Vulnerable populations receive vaccine

By Kendra Sitton

83-year-old Floyd Flagg received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine on the morning of Monday, March 22 as part of a partnership between the Veterans Village of San Diego (VVSD) and Family Health Centers.

Flagg said his arm felt fine after receiving the vaccine. The only hesitation he had in receiving the vaccine was mixed messages doctors gave him about whether he needed it after previously fighting a case of COVID-19.

The frail Navy veteran explained that he “had the virus but [is] still kicking.”

He hopes others get the vaccine as well because people are dying and many people have lost their jobs. “Just get back to normal,” Flagg said.

For Flagg, receiving the vaccine came after a year of chaotic moves. He was admitted to Grossmont Hospital with a case of COVID-19. At that point, he was moved to the mass shelter at the San Diego Convention Center before finally transferring to the Veterans Village transitional housing.

An area in the transitional housing building was converted into an open area to administer the vaccine for the residents and a few alumni of the program who are enrolled in the VA (Veterans Affairs).

An unsheltered veteran was able to walk into the clinic to receive the one-dose vaccine. The vaccination center being on site meant residents could easily access the vaccine and only have to make one trip before being fully inoculated. The effort from the VA, Family Health Centers and Veterans Village are part of an ongoing effort to ensure that vulnerable populations disproportionately affected by the virus also receive the vaccine.

Social workers provide key support to struggling families

By Kendra Sitton

Social work is a challenging profession at all times, but a year in pandemic meant many local social workers had to adapt quickly to changing conditions in order to serve some of the people most affected by coronavirus.

“I’ve come across countless individuals who are unemployed and became homeless at the beginning of the pandemic or during and have connected their homelessness directly to the pandemic,” said Rosalias Read.

As a social worker for Home Start, she does outreach to unsheltered people in East County to help connect them to services and housing. However, many of those resources evaporated during the pandemic. There are also waitlists for emergency shelters and permanent housing as the number of people experiencing homelessness rapidly increased in the past year.

Karina Hernandez, another social worker with the nonprofit organization Home Start, also works with unsheltered individuals, particularly transition age youth who are 18 to 24. She found assisting them to be a challenge this year because there were not many available jobs.

“With the lack of the opportunities for employment, it has been really hard,” she said.

Karina Hernandez works with transition age youth who are experiencing homelessness. (Photo courtesy Karina Hernandez)
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African American Community Development Corporation and the San Diego County Department of Public Health, this partnership during hillsgardenclub.org.

studying agriculture and related topics. The New Children's Museum staff.

THE NEW CHILDREN'S MUSEUM BECOMES THE FIRST OF SAN DIEGO'S MUSEUMS TO UNIONIZE

The New Children's Museum workers and management ratified a collective bargaining agreement last week, making it the first of San Diego's 45 museums to unionize. The agreement governs wages, benefits and worker protections, and comes after more than a year of negotiations amid the challenges of the pandemic. It covers the workers who serve museum guests, execute programming and play, implement health and safety measures and make connections with the children and families who come through the museum's doors each day. Both museum management and staff praised the agreement's enhanced benefits and increased wages as well as its inclusion of protections for laid off and furloughed workers.

“This contract demonstrates the power of union workers at the bargaining table. Our members were able to negotiate immediate increases in pay, along with annual pay raises, sustained health care, and opportunities for more input on the job,” said Nate Fairman, business manager for IBEW Local 465, which represents The New Children's Museum staff.

A judge, citing the danger of COVID-19 in jails, ordered Tuesday the release under house arrest of a 72-year-old driver who struck 108 unsheltered people on a sidewalk near City College, killing three of them.

Craig Martin Voss, who turned 72 in jail Monday, is restricted to his South Park home with the only exception to leave the house for medical appointments and for court.

Voss will not be released for several days because he has to be screened by a county program to set this up, both his attorney and San Diego Superior Court Judge Francis Devaney said.

Devaney ordered his driver's license surrendered and for him to wear a device that detects drug or alcohol use as well as a GPS monitoring device.

I sympathize with a veteran with medical conditions, but I also sympathize with the three dead people,” said the judge.

Voss was arrested March 15 minutes after he drove into a tunnel at 9 a.m. on B Street west of Park Boulevard. It was raining at the time and perhaps 50 people were gathered in blankets and tents on the sidewalk. Police have since cleared the area.

