Conflict and confusion over All Peoples Church project

By JEFF CLEMETSON | Mission Times Courier

Two years ago, a plan to build 24 homes on a narrow strip of land along College Avenue just south of Del Cerro Boulevard was scrapped by developers. The ColRich development had been controversial due to traffic issues it could have caused because of issues with a limited ingress and egress to the property. The project was not supported by the Navajo Community Planners, Inc. (NCPI), but was ultimately approved by City Council, only to be abandoned by developers just after approval when the land was sold to All People’s Church.

All People’s Church (APC) purchased the six-acre property to build a permanent church for its

SEE CHURCH PROJECT, Page 2

Is San Diego ready for transition to EVs?

By DAVE SCHWAB

Mission Times Courier & College Times Courier

With the passage of recent state legislation phasing out the sale of all gasoline-powered vehicles by 2035 in an effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, a clear message has been sent encouraging the state’s drivers to switch to electric cars.

But is San Diego ready for such a transition?

Gov. Gavin Newsom recently signed an executive order that

SEE EVS, Page 4

(SEE NICOLOSI’S, Page 12)

Local political clubs weigh in on the results of the election. Page 6

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Planners approve housing project at Nicolosi’s site

At its Oct. 14 meeting, the Navajo Community Planners, Inc. (NCPI) voted to approve an affordable housing project proposed for the a site along Navajo Road currently occupied by Nicolosi’s Italian Restaurant.

The project by Community Housing Works (CHW) is a four-story elevator building with the following amenities:

• 45 units with private balconies – 21 one-bedroom units; 12 two-bedroom units and 12 three-bedroom units
• 59 parking spaces
• Multipurpose community room with kitchen
• Computer lab
• Management leasing office
• Outdoor amenity space including community garden and tot-lot
• Security lighting camera system throughout property.

At the informational presentation of the project to the NCPI board on Sept. 9, some nearby residents raised concerns about safety and crime.

CHW representatives addressed those issues at the October meeting in a presentation that showed where lights and cameras will be located on the site. Other concerns raised by residents included line of sight issues at the exit of the proposed apartment complex onto Navajo Road and the safety of children using a

SEE CHURCH PROJECT, Page 2

Architectural rendering of the proposed All Peoples Church on College Avenue (Courtesy image)
NEWS

Church project
CONTINUED FROM Page 1

congregation and plans were submitted to the city to construct a building with offices, a gym and a meeting hall that could hold 900 parishioners.

In April of 2019, the church first presented its plans to the Del Cerro community at a special meeting of the Del Cerro Action Council. Pushback by the community was immediate, with residents again concerned about traffic issues and possible uses for such a building like a school or daycare facility.

On Nov. 5, APC presented its most recent plans for the site to the Del Cerro Action Council and on Nov. 11 the NCPI board heard a report from its subcommittee for the project, as well as comments from over 80 residents who attended the online meeting that spoke in favor or opposition to the church.

Subcommittee member Jay Wilson presented to the NCPI board updates on the project, which now include a new traffic signal and an opening in the median on College Avenue that would allow people to turn left from northbound College Avenue from the church parking lot and left into the church parking lot for people traveling south on College.

Wilson said the proposed light would be equipped with technology that would only be triggered when drivers are turning in or out of the lot and that would be primarily on Sundays.

“The traffic has always been a concern by us, but the traffic report showed very little traffic and not showing any real traffic at all during the week, although it would on Sunday mornings,” he said.

Another change in the project was moving a parking structure closer to College Avenue and away from neighboring homes on Marne Avenue located above the property.

Wilson reported that the number of Sunday services would be two or three to accommodate all the members and to alleviate parking issues because the project only provides around 350 parking spaces. Another issue addressed in the subcommittee report was the height of a cross on the church, which Wilson said the church could build “by right.”

“That’s not a subject that we would be involved with,” he said.

Wilson reported that there are still a number of items that still need to be “considered and ironed out” between the city and All Peoples’ Church that are currently being addressed in the cycles report for the project. When those issues are addressed, APC will make a formal presentation to the Del Cerro Action Council and ask for a recommendation.

