UP IN ARMS: coronavirus exposes disunity in San Diego yoga community

SEE PAGE 12

A group practices yoga on the beach as the sun sets.

Del Mar Race Track holds virtual hat contest
NEWSPAPER GROUP

SEE PAGE 13

New short-term rentals proposal

SEE PAGE 10

Mandarin House to reopen in August

SEE PAGE 19

PHOTO BY THOMAS MELVILLE

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Local businesses overcome challenges to operate outdoors

By DAVE SCHWAB

S
ome businesses that closed again due to a spike in coronavirus cases now have a choice to remain oper- ational: moving outside. Fortunately, that choice is being made easier by recent City action.

In response to the growing crisis, Mayor Kevin Faulconer has signed a new executive order extending the growing list of allowed outdoor options to hundreds of additional businesses. That list now includes gyms, worship centers, barbershops and nail salons, which are being allowed to expand their operations into private parking lots.

Local business improvement districts, La Jolla Village Merchants Association and Discover PB expressed gratitude – regarding this second wave of business closures. They also praised local government efforts to pop-up small businesses.

“This has been such a challenging time for all of us and especially hard for small business,” said Village Merchants Association executive director Jodi Rudick.

“So it’s exciting to see all of the creative outdoor dining options emerging in the Village. La Jolla is taking on a European feel as courtyards, patios, sidewalks, parking lots and, even parking spaces come alive with al fresco dining. I’m looking forward to many more cafes to pop up as we move through the modifications.”

“The recent re-close was a major hit as many businesses had just invested in reopening within a week of being re- closed, not just in social distancing infra- structure but the processes of hiring back staff and employees coming off unem- ployment, who now have to re-navigate the system,” said Discover PB’s executive director Sara Berns.

Noting the new prohibition barring some indoor operations follows on the heels of many PPP grants expiring, Berns added, “We fully support the efforts of our public health officials and the work they are doing and hope people will help by complying with social distance and mask mandates so that our businesses can get open again.”

The degree to which local small businesses have been impacted by re-closing indoor activity due to COVID-19 has de- pended a lot on their nature and whether they do – or can – take their operations outside.

“We’ve been adjusting and dealing with it,” said Henish Pulick of Pacific Beach, who is in the real estate and residential construction trades. “The first couple of months were a big adjustment, now it seems that it’s becoming a new normal.

“Our family understands that attitude is everything, so we’ve got smiles under our annoying face masks. Business wise, real estate and construction has been very busy. People are still buying homes and many that aren’t buying/selling are doing construction.”

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L a Jolla Village Merchants Association, in July discussions numerous alternatives for freeing up outdoor space now that indoor dining has been temporarily banned again, including painting curbs to shorten parking limits and setting up outdoor cafes and parklets.

"COVID has changed our business model quite a bit," said LJVMA executive director Jodi Rudick. She added merchants want to free up more outdoor space for customer pick-up. "They've been asking us if we might be willing to approve or support green curbs changing 90-minute parking to 15- or 30-minutes."

Rudick cited Mike Eastwood, owner of Smallgoods Cheese Shop & Cafe, at 7524 La Jolla Blvd., as one example. "He wants his customers, along with other restaurants on the same street, to be able to run in and pick up what they need without having to search for parking," she said.

Eastwood characterized the existing 15-hour parking limit in front of his street as "devastating for our business and the salons around us. We have happily agreed to seek a 15-minute parking zone with the salons around us. We will not be allowed without permits.

"Eastwood recently put a petition out for nearby merchants to sign. "We've received the unanimous support of every business on our street, 12 pages of customers and neighbors, who also support this idea as well as that of curbside pick-up," he said. Added Eastwood, "COVID has made people extremely sensitive about getting out of their cars to access our shops, and don't want to double park. I'm asking for the community's support for new short-term parking on La Jolla Boulevard."

"I support converting parking space to 15 minutes directly in front of their stores," said LJVMA president Brett Murphy.

District 1 staffer Steve Hadley pointed out implementing desired parking-limit changes has hit an early roadblock. "The Council office has asked for temporary curb pick-up zones, but that request was denied," he said. "We will continue to push for temporary, pick-up parking during COVID."

Rudick cautioned that temporary curb pick-up should be sought on a case-by-case basis, because it would be virtually impossible for every merchant to get 15-minute parking in front of their store. "We're going down the right path," she concluded.

Regarding temporary business permits for operating outdoors, Rudick referred to Mayor Faulconer’s recent signing of an executive order allowing outdoor dining by restaurants on sidewalks and in private parking lots.

"It's a very big deal that really clears the way for people to take matters into their own hands, while following all the rules, including ADA guidelines," Rudick said while cautioning, "More sidewalk cafes will not be allowed without permits."