He is charged with three counts of vehicular manslaughter in the deaths of Rodney Difffenbahl, 40, Randy Ferris, 65, and Walter Jones, 61. Seven more people were injured, but several did not want to go to a hospital and were treated at the scene.

Voss takes medications for his heart, diabetes, restless leg syndrome, and an antidepressant, said Deputy District Attorney Cally Bright. He had a stroke previously and the medications' side effect include dizziness and nausea, she said.

Bright opposed the release of Voss, suggesting the judge lower the bail from $1 million to $500,000. Bright said Voss takes approximately 10 medications and to date they do not yet know for certain if he was under the influence by those specific drugs or others.

“The danger to the community is just too high,” said Bright. “There’s no way to stop someone from getting behind the wheel of a car.”

Voss's attorney, Kristen Haden, said Voss's car was damaged and was impounded by police, so he cannot drive that one. She said his wife has a car, but she uses it to drive to a supermarket where she works.

“You will not drive a car,” said Devaney, who told Voss he could only leave his home for a medical appointment and also to attend the May 3 preliminary hearing.

Devaney set a Friday hearing to confirm whether Voss is successfully wearing a device that monitors his alcohol or drug use.

“He did admit to using methamphetamine and marijuana, though not on the day of the crash,” said the prosecutor.

A pipe with traces of meth was found in Voss's pocket at the scene, which stunned the judge. “I’m frankly surprised, Mr. Voss, with you using that,” said Devaney.

“Mr. Voss is not perfect,” said his attorney.

Bright said traces of meth and marijuana were found in his system, but not enough to prove he was under the influence. She said he had a DUI arrest 40 years ago.

“I frankly don’t think Mr. Voss is a flight risk with his wife here,” said Devaney. “I’m confident Mr. Voss didn’t intentionally drive up on that sidewalk,” he added.

“I’m really concerned about Mr. Voss, his age, and medical conditions in jail,” said Devaney, who added that there are many deaths in jail due to COVID-19.

“Mr. Voss, good luck to you, sir,” said Devaney as the hearing ended.

Voss has pleaded not guilty to the three manslaughter counts and to numerous other counts involving serious injuries to the other people while under the influence of a drug.

Voss spoke on a video screen from the Vista Detention Facility. The attorneys also appeared remotely due to the coronavirus outbreak.

—Neal Putnam is a local court reporter.
San Diego's landscape architects inspired by international projects

**Art on the Land**

By DELLE WILLETT

Two of San Diego's local landscape architecture firms are working on inspiring international projects in China and Qatar.

David McCullough, Principal, McCullough Landscape Architecture, is engaged with Zizhu HiTech Industrial City, a new urban innovation city in Shanghai China.

In 2016, McCullough was invited by Gafcon, Inc. to be the landscape architect for the industrial city, a new urban innovation city in Shanghai China.

Today, this new city is home to innovative technology corporations, including Scandisk, Intel, and Microsoft, as well as to research and manufacturers of automation machinery, biotech, energy, smart vehicle, and semiconductor technologies.

The Zizhu project is being developed in phases. Phase one includes a lake, known as the "Purple Lake," which will be surrounded by residential towers, yacht homes, a commercial district, lake gardens and a luxury hotel.

After the design and plan preparation for phase one was completed, McCullough and Gafcon were invited back for phase two, which includes enhanced amenities and features. Currently, these first two phases are well under construction with the Gafcon/McCullough team.

Recently, Gafcon retained McCullough to study gardens that will surround the luxury business hotel. Eventually called the “Purple Garden,” it will span nearly 100 acres, south of downtown Shanghai and will serve as an amenity for the hotel, the new town of Zizhu and several other southern Shanghai districts. Some of the amenities and features of the garden will include an imaginarium, an indoor arboretum, botanical gardens, an art academy, children’s playgrounds and adventure zones and much more.

“We are grateful to be involved in such an exciting, highly creative, and cutting-edge project and welcome the challenge,” said McCullough.

McCullough has offices in San Diego and Los Angeles. Visit their website for more information at mlasd.com

Patrick Baldwin, Partner, Burton Studio in Solana Beach, is challenged by Msheireb Downtown Doha. Branded the “Smart City with a Soul,” Msheireb downtown Doha is nearly completed as of 2021. The Burton Studio’s work on the project began in 2010 and the final fourth phase of the project will be opening shortly.