Wilson said that would likely happen in January 2021. The NCPI board would then schedule a meeting to vote on the project before it goes in front of the city’s Planning Commission and then to the City Council for final approval.

Comments from the NCPI board were few, with board member Marylin Reed raising some concerns about the about the new intersection and whether a current traffic study was used by city staff in determining whether the new intersection and traffic signal is feasible.

Marcela Escobar-Eck, a representative from the Atlantis Group, assured that “The church did assert that “The church did not purchase the home at 5688 Marne Avenue. It was purchased with cash by an LLC. They said they believe that the church had purchased the home thought the LLC to possibly tear down and replace with another access point to the church in case the new intersection on College Avenue is ultimately rejected by the Planning Commission or City Council.

When asked about the validity to the claim, Escobar-Eck said she was unaware of any such purchase. However, in a statement to the Mission Times Courier, APC asserted that “The church did not purchase the home at 5688 Marne Avenue. It was purchased

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San Diegans really worked together to make this year’s Stuffed Animal Drive a huge success.

On Saturday morning, Oct. 24, hundreds of cars drove through 11 locations around the county donating thousands of new stuffed animals that will provide comfort to sick children and their siblings during their stay at the Ronald McDonald House.

Pastor John Quinata of Our Father’s Grace Ministries has organized this event for the past five years. This year, 51 congregations of different faiths and numerous businesses participated in this county-wide drive-thru event. A generous printer and graphic designer also donated their time to help.

Eleven parking lots around the county were set up with tables, collection boxes, storage boxes, and masked and gloved volunteers. Volunteers gathered the donations from each car and then tied a tag with a special message to each stuffed animal. The tag read “A Gift of Love, Hope & Prayers from Our Father’s Grace Ministries and the Interfaith Community of San Diego.”

Drop-off locations were in University City, Clairemont, Carmel Valley, La Costa, Chula Vista, Imperial Beach, Bonita, El Cajon, Mission Valley, Allind Gardens, and San Carlos. Volunteers used the JustServe.org website to find the location nearest them to drop-off their stuffed animals.

Thanks to this “labor of love” by so many good and generous San Diegans, Pastor John will be delivering over 2,400 stuffed animals to the Ronald McDonald House Charities of San Diego.

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

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EVs

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

amounts to the most aggressive clean-car policy in the nation. Although it bans the sale of new gas cars and trucks after the 15-year deadline, it will still allow such vehicles to be owned and sold on the used-car market.

The City of San Diego is incorporating accommodating electric vehicles into its planning for the region’s transportation future.

“One of the main strategies in the City of San Diego’s Climate Action Plan is to lower emissions from our transportation sector, so electric vehicles are certainly a key component of that,” said Nicole Darling in the City’s Communications Department. Noting an update to the City’s Climate Action Plan adopted in 2015 is currently underway, Darling pointed out the CAP update includes “gathering the viewpoints and priorities of our residents. An online survey is available and virtual forums are planned for every council district. We anticipate that the CAP update will include targets related to electric vehicles and charging stations across the city.”

Presently, the City has 57 electric vehicle charging stations (68 ports) at 15 locations. The locations include destination sites related to electric vehicles and charging stations stations across the city.

The report finds a transition to clean, non-combustion renewable energy over the coming decades. A leading contributor to air pollution and climate change, said Nicole Darling in the City’s Communications Department. Noting an update to the City’s Climate Action Plan adopted in 2015 is currently underway, Darling pointed out the CAP update includes “gathering the viewpoints and priorities of our residents. An online survey is available and virtual forums are planned for every council district. We anticipate that the CAP update will include targets related to electric vehicles and charging stations across the city.”

Presently, the City has 57 electric vehicle charging stations (68 ports) at 15 locations. The locations include destination sites such as Balboa Park, other parks and recreation centers, libraries, and entertainment districts. Information about the charging stations can be viewed at bit.ly/3jyyUL.