Rudick said the City is also considering businesses to use parklets, sidewalk extensions providing more space and amenities for people using the street, usually installed on parking lanes. "This would allow businesses, not just restaurants, to encroach into parking spaces that are adjacent to their storefront," she said. "That would give those who need it extra space to accommodate customers and the ability to do that."

Rudick noted the Business Improvement District Alliance, which LJVMA belongs to, is continuing to push for relaxing of standards to allow outdoor dining and curbside pick-up. "Our hope is that all our restaurants will stay afloat through this indoor dining ban," she said.

Village Merchants Association endorses more outdoor seating, curbside pickup

By DAVE SCHWAB
A project for redeveloping a lot with a companion unit at 3535 Promontory St. in Crown Point fared no better in July than it did in January, as Pacific Beach Planning Group once again turned thumbs down on the redo plan by a lopsided margin.

Project developer Igor Prokopenko owns the parcel he wants to redevelop, which has been a rental property. He argued before PB planners on July 8 that plans for remodeling the Promontory dwelling and its accessory dwelling unit had been “softened” by redesigning it to mute its modernistic design. “It was a little too austere for the area, so we added some gab- bles and made it look a little more traditional than the older design,” said Prokopenko. “We pushed all the living space toward the inte- rior of the lot.”

But PB planners remained uncon-vinced, moving at the end of testimony by neighbors opposed to the project to recommend its denial on grounds the project was out of character with the neighbor- hood. Planners also found that the second dwelling proposed on the parcel didn’t qualify as an ac- cessory unit.

The project was yet another ex-ample of community push-back by some local planners and resi-dents of an ongoing effort by the City to make it easier — and less expensive — to create compan-ion units. Otherwise known as gravy flats, such dwellings are increasingly coming under fire during a neighborhood planning review. The City has justified relaxing restrictions on building ADUs, insisting it is a necessary and logical step to alleviate the afford- able housing crunch which has caused a precipitous rise in rents. Some residents and community planners, however, have claimed relaxing standards to encour-age ADUs is a veiled attempt to increase unwanted density in single-family neighborhoods threatening their quality of life and community character.

Following the plan group meet- ing, neighbors John and Joyce Lilya, who oppose the project, said “we were pleased the plan- ning group saw the neighbor- hood’s point of view and did not want multiple houses in an R-1 (single-unit residential zone).” The Lilyas pointed out that when the original Palmer tract housing was built in Crown Point, that the city had deemed this Promontory lot to be too small for two houses.

“Now these developers want to split the lot and build two unaffiliated houses, disguising the smaller one as an ADU unit in order to exploit the ADU rule book and our R-1 zoning,” the couple said.

Asked what they preferred on the site, the Lilyas said, “Neighbors want one single-fam- ily home built, not two houses.”
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District 2 Councilmember Dr. Jennifer Campbell's compromise short-term rentals memorandum would:

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• Cap whole-home STRs at 0.7 percent of the City's housing stock (based on SANDAG's annual Demographic and Socioeconomic Housing estimates), which would equate to 3,750 permits today – reducing whole-home STRs by 70 percent or more based on the City Auditor's estimation that 16,000 STRs exist today.
• Establish two-night minimum stays for most whole-home rentals.
• Allow residents a maximum of one permit, per person.
• Adopt the Mission Beach Town Council's recommendation to permit up to 30% of the housing units in the community to be used as whole-home STRs (1,086), which will be in addition to the city-wide cap.
• Allow all residents to home-share.
• Allow part-time STR operators to obtain a permit at lower annual fees to accommodate high visitor events such as Comic-Con, Pride or December Nights.
• Create a detailed Good Neighbor Policy with strict enforcement guidelines, a fine structure for violations, and a permit revocation standard for repeated violations.

By DAVE SCHWAB

District 2 Councilmember Dr. Jennifer Campbell's compromise proposal on short-term rentals has stirred strong emotions, being condemned outright by at least one civic group, while other stakeholders have adopted a more conciliatory tone. Campbell worked with representatives recently from Unite Here Local 30 and Expedia Group, the parent company for leading short-term rental brands Vrbo and HomeAway, to craft a compromise on short-term rentals. The parties agreed to a set of comprehensive rules to regulate San Diego's short-term rentals industry.

As outlined in a memorandum of understanding, Campbell's proposal would reduce the volume of whole-home short-term rentals, while creating legal inventory for short-term rentals platforms and local operators that comply with the new rules.

In a letter to San Diego Community News Group published online July 7, Pacific Beach Town Council decried Campbell's proposal for “not consulting community town councils, planning groups, and residents.” Pacific Beach Town Council’s letter claims Campbell’s approach would “legalize short-term rentals in our neighborhoods,” while arguing that short-term rentals are “illegal under the city’s zoning code and have no place in residential zones.”