Said Baldwin, “While our travel to the region has slowed, the

*Saw Chin and Qatar, Page 10*

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Fabric inside the store

Inside store

Picture of Needlecraft Cottage (Courtesy photos)

Gramps project for March and April

Winters Beach project for March and April

Gramps project for March and April

Without people being able to come into the store. Since the pandemic, there is an even bigger demand for fabric to be used for making masks. The store did really well with this. The future goal is to bring in supplies and classes for cross stitch, embroidery, and other needlework.

Right now, they offer classes on Zoom but may change to in-person depending on San Diego’s tier level. Currently, they give a class to teach basic crochet stitches. They also offer a Sweater Club which has no cost to join. The only requirement that the customer purchase their yarn for the project through the Needlecraft Cottage. The projects for March and April are Winters Beach and Gramps. If you are having trouble with your project, customers can make an appointment for knitting troubleshooting!

The yarns are sold at different price points so if you are an inexperienced knitter or crocheter, you can come in and find an inexpensive yarn to try it out for the first time. If you are an experienced knitter, you can come in and find an expensive yarn for your project. Many people are allergic to wool or have extra sensitive skin and the store has yarns for them too.

Needlecraft Cottage also has “Knit Along” where people on similar projects can get together and work on their projects while having fun at the same time. They hope in the future to have in-person classes, a launch party to celebrate the opening and to attract a younger crowd. They are open from 10 a.m. -5 p.m. on Tuesday through Sunday. For more information visit needlecraftcottage.com.

—Diana Cavagnaro is an internationally renowned Couture Milliner based in the San Diego. Learn more about our Hat Designers, Teacher & Blogger at DianaCavagnaro.com

PUBLIC WORKSHOP/HEARING ANNOUNCEMENT

Please join the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority (Airport Authority) for a Public Workshop and Hearing on the 14 CFR Part 150 Noise Compatibility Study Update (Study) at The 180 on the Bay, 2722 Truxtun Road, San Diego, CA 92106. Viewing is by appointment only, please call 619-400-2309 to schedule.

The study is being conducted to identify and evaluate current and future noise effects caused by aircraft operations at the San Diego International Airport (SAN). The purpose of the Public Hearing is to obtain public comments on the Study.

After the completion of the Public Workshop portion, the official Public Hearing will begin, and all members of the public may submit verbal comments that will become part of the public record. Airport Authority staff and expert consultants will be in attendance to answer questions during the Public Workshop and listen to public comments during the Public Hearing.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting will be held virtually. To attend, please visit the study website below to register and receive the Zoom meeting link.

In addition to verbal comments at the Public Hearing, members of the public are encouraged to submit written comments via the study website sannoisestudy.com or in writing to:

Mead & Hunt
Attn: Jen Wolchansky
1743 Waave Street, Suite 400 Denver, CO 80202
Comments will be accepted through April 21, 2021.

If you have a disability or require language translation, please call 619-400-2309 to discuss your needs with at least 48 hours’ notice.

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 7, 2021
Making Waves: Textiles Addressing Sustainability at Visions Art Museum with Professor Susan Lazear at 11 a.m. Registration is free. bit.ly/3aqqtui

April 16, 2021
Fashion Redux! Will be at 7 p.m. on zoom. This is a co-ordination between Mesa College and The San Diego History Center featuring a discussion panel with the top 4 Student designer. Registration at bit.ly/3hQpjz

April 22, 2021
FWSD21 Spring Showcase from 6 p.m.-9p.m. For tickets visit: FashionWeekSD.com

5

San Diego Downtown & Uptown News
April 2021

Highrise Living at Pacific Gate!

Gregg Whitney
858-456-3282
info@BillionairesRowLaJolla.com
CalDRE #01005985

Experience Contemporary Downtown living in the iconic Pacific Gate high-rise in the highly sought Marina District! Open concept living with harbor views: chef’s kitchen has Sub Zero/Wolf appliances, Caesarstone counters, big island w/4 stools, walk-in pantry and a 350 bottle+ wine fridge with 3 temperature zones. Dual master suites and all common-area rooms are lined with a wall of windows. The building offers lavish amenities including reserved use of private yacht and fleet of luxury cars, chef concierge, porter, 24-hr lobby attendant, pool/spa/fitness and business center, and pet retreat in the heart of DT!