Concerning the future of infrastructure serving electric vehicles in the City, Darling said, “We expect public charging in the region will increase over time and we are regularly looking for opportunities to continue that expansion. We are specifically looking to facilitate the deployment of charging stations in areas of the City that have the lowest access to clean energy resources (using our Climate Equity Index as a guide for prioritization). We are in regular discussions with our fellow regional public agencies in the County and the San Diego Association of Governments (regional transportation planning agency) about identifying grant opportunities to fund regional public charging stations.”

Recently, the American Lung Association released “The Road to Clean Air,” a new report that outlines the benefits of a transition to an electric transportation sector increasingly powered by clean, non-combustion renewable energy over the coming decades. The report finds a transition to electric cars, buses, and trucks by mid-century would both improve air quality and address climate change, benefiting the lives and health of Americans.

In the report, San Diego was listed as one of the top 10 metro areas that would see the greatest benefit from a transition to electric vehicles.

“The transportation sector is a leading contributor to air pollution and climate change,” said William Barrett, director of advocacy, clean air for the lung association. “We have the technology to transition to cleaner cars, trucks, and buses, and by taking that step we can prepare San Diego for the future while also seeing the health and economic benefits forecasted in ‘The Road to Clean Air.’”

“Especially as our state faces the impacts of climate change such as extreme storms, this is a powerful and practical opportunity to take action to improve our economy, our health, and our future.”

Check out the City’s Climate Action Plan survey at SDClimateSurvey.org.

—Contributing editor Dave Schmub can be reached at reporter@sdnews.com.

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Metro Areas with the Highest Share of Used EVs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>DMA</th>
<th>EV Share in Metro Area</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>San Francisco - Oakland - San Jose, CA</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Seattle - Tacoma, WA</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Portland, OR</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>San Diego, CA</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Los Angeles, CA</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Phoenix, AZ</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Salt Lake City, UT</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Sacramento - Stockton - Modesto, CA</td>
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<td>Denver, CO</td>
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As more automakers add electric vehicles to their lineups and with California’s announcement to only sell EVs by 2035, many consumers might be considering purchasing a used EV. In its latest study, iSeeCars analyzed over 54,000 used EV sales from 2019 to 2020 to determine the most popular used cars. San Diego is among the metro areas with the highest share of used EV sales.
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Americans fire Trump, San Diegans hire Dems

By SEAN QUINTAL

“This process of election affords a moral certainty that the office of President will seldom fall to the lot of any man who is not in an eminent degree endowed with the requisite qualifications.” – Alexander Hamilton

Alexander Hamilton was no fan of democracy; he generally favored an elected monarch, and he feared the masses having too much power. But even Hamilton could foresee that, at least occasionally, the presidency might fall to an unqualified actor. And if that were to happen, the electoral process itself was to impose some moral certainty, to rein in such an ominous threat as would be presented by a trespasser who was not eminently endowed with requisite qualifications.

This month, faced with another grave threat, the American people responded to another grave threat, the American people responded with moral certainty. Even Americans firing Trump for continuing to fight the obvious facts of reality seems to gaining votes each day. Meanwhile, here in San Diego County, voters also overwhelmingly chose Democratic candidates to represent them, and to assume the levers of power. This is a long held tradition of our club, and it is always wonderful to see how much the veterans appreciate the remembrance in honor of their service to our country. It is also a treat for our members to visit with them as they share their memories. We owe our liberty and freedom to those who fought and sacrificed their lives. Let us never forget.

Republican Women of California-Navajo Canyon will be continuing another tradition this Christmas season with the donation of gifts to Military Outreach Ministries. MOM’s mission is to help junior enlisted military in San Diego with basic needs to help stretch their limited funds as they live in one of the most expensive areas of the country. It is our pleasure to donate gift cards and items that will be helpful and to brighten up their holiday season. Their sincere appreciation is a gift to us.

The Nov. 10 meeting of Navajo was held at the beautiful new Legacy Resort Hotel in Mission Valley. It was our first “in person” meeting since February and we certainly were looking forward to it. Our speaker was Michael Harrison, District Chief of Staff for Office of CA-50 Congressional District. He discussed elections results and political updates.