“San Diegans deserve short-term rentals regulations that protect our neighborhoods, preserve valuable housing and will stand the test of time,” said Campbell, whose district includes the Point Loma, Pacific Beach and Mission Beach area in a released statement. “I promised my constituents I would work for them to tackle the tough issues, and that is exactly what happened here. I appreciate the willingness of Unite Here and Expedia Group to work with me in the spirit of collaboration. I look forward to discussing their proposal with my colleagues when this issue comes back to council,” said Campbell.

“After several failed attempts to address the issue, it is clear that a compromise is what we have needed and a compromise is what Campbell is proposing,” said community activist and planner Scott Chipman of Pacific Beach. “After hundreds of hours of public testimony, everything that could be said has been said about what is good or bad about short-term rentals.”

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Business was: a billion industry. In the U.S. has turned into a $17 billion industry. We've had a recession and the police the next time she came to the workplace. He said he only has a code of conduct barring prejudice and harassment inside the workplace. He said he challenged himself and his personal growth with the people he worked with and he was considering all possible avenues to get a job in the public sector. 

"I can't fire someone for what they say outside of work. I would not do that because I legally can," McKee said. "In terms of public statement, I don't want to get into a war of words with people. We've made our statement about Black Lives Matter. We've had a business that is socially conscious.

Think the people speak for themselves. One of the only ways to fire someone for social media posts under the First Amendment is if someone says they are speaking on behalf of their employer. Fortier uses her authority as a guru to support her business. She is considered a representative of a Fictitious Business in posts shared with San Diego Community Newspaper Group.

"We're in this really strange time of COVID and Black Lives Matter," McKee said. "Any business that's going to be having to be up against the wall because of COVID and Black Lives Matter. We've had a recession and growing and people are really
to help her. She won't be a political scientist because she reports that she can't avoid the teacher because her "crisis colors" were causing out.

"If I have to do that work, I think Pilgrimage should have to do that work too," Baumgardner said. Sujantra McKeeen, who owns the studio, explained that Fortier is currently not employed with them. Fortier is a Fictitious Business and has a personalized form of yoga not included in their smaller class schedule.

George Soros, the truth about Hitler, 'mental slavery,' and Aunt Jemima.

Fortier was not included in the typical class schedule and is no longer listed as an instructor on the Pilgrimage website. People who contacted the management at Pilgrimage were led to believe the new behavior was ignored. They won-dered if she had been quietly let go and the studio should have been more open to her accusations. Without a public statement, a former student of Fortier's, Joanie Baumgardner, individually con-tacted people she previously rec-ommended join Fortier's classes to avoid the teacher because their "crisis colors" were causing out.

Fortier did not respond to a re-quest for comment on this story.

Yoga teacher Nicole Fortier's post of 'Adolf Hitler: The Greatest Story Never Told,' a debunked movie of revisionist history, which is often cited by Holocaust deniers and White supremacists.

Yoga teacher Nicole Fortier's post of 'Adolf Hitler: The Greatest Story Never Told,' a debunked movie of revisionist history, which is often cited by Holocaust deniers and White supremacists.

Fortier said he contacted a lawyer and an HR professional about Fortier's posts who confirmed he cannot fire anyone for the post about Hitler or Aunt Jemima. The court may appoint counsel to represent the person whether or not the person is able to afford counsel, and the court may appoint counsel to represent the person whether or not the person has knowledge and intelligence and was over the age of 18 at the time of the offense. Council made complete a form of service, such as Proof of Service, for the return of service of process. Ernest J. Dronenburg, Jr. Recorder/Director of the County Recorder's Office, County Clerk of San Diego County on JUNE 22, 2020. ISSUE DATE: JULY 14, 2020.

Due to the province's pandemic-related procedures and possible complications, and may continue for a number of years for the special 30 days for the special needs of the person, the court may appoint an attorney to represent the next time he came to the workplace. He said he only has a code of conduct barring prejudice and harassment inside the workplace. He said he challenged himself and his personal growth with the people he worked with and he was considering all possible avenues to get a job in the public sector. 

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The Del Mar Race Track opened this year on July 10 with attendees watching it remotely. This year was the 26th annual Opening Day Hats Contest, which was their first virtual hat contest. Contestants throughout the U.S. entered, including Nashville, Iowa, and Palm Springs keeping the tradition alive. They were all vying for a chance to win two VIP tickets to the 2021 Breeders’ Cup World Championships at Del Mar.

Sporting their best ensemble with a fabulous hat, the entrants were asked to post a photo of themselves on Instagram or Twitter with the hashtags #DelMarHatsContest and tag @DelMarRacing to win on Opening Day. There were over $2,700 in prizes plus a $500 gift certificate for merchandise from Christine A. Moore Millinery and Studio Savvy Salon.