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Highrise Living at Pacific Gate!

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Highrise Living at Pacific Gate!
Guest Editorial

The Way Forward: What democracy means

By Brian Schrader

The robust democratic society that we all strive to build brings people into the fold, not outside the fold. It’s one that seeks to build a unified political culture that empowers everyone to participate and power to lift up the downtrodden and work for the public good. In a broader sense, democracy is about a lot more than just voting and lawmaking. Democracy requires that we work to improve all aspects of our society. This is because, in order for it to function properly, democracy requires an engaged and educated electorate that has the resources and time to participate in civic life. Resources are important, but we must prioritize strengthening our education systems to ensure that people are educated, and political institutions are strong and efficient. It is a society where people can secure good paying jobs.

Democracy works best when everyone participates beyond the public sector. Democracies can and should be more common in the business world. Today, most companies are organized as de facto autocracies, and while a few trendsetters are democratically run and, better yet, they make up a very small minority. Workers today have little real say in their workplace, and therefore limited experience with democracy outside of seeing the occasional political ad on TV or voting in a presidential or congressional election.

It is no surprise, then, that studies have shown faith in democracy has declined, especially among the younger age Americans. Today the vast majority of people commonly experience the downsides of democracy, and rarely get the chance to experience its upsides.

The way forward must be to build up democracy and regain the strength that lies in our collective will. If we wish for ourselves to be better educated, California should work to develop a publicly funded and university free for our residents once again. With access to a quality education, Californians of all backgrounds will be better equipped to understand and navigate the world around them, and will be allowed the opportunity to earn a better future for themselves and for their families.

The way forward must be to better our collective lives, and add even more beautifying our public spaces—parks, pools, recreation centers, libraries, trails and phases and breaking ground on new sites. Public spaces help to unify communities around common experience and include community members with lesser means as equal participants.

The way forward must be to democratize corporate ownership, or at least incentivize democratic organizing structures, which are better at protecting the rights of the working class. The vast majority of people interact with their workplace and with other companies more frequently than they vote. And, there is no defense, and those organizations are not democracies. It’s difficult to argue that we live in a democratic society if we only interact with democracy 0.07% of the year. A decade ago, fast food chains were largely responsible for calling a product “beef” when it was only 88% true, but by most measures our “democratic” society contains far less of its titular ingredient.

For all of its greatness, the process of democracy is full of downsides and its upsides are not always as advertised, or even granted. To renew our democracy, we need to reinvent in it. We need to ensure the promises of democracy are fulfilled for everyone, not just the historically privileged, and as a society with significant worldwide influence, we need to be a shining example of the good democracy can bring.

It’s often seen as naïve or overly prescriptive, but I believe democracy is and remains the least worst form of government we have devised. It allows us to be collectively our own fate, to protect and nurture ourselves and our fellow citizens, and it allows us to collectively build a better world instead of just leaving it to be driven by the market.

—Brian Schrader is a software developer in Normal Heights and writer at democratycamp.com.

Last minute changes to tax laws

By Dave Schwab

Here we are, just weeks away from April 15, and there have been a significant number of changes related to filing your 2020 tax returns and increased tax credits for 2021 taxes. Here is a quick summary of some of the most relevant changes and what they might mean for you.


The IRS extended the back the filing deadline and payment deadlines for your individual Federal tax returns to May 17, 2021. While this is good news to many, there are a few very important things to note:

1. Some states have yet to comply with this. If you are living in a state that has not decided to change the deadline yet, you still need to file your state returns by April 15. California has moved to state tax return filing and payment deadline to May 17 to match the IRS deadline.

2. 2021 first quarter estimated taxes are still due April 15. Even when the filing deadline is extended, by that date, you will still need to pay estimated taxes by then for your first quarter IRS and possibly your second quarter IRS. California is following the IRS on this and requiring your first quarter estimates to be paid by April 15.

3. Only individual returns are given the delayed filing dates. All business and trust returns are still required to file or extend by April 15.

The first $10,200 of unemployment benefits can be excluded from your income.

This was part of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. There is one important detail that most people have not seen regarding this. You must have Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) below $150,000 to be able to get the tax treatment. This limit applies to any filing status (Single, Married Filing Jointly, Head of Household) and there is no phaseout. If you are below the $150,000 you get the exclusion. If you are at or above $150,000 you do not get the exclusion.