Please stay up to date with our meeting schedule by checking our website BVCNavajoCanyon.org and on Facebook at Republican Women of California Navajo-Canyon.

—Pat Boerner writes on behalf of the Republican Women of California-Navajo Canyon.
Democrats, our own Colin Parent, the top two vote-getters in the La Mesa City Council race, flipped the previously-Republican District 7. As of this writing, the top two vote-getters in the La Mesa City Council race are two Democrats, our own Colin Parent and Jack Shu.

The Democratic leaders who succeeded this month can bank on solid support from the community. SD County Democratic Party Chair Will Rodriguez-Kennedy points out that Democratic voter registration has grown by 14%, and that its growth is four times that of Republican registration. The emboldened Democratic leaders intend to achieve genuine progress on the most important issues confronting the region.

At both the county and municipal level, Democratic office holders have averted to immediately address the crisis in homelessness and housing, to provide greater resources for behavioral, mental and drug treatment services, to implement a regional transportation strategy, and to take coordinated action to mitigate the slow-rolling devastation already being experienced due to climate change. In the City of San Diego, voters approved a measure to create a Police Review Board, an action already endorsed by the La Mesa City Council. These are the priorities of elected officials who heard the voice of the people, and who intend to answer that call.

So in two weeks, at our Thanksgiving tables, as Americans and as San Diegans, we can raise a glass in gratitude. To give thanks for a return to truth and decency in the White House and to express appreciation for the prospects of good local government. And speaking of the holidays, we hope you might join us for our December meeting. It’s a holiday party on Zoom, with entertainment and an opportunity to contribute to local charities. We’ll be collecting socks, toiletries, canned goods and other staples for folks who are in the greatest need this holiday season. The meeting starts at 7 p.m., preceded by a half hour of freestyle conversation starting at 6:30 pm. Zoom details at lmdems.com/links.

—Sean Quintal writes on behalf of the La Mesa Foothills Democratic Club.

property Taxes will be Profoundly Impacted by Changes to Proposition 13 and Proposition 58, with 5 Months Left to Prepare, Evaluate and Possibly Appeal Your Property Taxes—Potentially Reducing Your Tax Bill by 20% to 10%.

Wes Nichols, president of Paramount Property Tax Appeal Service is ringing an urgent alarm bell right now, suggesting that the dearth of interest from property owners in California to look into preparing themselves for all property tax eventualities, concerning potential revisions of long standing, widely utilized tax breaks.

Paramount is inviting California property owners to take advantage of the firm’s unprecedented offer of a free consultation regarding property tax reduction—specifically Property Appraisal; Real Property Tax Appeal, Business Property Tax Appeal, and Business Personal Property Tax Compliance.

Mr. Nichols announced this week: “Facts are often cited for our clients to see us so we can complete their paperwork in terms of locking in their future tax base. Proposition 19 is different than the Prop 15 ‘Split Roll’ tax. With Prop 19, folks have until Feb. 2022 to complete estate planning in order to pass down low assessed values to their children. Prop 19 is designed to eliminate the Parent-to-Child Exemption for properties that are not owner-occupied homes within a year. This means apt. buildings and other commercial properties are assessed at full market value when you transfer title to your children.”

Paramount is one of the few firms of this kind with unique property tax reduction solutions and proprietary programs to make sure parents can pass down their low assessed value in the future to their children. Even if property is held in an LLC or a trust.

Company president Wes Nichols explains: “This year, Californians face unprecedented tax challenges from this year prior, due in part to the COVID shutdown and resulting economic crisis impacting property values and estate planning requirements. However, families with estate planning needs have only 3 months before the doors for California property tax relief from Proposition 13 and Proposition 58 slam shut – if Proposition 19 and Prop 15 become law. Thereby dismantling key tax breaks protected by the Parent-to-Child Exemption, avoiding property tax reassessment. ‘Folks should understand that by engaging us now, you start the process of setting up your tax appeal; to reduce your overall tax burden. Waiting un-til you’re too close to the appeals deadline can be a recipe for disaster! Bottom line, we truly do enjoy helping people—middle class and working families, not just wealthy folks.’

