to host CicloSDias on Oct. 27. The annual event created a Mid-City “car-free playground,” with four miles of roads blocked off to cars so bikes could explore the area. At the Normal Heights Community Planning Group, a representative of the business association explained the purpose of the event was to bring new customers into the area, even if it meant that many steady customers stayed away for that one day. The representative said that most businesses lost money the day of the event, with the area along Antique Row claiming they lost $2,000; the business association wanted to host the event so people across San Diego would be introduced to those local businesses.

The AABA opposes the bike lane and is working to overturn it, according to the association’s executive director, Scott Kessler.

“The elimination of 85-90% of the parking stalls on 30th Street poses the biggest existential threat to this linear commercial district since the advent of regional shopping malls in the ’60s. It is a prime example of the mayor’s office being totally out of touch with reality and uncaring about the potential harm they are proposing to do,” said Kessler. “I’ve lost a great deal of respect for Mayor Faulconer and Councilman Ward over this flawed process and outcome.”

With the mayor’s plan, those Adams Avenue businesses will see firsthand the potential benefits and costs of taking away parking spaces and adding protected bike lanes.

— Kendra Sitton can be reached at kendra@sdnews.com.
North Park, Mid-City bikeways break ground

SANDAG hosted a press conference Thursday to celebrate the start of construction on the Georgia – Meade and Landis Bikeways. This comes six years after the SANDAG Board of Directors approved a $200 million Bike Early Action Program to expand the bike network throughout San Diego. These bikeways are just two of 40 projects comprising 77 miles of new bikeways as the city tries to improve multi-modal transportation options and meet climate action plan goals.

A sunrise bike ride from North Park to Cherokee Point Park preceded the event, which drew influential local leaders as the city tries to meet its climate action plan goals. In order to cut down on emissions, the plan requires many current car users to switch to bikes by 2020. That percentage is supposed to double by 2035, as San Diego aims to cut its greenhouse gas emissions in half by that date. In addition to the climate action plan, the city has also enacted a Vision Zero program that’s sole goal is to end all traffic deaths and serious injuries by 2025. Despite Vision Zero being adopted by many cities, pedestrian deaths are still up nationwide. “Today marks a significant step on the path to creating a network of regional bikeways to give San Diegans safe options to travel to work, school, or just to get out and enjoy our beautiful region,” said SANDAG Vice Chair and Encinitas Mayor Catherine Blakespear. “Breaking ground on these two urban bike- ways brings us one step closer to achieving that goal.”

Blakespear joined San Diego City Council President Georgette Gomez, Council member Chris Ward, and other community members to kick off the celebration. Together, the Georgia – Meade and Landis Bikeways projects will add more than 6 miles of new bikeways and pedestrian infrastructure, which will provide a connection for residents to walk and bike between communities within San Diego’s urban core including City Heights, Kensington, Talmadge, Normal Heights, North Park, and University Heights. The projects include two unique features — neighborhood traffic circles and bend-outs. While the features are meant to slow traffic in neighborhoods to improve safety, the features have been somewhat controversial.

At the recent Normal Heights Community Planning Group meeting, a resident named Diane explained her neighbor on Meade Avenue created a petition asking SANDAG to ditch the traffic circles because their construction is taking away land and gardens from corner lots. However, they have all already received construction notices.

The $16 million Georgia – Meade and Landis Bikeways construction costs are funded by TransNet, the regional half-cent sales tax for transportation, administered by SANDAG.

The Georgia – Meade and Landis Bikeways are expected to be completed in spring 2022. They are the first in the series of bikeways coming to North Park and Mid-City, which in total will be 13 miles of bike boulevards and protected bikeways.

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

FROM PAGE 4

CPG REFORM

review recommendations and member applications will also be recorded. It will also be explicit even shut them down by drawing projects past them was described by many CPGs can hold up projects or changing so the CPG in question Intentionally or unintentionally, CPGs can hold up projects or even shut them down by drawing out the process of giving recommendations. The cost of delays is then passed on to homebuyers and renters, according to the developers who spoke. The reforms would standardize the process of making recommendations and impose deadlines so developers can get community input early on in the planning stage and not have to repeatedly return before the group.

While the committee overwhelmingly supported many of the recommendations, a plan to make CPG members file economic interest forms was sent back to staff. Council member Chris Ward spoke out strongly against volunteers being forced to fill out the forms required by the Political Reform Act, as small mistakes could incur major fines and the forms themselves are complicated and burdensome. A recommendation from the task force to tape, either via audio or video, any land-use items on the agenda failed as council members wanted the city would not provide the tools to do this and it would be too difficult to have volunteers do.

Another recommendation that would have disbanded a CPG or forced it to merge with another CPG if it failed to meet a quorum for three months in a row was changed so the CPG in question would be considered inactive, and would have to complete specific steps to regain its active status. After Council member Vivian Moreno opposed the original wording on the grounds that no community should be without representation, she pointed out Barrio Logan, the neighborhood south of Downtown quickly undergoing gentrification, has only had a CPG for a few years — long after it began going through significant changes.

Next, the approved reforms will go before the full City Council and City Attorney Mara Elliott for review.

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

REAL ESTATE SHOWCASE

Call 858.270.3103 to get your property featured today!

WELCOME TO
HARBORVIEW SENIOR ASSISTED LIVING

HarborView Senior Assisted Living is a boutique assisted living home located next to downtown San Diego in the Upstairs Bunker’s Hill neighborhood. HarborView is dedicated to offering comprehensive, individualized services for residents living with Alzheimer’s or related dementias. We also promote the physical, social, and emotional well-being of our residents’ lives. Our well-trained and considerate staff works around the clock in this charming Italian renaissance chateau.

A sunrise bike ride before the groundbreaking

KENDRA SITTON | Uptown News

Dec. 13, 2019-Jan. 9, 2020

San Diego Uptown News

15