2021 Child Tax Credit has been increased.

The credit has been increased from $2,000 to $3,000 and if you have a child age six or younger at the close of the calendar year, their credit will be $3,600. The increased credit amount is phased out for taxpayers with the following income levels: Single $75,000; Head of Household $112,500; Married Filing Jointly $150,000. If you are over the phaseout limits, you can still receive the $2,000 credit with the current phaseout limits.

If you qualify, keep an eye on your accounts. You should receive the benefit the same way you have in the past, either direct deposit, check or debit card.

Business PPP loans and California

Due to the pandemic, many businesses utilized the PPP loan program and subsequent debt forgiveness program. The IRS has said that the loan forgiveness program would be considered income and the expenses paid with the money would still be deductible. California does not agree with this currently and does not require anyone who received loan forgiveness to offset their business expenses by the amount of the loan forgiven. The issue is that now there is legislation in California to change this and comply with federal rules. If this happens, businesses in California will be allowed to deduct expenses paid with the loan forgiveness income and taxes for state purposes.

As you can see, we have had a lot of changes and there are still more that will happen throughout the year. Consider working with a qualified CPA to benefit from all these recent changes to our Federal and state laws.

—Dave Schwab, Uptown Money
Optimism persists amid vaccinations

Notes from Toni
By TONI G. ATKINS

Happy April! This week many Californians are celebrating Easter and Passover. While the celebrations will look a little different again this year, I think we’re all starting to feel some sense of optimism. If we continue to do our part—get vaccinated, keep wearing masks, wash your hands, and remember physical distancing.

Since my last update to you, millions of Californians have been vaccinated and millions more are now eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine. As a sign of continuing progress, San Diego County has moved up into the red tier, allowing for the gradual reopening of more businesses, gyms and restaurants.

The vaccine supply issue continues to be our greatest hurdle, but now there are three options in our battle: Moderna, Pfizer and Johnson & Johnson. We just ask that folks who are already vaccinated, please refer to the CDC’s website for the latest information about these important programs.

I’m very pleased to announce that as we move into April, several of the bills I have introduced are making significant progress. SB 1, which provides tools to help California and our communities push back against sea level rise, was approved by the Senate Natural Resources & Water Committee, and after a couple more stops in the Senate and legislature and the governor is now available at the Housing is Lord Eviction Relief enacted by the legislature and the governor is now available at the Housing Key website. This April, thanks to our efforts in Sacramento and the Biden Administration’s American Rescue Plan, there is increased funding for both the federal Earned Income Tax Credit and the California Earned Income Tax Credit. The EITC programs put cash into people’s pockets and money into local economies. With the April 15 tax deadline being pushed back to May 17, we have extra time to spread the word, so please share this information with anyone you know who is eligible—and you don’t have to owe any taxes to qualify. CalEITC4me.org has more information about these important programs.

Remember, the statewide application for the tenant/landlord eviction relief enacted by the Legislature and the Governor is now available at the Housing is Lord Eviction Relief Key website.

And remember, the statewide application for the tenant/landlord eviction relief enacted by the Legislature and the Governor is now available at the Housing is Lord Eviction Relief Key website.

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Two buildings, two notable men, one site

Schmitt/Sensenbrenner Building

By SANDEE WILHOIT

Gastrop Landmarks

Like most sites in the Gaslamp, the Schmitt/Sensenbrenner Building lot had its origin in a sale from Alonzo Horton to John B. Boyd in 1872. And like most historic sites and buildings, it had a plethora of venues housed therein before establishing its ultimate name and identity. The property and the two-story wooden structure on it was the subject of a variety of exchanges between Boyd and several gentlemen. It was ultimately sold by Boyd to Dr. George H. Schmitt in 1888.

Dr. Schmitt hired P.J. McCormack as the principal contractor and Aime Pure as the architect for the construction of his new offices. The ornate three-story structure was in the Victorian commercial style with a gabled roof, large plate glass windows, and a recessed entrance. It was decorated with statues and an ornate coat of arms. The building was completed in late August of 1888, and was known as the Dr. Schmitt Dispensary.

Dr. Schmitt advertised himself as practicing general medicine, surgery, obstetrics and gynecology. In connection with his private practice, he also conducted a free clinic for the poor. His methods included traditional medico-practise as well as what was then considered exotic ancient remedies and methods. These might have included what is now known as alternative medicine, such as acupuncture, massage, ayurveda, homeopathy and med-tiation.