In unprecedented fashion, the firm is inviting property owners and families looking to lower their property taxes and/or transfer property to heirs, to get a free evaluation—or to call our office at 858.225.1200 with the option to come in and sit down informally with a property tax specialist, and discuss their property tax and/or business personal property tax issues.

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AVOIDING FUTURE TRUST OR WILL CONTROVERSIES

By: Dick McEntyre and Chris von der Lieth, Attorneys at Law

Although most trusts and wills contain a “no contest clause,” disgruntled persons, especially one’s children, who feel they were improperly left out of a decedent’s disposition of property, may still vigorously challenge the provisions of the decedent’s documents in question following the deceased person’s death. The grounds for such a challenge can be: (1) alleged fraud or undue influence exerted by the taker under the trust or will; (2) purported lack of mental capacity of the trustor or testator resulting in the estate going to the “wrong beneficiary”; or (3) especially in the instance of children, when a child believes he or she was inadvertently left out (“forgotten”) of the trust or will. Such challenges can slow up the administration of the trust or estate, cause anxiety, and be very costly to all parties involved.

To help avoid such a future challenge, when a trustor of a trust or the testator of a will believes there may be future discontent among his or her children, he or she should strongly consider having a before-the-fact meeting with the children and advise them of his or her intentions regarding the future disposition of the trust and/or estate. While such a meeting may be uncomfortable, in the long run it could be beneficial, since it may well allow the trustor or testator to die in peace, knowing that there should be no challenge to his or her estate planning disposition, with its attendant delays, costs, and anxieties. Further, such a meeting may provide for a reconciliation of those presently estranged children. Another idea which may be helpful is making a videotape of the trustor’s or testator’s signing of the trust or will along with such trustor or testator making a statement of why he or she is making the disposition in question.

The above statements are not to be taken as legal advice for the reader’s particular situation. Richard F. McEntyre practices law in the area of estate planning and administration, having served the San Diego community as a lawyer for over 40 years. Chris von der Lieth is Dick’s associate lawyer, having worked with him for over 15 years. Highest quality services. House calls available.

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Church project
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

by a member of the church who plans to lease the home. There are no plans to propose using this property as a second access to the church property.

In an additional statement, APC Pastor Robert Herber said, “It is our desire as a church to be an asset to the community, and we have a high commitment to being a good neighbor. We believe that we offer many benefits, from providing youth programming to offering support to families and seniors. All Peoples Church is a non-denominational church and anyone is welcome.

“For the last two years, we have made a concerted effort to communicate with the community, attending nearly all Del Cerro Action Council meetings to provide updates, presenting to the Navajo Community Planners, and meeting with adjacent neighbors. We will continue to be transparent and work with the community throughout the review and approval process.”

That will be a tough challenge for the church, as evidenced by some residents who feel that the site itself, and not any particular project, is the problem.

“In her opposition to the project, Del Cerro resident Mardine Davis alluded to the history of the property and its inability to attract a project that has the consensus of the community.

“As far as land use goes, this [property] has not been developed,” she said. “It was not developed for a very good reason — it’s not feasible. There’s no access to it.”

The Del Cerro Action Council will be the next public body to see the project and will be the first to make a recommendation. That could be as early as its very next meeting in January, Wilson said.

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

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9
Observation of the Month: Least Katydid

By PATRICIA SIMPSON

While visiting with a friend in Point Loma, I spotted a very well camouflaged little beast on a dried-up branch. As usual, I snapped a photo and posted it on iNaturalist. Before long, experts weighed in and declared it a Least Katydid (Brachyinsara hemiptera). One of the identifiers, James Bailey (aka silversea_starsong), decided to make a special trip to San Diego with katydid expert Jeffrey Cole. Both had been trying to track down this rare species for some time. Little is known about the Least Katydid, its true range and even its song.

Katydid species are grasshoppers what moths are to butterflies — a nocturnal cousin. Just like grasshoppers, katydids have specific songs they produce through stridulation (rubbing one body part against another). Katydid species use their wings while grasshoppers use their hind legs.