On Saturday, July 11, the Grand Prize winner was Rebecca Templeton of Mitchellville, Iowa. I asked this horse racing lover how she coordinated her ensemble and she said, “I am a firm believer that the dress comes first.” However, for this particular outfit, she had won the hat at the virtual Kentucky Derby fashion contest for the homemade quarantine outfit. Deciding to go with this beautiful large hat from Christine A. Moore Millinery, she began looking for a coral dress to match and found this one on ASOS. Templeton said: “My husband and I will definitely be attending the Breeders’ Cup next year. We love attending the Breeders’ Cup and have been to eight of the last 10.”

Hayley Danielle Fulton of Torrance came in a close second all decked out with a fuchsia and white fascinator designed by Illana Kogan. Fulton was photographed with her black retriever, Midnight, who was wearing a fuchsia harness and wore matching fuchsia feathers.

Jessica Lewis of Campbell was the third-place winner. She sported a stunning white and blue fascinator by designer Amy Pate. This electrical engineer submitted a beautiful photo with her husband and son.

Katherine Kapavik of Vista took the fourth-place award with a cobalt blue wide brim hat and matching dress. She posted her picture with her Great Dane who was also wearing a large hat.
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Recognizing all of the different tribes we belong to encourages diversity

By Natasha Josefowitz, Ph.D.

The newspapers have been discussing the new tribalism as evident in our contentious politics. We are increasingly nationalistic in our ways and more opposed to others’ points of view. We embrace the attitude: Only I am right, and the rest of you are wrong. Only my tribe—political party, religious group—is right. Political and religious tribes are the ones most likely to promote conflict. Non-members of the tribe are disregarded and all too often fought.

According to Joshua Greene in his book “Moral Tribes,” humans have innate tribalistic tendencies. Once we are a tribe member, we favor in-group members over outside-of-group members. Once we are a tribe member, we favor in-group members, which can lead to strife. Ethnocentrism is a universal human tendency: my tribe is part of a tribe of humans. This makes me wonder about the number of tribes we all belong to and how we recognize that affiliation. When I travel to a foreign country and am surrounded by natives and an American appears on the scene. I am happy to see a person from my country and will always go up and start a conversation. I belong to tribes of academics, retirees, secular Jews, writers, feminists, etc.

I started thinking about which of the people I encounter that I feel I share a familiarity with. When I meet a French-speaking person from France or Switzerland. I immediately feel a rapport; the same holds true for people who speak Russian. When I meet a psychologist, I know I will share another sort of common language. University professors are another group I belong to, as well as people who are in their nineties.

When I saw a friend of mine cry recently because her dog had just died. I realized that I belonged to a tribe of people who have loved and lost a pet, so I could immediately relate to her pain and was able to be supportive. I am also part of a sad tribe of people who have lost a child.

When I was a young mother, I belonged to a tribe of other mothers with young children, and now I belong to a new tribe of great-grandmothers with whom I share photos of my four great-grandsons. I belong to a tribe of widows, a tribe of former skiers and horseback riders. And, of course, I am a member of a tribe of all the people living in my retirement community.

What does all this mean? It means I am at ease interacting with people who share a part of who I am or was. There is familiarity, which is comforting. I am not alone writing poetry; I can share some of the woes and joys with another person who writes verse, too. I am happy when I meet someone who went to my alma mater. Scripps College, or who received their advanced degree at the age of 50.

All these commonalities feel good, whether you are part of a tribe of churchgoers, bridge players, or singers. There is recognition that “we are not alone and the desire to belong to a group is part of our DNA. Even meeting someone who mentions that a favorite book growing up was the same as mine gives me a surge of pleasure at the connection.

All the tribes I have described so far are affiliations due to some recognizable commonalities, through interests, geography, language, nationality, gender, education, work, history, etc. These are tribes we connect with spontaneously. While there are many personal benefits to this sense of inclusion we feel when we identify our groups, there are also negative repercussions to others and our society when we work to maintain these boundaries between groups. Being exclusionary can wreak havoc on the opportunities available to people outside our tribes, support the continuation of inequities and injustices, and, at its worst, cause us to dehumanize others. The acknowledgment of tribalism can help us identify where it becomes dysfunctional and where integrating members of different tribes is the road to survival in a democracy.

Take a few minutes and identify some of the tribes you belong to. Make a point of recognizing the pleasure of knowing each other, sharing mutual interests, lifestyles, loves, and the joys of belonging. It is also vital to reach out to other tribes to preserve our shared humanity, to recognize that ultimately all people are part of the tribe of humans. Natasha Josefowitz is the author of 21 books. She currently resides at White Sands Retirement Community in La Jolla. Copyright © 2020. Natasha Josefowitz. All rights reserved.
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PB Fun Fact:
Mission Bay High School was built in 1953 but the first graduating class was 1955. Prior to it being built, most kids in PB attended La Jolla High (like my maternal grandmother).