Unfortunately, by 1894 Dr. Schmitt’s finances were in a precarious position. His dispensary and lot were sold to satisfy judgments against him. The building was then used as a lodging house, an Officer’s Club, a billiards hall, a barbershop and an athletic club.

In 1908, the property was purchased by August Sensenbrenner. Sensenbrenner, a pioneer businessman in San Diego, founded the firm of A. Sensenbrenner and Sons, cigar makers and jobbers (wholesalers). This be-came one of the largest enterprises of its kind on the Pacific Coast. Sensenbrenner’s business lasted more than four decades. He passed away in 1918 at the age of 63, leaving his two sons, August, Jr. and Louis to carry on the business with constant success and profit. Sensenbrenner claimed that he produced over one million cigars yearly. At the Panama-California Exposition in 1915, he earned the coveted Gold Medal, as well as the Grand Prize from the Jury of Awards for the quality and workmanship of his product. Sensenbrenner’s business exceeded all expectations and we raised and collected over $2.5 million in one year and six days, said Luke Vinci Chair of Our Lady of the Rosary Finance Committee.

The restoration included re-mastering the original paintings as well as the carpet being replaced with Calcutta marble. Rojo Alicante marble is also being used in the center and side aisles. The confessional rooms have been restored with new stained glass designs including pieces of the prodigal son and merciful father.

Our Lady of the Rosary Church prepares for centennial with $2.5M historical restoration

By CHRISTOPHER GOMEZ

The historic church in Little Italy

Father Joe Tabigue of Our Lady of the Rosary Church.

As Easter approaches, we invite you to visit our church and enjoy the beauty of the restoration for yourselves. As you leave the church, see you can spot Father Rabaglia the newly restored murals. Our Lady of the Rosary Church is open daily for mass and is actively following COVID-19 guidelines. Holy Week’s timeline includes mass on Holy Thursday at 7:30 a.m., Good Friday Veneration of the Cross at 3pm, and Easter Vigil Mass on Easter Sunday at 7:30 a.m., 9:10 a.m., and 12 p.m.

For more information, please visit OLRSD.org.

With indoor dining now available at 25% capacity, be sure to stop by one of our delicious restaurants to enjoy a lovely family brunch to keep the celebration going.

For the latest updates on Little Italy, please visit us at LittleItalySD.com or follow us on Instagram @LittleItalySD. Twitter @LittleItalySD and Facebook @LittleItalySD.

Christopher Gomez has been Little Italy’s district manager since 2000. Reach him at christ@littleitaly.com.
It’s April in San Diego, spring is in the air, and a sense of hope and renewal can be felt throughout our city streets. This month also signals that baseball season is upon us—another crucial milestone being met, perhaps, in our collective grasp for a return to normality. While we root for a great season for our beloved Padres, however, another important connection to baseball comes to mind and one that is also a relevant part of San Diego’s Italian American history: sports art.

Many legendary Italian American ball players (their names don’t even need to be mentioned at this point, do they?), as well as sports figures in general, owe a great debt to one man for emblazoning their images in our minds and hearts through his uncannily realistic renderings of them. Christopher Paluso’s talent is well known in sports circles, and he is the sole American artist to be seen throughout different channels and media: Elaborately designed pieces sit in museums, brilliant illustrations have graced magazine covers, and (depicted from the sports team for just a moment), even landmark signs in Disneyland Hong Kong capture his work. Mr. Paluso has met with and illustrated the best of the classic Disney characters, the Jurassic Park dinosaurs, and the Marvel superheroes.

What characteristics stand out through your artwork? What characteristics stand out about them?

For sure Joe DiMaggio, Yogi Berra, Eddie Arcaro, and Lou Costello, because they were also Italian Americans, along with astronaut Capt. Eugene Cernan and Mohammed Ali. They all embodied that sense of pride in their endeavors and hard work to achieve their goals—something I wanted to show in my art of them. There was purpose to what and who they were.

Tell us about some of the museums that have displayed your artwork?

Most art on display like that are associated with sports, like the San Diego Hall of Champions, Breitbard Hall of Fame housed now at Petco Park in the Western Metal Supply Building (172 members—all my artwork): the San Diego Air and Space Museum (26 members of their hall of fame); the Hawthorne Race Course Jockey Hall of Fame in Chicago; and the National Italian American Sports Hall of Fame in the same city.