James and Jeffrey decided to head to Mission Trails Regional Park and were successful in finding a few Least Katydid species, one of which can be seen here at iNaturalist.org/observations/59068724, once again proving that our beloved park is a great refuge to many treasured and rare species. Observations made in the park and posted on iNaturalist can be a great way for nature enthusiasts like you and me to help scientists find populations of understudied animals or plants. Some observations sometimes lead to great discoveries. So don't forget to snap a few shots with your camera or cell phone the next time you visit our park and post them on iNaturalist.org!

SEE LEAST KATYDID, Page 11

Sometimes a nut, sometimes not

By BILL EDWARDS

In the 1970s Mounds and Almond Joy candy bars were advertised with the phrase: “Sometimes you feel like a nut, Sometimes You Don’t, Almond Joy’s got nuts, Mounds don’t.” While they did not share almonds, both Almond Joy and Mounds did share such “nut” sources as shredded coconut and chocolate. Undermining the jingle is that almonds are not true nuts, and, in fact, there are no true nut components in either candy bar.
Gifts that give back to Mission Trails

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Items like this 5-Peak Challenge t-shirt and a book on Mission Trails geology are available in the new online gift store at mtrp.org. (Country photos)

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Nuts
CONTINUED FROM Page 10

fleshy fruit with thin skin and a central stone containing the seed, such as a plum, cherry, almond, or olive. A true nut is classified by botanists as a type of fruit comprised of a shell and a seed.

While a coconut and an almond have a hard shell and a seed, true nuts (such as acorns, chestnuts, and hazelnuts) are indistinguishable—they don’t split open to release their seeds when ripe. In the case of the coconut and the almond, the seed germinates and then sprouts from the end of the shell, which eventually splits (dehisces) the shell exposing the seed.

So why is one of the few botanical nuts of North America much more frequently called an “acorn” instead of the much less used term “oaknut”? The etymology is a little complex, which is often true for words that have derivations from many different countries and are used to identify something that has a highly varied and significant economic role for humans and major ecological impact.

A search for the origins of the word “acorn” produces many conflicting, and somewhat esoteric, analyses. My interpretation is that “acorn” is a compound word consisting of “ac/ak” which refers to either the oak/beech tree, or the open land where these trees grow, and “corn” which refers to “mast” or the fruit of the trees.

For a view of the songs and loopy TV ads of the 1970s, go to Google and use the search term “sometimes you feel like a nut”. Click on “view all” under the Images link. Be prepared to waste a lot of time.

—Bill Edwards is a trail guide at Mission Trails Regional Park.

Least Katydid
CONTINUED FROM Page 10

trails. You never know what you might find!

And while the Least Katydid is not easy to find, you may be familiar with another, more common katydid that roams your neighborhood, the Scudder’s Bush Katydid (genus Scudderia) (instu- ralist.org/observations/234796).

This large green insect is often spotted on a variety of plants and has adapted well to urban gardens.

—Patricia Simpson is a trail guide at Mission Trails Regional Park.
If you’re planning to buy or sell a home or property, we would like to help you put your plan in motion. Here are some properties that are currently on the market, but they’ll be going fast.

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**Nicolosi’s**

CONTINUED FROM Page 1

crosswalk across Navajo Road to nearby schools. CHW representatives said they will look into the sight issues and pointed out that there are already students who use the crosswalk every morning without incident.

At the October meeting, there were also some residents who voiced support for the project, citing the need for affordable units in the area and also praising the design as consistent with other housing complexes adjacent to the proposed project.

According to CHW, construction could start as early as 2021 if the city planning department approves the project and funding is secured. That timeline is disputed by Nicolosi’s owner Ron Burner who in an email to the Mission Times Courier said the restaurant has a lease to operate at the 7005 Navajo Road site that prevents CHW from breaking ground until it is expired.

“We have two years left on our lease, so the absolute earliest they are going to break ground would be September 2022 — if not longer,” Burner stated.

However, that would depend on how soon Nicolosi’s finds a new location.

“Nicolosi’s will begin a search for a new property in the area probably next summer and we will make a move,” Burner said. “I guess they could break ground that early if a lot of things fall into place.”