How did you get into teaching? And how did you develop your professional pursuits (commercial art and education) and what notable differences have you noted between the two in terms of your approaches?

I was able to enter the classroom through the East County ROP as a professional to teach graphic design and desktop publishing, fulfilling the desire to make a difference with young people. I was able to follow that seven years later getting the opportunity to start an art program at a public charter middle school. Through both I maintain a few of my clients and used my method of work teaching the creative process. It is a building process taking a simple sketch and working towards a finished assignment understanding changes are needed along the way.

Tell us about your fascination and passion for all things Disney. How did that begin?

From early on seeing Disney animation at the movies and watching Walt Disney every Sunday learning about his dreams and building on them, I wanted to work there. The first things I drew were some of the classic Disney characters, which gave me confidence I could draw. My dream came true when, in 2004, I got to paint on two signs for the Jungle River Cruise ride at Disneyland Hong Kong.

What’s next for you in your professional pursuits, considering that retirement is likely not in your vocabulary?

I would like to work with an organization like the San Diego Zoo and teach both children and adults using a time-travel zoologist-explorer-conservationist-artist character, to learn how to draw wild animals and facts about these animals and their habitats—while in the process, understanding the need for conservation in the natural world and the fight against extinction.

What do you see as your legacy, professional and personal?

I was told by an uncle that when the Union Tribune ran a full-page article on me as an artist, that I brought pride to our family, that I had the opportunity to be a historian of the past greats through my talent and honoring contributors to the fabric of America, especially Italian Americans.

—Tom Cesaroni is the executive director and founder of Convivio and also serves as the Italian honorary consul in San Diego. Convivio cultivates community and fellowship, advances Italian cultural identity, and fosters multicultural awareness across myriad disciplines through education and research, social enrichment, and innovative programming. Visit: convivioociety.org or follow at @convivioociety on social media.

By TOM CESARINI

Little Italy Culture & Heritage

In our community: Italian icon artist Christopher Paluso

The great Yankee Clipper, Joe DiMaggio, used as the cover of Red, White and Green Magazine for the National Italian American Sports Hall of Fame.

Paluso at the Padres Ballpark near some of his art for the Breitbard Hall of Fame. (Photos courtesy of Christopher Paluso)

Gaslamp history CONTINUED FROM Page 8

the Sensenbrenner Building in historical references. It still remains in practically its original form with the exception being the roof, which was originally gabled, but is now flat with a decorative cornice.

The three-story commercial styled structure is a stucco over brick building with a base ment, and white and green tile finishing the symmetrical facade. The main entrance is centered and recessed with evenly spaced windows on the second and third floors. The windows are double-hung sash style and accented by short horizontal opaque windows above each one. Metal fire escapes are placed in front of all the windows. There is a small balcony centered on the second floor.

The brothers maintained the cigar business at this location until 1929, and maintained the property until 1917. At this time, it was sold to the Braun family, who kept it until 1966. Various businesses traded there, including restaurants, a tailor and a doctor. The cigar business continued at another location and in 1957 finally merged with an enterprise in Detroit, Michigan. The only remaining son, Louis, wanted to retire and ultimately died in 1962.

By 1979, Palace Pawnbrokers had arrived, and has maintained business in the Sensenbrenner Building ever since. They are known for their friendly, courteous and excellent customer service.

—Sandee Wilhoit is the Historian/Lead Tour Guide for the Gaslamp Quarter Historical Foundation. She can be reached at smithhi@gaslampfoundation.org.
imagery we see has been thrilling and reflective. “The project had a huge learning impact on the studio. Every line we drew required a story. This challenge has inspired the studio to take this into account on all of our projects. Whether that story lasts the lifetime of the project isn’t the most important. We see it as a simple tool that helps bring all of the stakeholders and designers on the project to unite in single vision.”

In 2018 Burton Studio learned the landscape of the project had been nominated for the Aga Kahn award. “The submittal process with the Aga Kahn committee was an incredibly enjoyable process and even though we were not shortlisted, the submittal process allowed us to relive the rigor and adventure this project brought to the studio,” Burton said.

Recently, Msheireb launched the Doha Design District (DDD), the new design hub centered within Msheireb Downtown Doha. This district will serve as the center of Qatar’s design and innovation. The curation of art was layered throughout their design work.