Burner added that he plans on keeping Nicolosi’s local to the Navajo community and that his eventual goal is to keep his and his wife’s “family tradition going through our kids.”

“We are so thankful to all our neighbors and loyal customers for their support over the years and especially during these trying times,” he added.

—Reach Jeff Clemetson at jeff@sdnews.com.

A rendering of what the proposed CHW project will look like from Navajo Road. (Courtesy image)
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Hitting the ‘Spot’
Surf & Soul offers up authentic Southern flavors

By ROBIN DOHRN-SIMPSON
La Mesa Courier

If you want to eat at Surf & Soul Spot, the first thing you have to decide is if you want surf or soul. Next, you have to pick which day, because surf is on Monday and Tuesday and soul is on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

Owners Chef Sarajevo Petty and former Olympian Eagle High School and NFL football player Sergio Bailey joined the College Area/La Mesa neighborhood in December 2019. They liked both that it is central in San Diego and that they could cook everything in their on-site kitchen.

Chef Sarajevo has had a career in the culinary world working with Hyatt Hotel Corporation on both the east and west coasts of the United States. Sergio, an extremely successful 20-something, who realizes that you can’t play football forever and you need other plans and goals in life.

“Write your goals down and check them off at the end of the day,” Sergio said.

The restaurant is currently a fast, casual takeout. You can order via phone or walk up and order. The restaurant opens at 11 a.m., noon or 1 p.m. depending on the day and closes when they have sold out. Don’t delay in ordering your food; closing can be as early as 4 p.m. on some days. Currently guests wait for their orders outside as they are taking extra precautions during COVID.

Sarajevo recommends that the food is eaten directly after pick up so it is hot and fresh. Fans hope that the restaurant will return to a sit-down eatery once the pandemic is over.

If you visit on a surf day you can expect to see golden fried catfish, crispy fried shrimp and cheese grits, popcorn shrimp, a blackened shrimp and crab roll and crispy fries smothered in smoked turkey gravy and topped with white cheddar cheese, red pepper ranch, scallions and spicy tomato relish. Prices are moderate ranging between $8 and $15.

Soul food days feature southern cooking at its finest. Meats include fried catfish sandwiches, whole chicken wings and fried pork chops. Side dishes include rice with smoked turkey gravy, mac ‘n cheese, sweet candied yams, collard greens or traditional red beans and rice. Pricing is moderate with one meat and two side dishes priced at $16. For those who want the combo plate of two meats and two side dishes you can expect to pay $20.

“We wanted to do our rendition of both types of food. Being that our kitchen is so small it makes sense to have two separate menus that work well together with our brand and name,” Chef Sarajevo said.

Save room for dessert. There is nothing like a sweet potato cupcake, cookie crunch banana pudding or butter pound cake.

With the amount of attention they are getting from residents it will be fun to watch them grow.

Their philosophy: Treat everyone like gold, including our employees and serve great food.

Surf & Soul Seafood Soul Spot is located at 7229 El Cajon Blvd. in Rolando. For more information, visit surfandsoulspot.com. Call in your order at 619-439-8801.

—Robin Dohrn-Simpson is a local freelance food and travel writer.

Fried shrimp plate
Salad (Photos courtesy Surf & Soul Spot)
Chicken sandwich

Fried chicken dinner
They’re out there every day and night. SDG&E® safety workers respond 24/7 when a gas leak is suspected. At times, SDG&E crews or gas technicians may need to access a customer’s property to inspect the gas meter and other equipment to keep our system safe and reliable. If you smell a gas leak, go to a safe area away from the leak and call 911 or 800-611-SDGE.
COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

As I write, voting continues. Many outcomes will remain undecided when the article is submitted, some will be unresolved when the paper is published. At this moment, the only certainty is the continuation of the antagonism that now defines our political relations. Whatever the outcome, there will be disagreement, perhaps anger. We used to be able to discuss politics and reach for a common solution. But today, we avoid conversations about most subjects as the only way to maintain friendships and to preserve familiar relations.

But most of those areas of conflict relate to matters that are more distant — remote from our trips to the grocery store, the gym, and the barber shop. Our real lives are in our neighborhood and on the block where we live. Our real lives are about housing, public transit, parking, recreation facilities, public safety, and community resources. We all have problems to resolve. And we can do it together.

There are two organizations by which we attend to those matters. The Allied Gardens/Grantville Community Council (AGGCC) and the Navajo Community Planners, Inc. (NCPI). The AGGCC is a non-profit corporation that is chartered to take guidance you need.

The AGGCC and NCPI meetings, the agendas, and the Zoom access instructions. Join our board and bring your energy to support our neighborhood.

NCPI is a formal component of the city planning department. Representing Allied Gardens, Del Cerro, San Carlos, and Grantville, the NCPC’s role is to ensure that all of those organizations charged with making recommendations on matters in the local community such as conformity of real estate development to local zoning limitations, of land use and planning, and of the use of developer impact funds for local public projects. The monthly meetings are conducted by Zoom. The power of the planning group’s recommendations is much dependent on the public’s attendance at its meetings. Get on our contact list for notifications of the meetings.

Another organization that is so very important to the Navajo community is San Diego Canyonlands. San Diego Canyonlands is a nonprofit based in City Heights. Since 2008, they have played a major role in restoring San Diego canyons and creeks to their natural habitat. Through stewardship, volunteer events and their habitat restoration field crews, they are dedicated to promoting, protecting, and restoring San Diego canyons. They have Navajo Canyon in their sights. Contact them through their website: sdcanyonlands.org.

Turning to local news and still another way to be part of our community, the Allied Community Gardens, located between Ascension Lutheran Church and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints on 51st Street, is enjoying the efforts of an Eagle Scout candidate to create more garden beds. Accordingly, they are now accepting applications for subscriptions to the new beds. Fees are $100 per year, used mostly for water. This has been a great year of harvest for the gardeners and they are looking forward to more community members. Reach them through the AGGCC website and friend them on Facebook — Allied Community Gardens.

At monthly meetings of the AGGCC Board of Directors, the community designs and implements important projects. Use the “Contact Us” page at aggcouncil.org to let us know how we can help you support your neighborhood. The board will not meet in December and our next board meeting will be during the first week of January 2021.


DEL CERRO ACTION COUNCIL

On Thursday, Nov. 5, more than 50 Del Cerro residents participated in the Navajo Community Planners, Inc. (NCPI) All Peoples Church (APC) Zoom Sub Committee meeting. Staff members of the APC and their consultants gave a presentation updating everyone on the church project from its inception to presentations over the past two years to the Del Cerro Action Council (DCAC) and NCPI.

No vote was taken by the members of the committee as this was an information and not an action item. Everyone was also invited to attend the Zoom November meeting of the NCPI held on Nov. 11 where the APC and consultants made another presentation. This was also an information item for the NCPI.

Several points were raised by residents for and against the church. They included, but not limited to, traffic, the height of the building, the amenities it will bring including a gymnasium, meeting rooms, to the need of more housing instead of a church. (Regarding housing, there are about 30,000 new units planned as part of the redevelopment of Grantville.)

We are asking the APC to return to the next DCAC meeting on Jan. 28 as an action item on our agenda. It would then most likely be an action item for NCPI. Both will be Zoom meetings and the public is invited to attend. Links to the Zoom meetings will be posted on the DCAC website delcroareaorganization.org and NCPI website navajoplanners.org.

—By Jan Wilson, secretary of the Del Cerro Action Council.

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Although 2020 was not what we expected, it has been a good reminder of what’s important and we learned that we have a lot to be grateful for. After 60 years of working and serving in Allied Gardens, Del Cerro, and San Carlos, we are grateful to be a part of this great community. It has been inspiring to see so many in our community volunteering, donating, and giving to help others through this hard time. We are grateful for our employees and technicians who have worked hard to keep others safe while still getting their jobs done. And we are grateful for our relationships with customers like you. Thank you for choosing Ideal for your home services.

We wish you and your family a happy, safe, and healthy Holiday Season and New Year!

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