A public-art masterplan was woven through the project. Burton’s design task was to curate the stage for the art, defining the space, backdrop, and lighting that the future artists will be using as their canvas.

Burton Studio is in Solana Beach. Visit their website, burtonstudio.com for images of Msheireb Downtown Doha.

—Delle Willett is PR advisor to the American Society of Landscape Architects, San Diego chapter, and is a freelance journalist. You can reach her at dellewillett@gmail.com

A traditional Chinese garden dedicated to Mr. Shen Wen, the man behind the original vision of Zizhu.

A series of canals connect boaters of all types back to Orchid Lake.

(Images provided by McCullough Landscape Architecture)
Social workers
Continued from Page 1

Both Hernandez and Read continued their jobs in person since they are on the front lines of reaching out to unsheltered individuals and holding office hours. They helped people navigate systems made even more challenging when they went virtual.

Home Start was contracted by a few cities to distribute rental and utility assistance during the pandemic. Grants and private donors helped the organization provide financial help to many low-income families.

Some social workers were able to shift to primarily safer virtual work. Ebony Brown is a therapist for Home Start who works with children who have experienced trauma. For most of her clients, she conducts telemedicine appointments although she does meet with two clients in person whose needs she felt could not be met virtually.

“My work has changed tremendously from going into people’s homes and having them come into my office to be totally remote. It was very challenging because I’m used to doing play therapy with children; play therapy is the most crucial key to building rapport and building a connection.” Brown said. “Just imagine going from being in person to going remote, which was very difficult to build connections with kids with high-risk needs.”

Some of Brown’s clients did not continue therapy at the start of the pandemic. Through those that did, Brown has seen families struggle to keep kids engaged in virtual school and feel frustrated being stuck in the home.

Despite the difficulties inherent in this past year, all three women said being social workers is still rewarding and worthwhile for them. “I feel that this is my life’s purpose to be in this field. I just really enjoy being of service to individuals,” [Rosa] said.

Brown and [Karina’s] mothers were both social workers. The women watched them navigate the field growing up so they saw the positive and negative aspects of it.

“My mother was a social worker. She actually tried to talk me out of this profession because she saw the trials and tribulations of being a social worker,” Hernandez said.

Although they are in the same field as their mothers, each took significantly different roles than their parents because of the wide variety of jobs under the social work umbrella.

“My mom was a social worker, and I was inspired by what she does. She mainly worked for [Child Welfare Services], which was a very difficult field to work in. I did see the dangers and things that she did go through to be a CWS worker but I wanted to do it on a different note where I provide one-on-one therapy services rather than to be in the field.” Brown said. “I look at my role as a supportive role. I don’t look at it as the enemy trying to break up a family, even though that’s how most people see it.”

Brown tries to provide the resources and support that help families stay together. This has been a constant throughout her career. The mission of the organization was founded 49 years ago in a five-year experiment to see the outcomes of people visiting at-risk homes to provide parenting lessons and tools. According to Home Start CEO Laura Tancredi-Baese, the county found that the children in households visited by Home Start social workers had better outcomes as their parents learned best practices for raising kids.

From that time, the field has changed significantly even before the pandemic. Tancredi-Baese emphasized that trauma-informed care is a major focus now.

“I think our recognition of trauma and the impact of trauma is something that we’ve learned a lot more about in the last 10 years than when I was first in the field. Having that lens of how trauma impacts the individuals and families and communities that we serve and keeping that front and center in everything that we do is key,” Tancredi-Baese, who has been in the social work field for over 30 years, said. That trauma-informed lens helps social workers strengthen families and provide supportive services.

“[Social work] is rewarding. It also can be hard at times, but in the end, I feel like if you help even just one person, it’s gonna make an impact on your life and feel like you’re doing the right thing,” Hernandez said.

—Reach Kendra Sitton at kentra@sdnews.com.

COX CONTOUR TV NEWS AND HIGHLIGHTS

New feature lets customers with physical disabilities control TV with their eyes

Cox Communications has unveiled the Accessible Web Remote, a new feature on Cox Contour TV that enables people who have lost fine motor skills – whether from degenerative conditions or paralysis – to browse their video guide with a glance of their eyes.

The Accessible Web Remote feature is a free web-based remote control navigable with various assistive technologies owned by the customer, including eye-gaze hardware and software, switch controls, and sip-and-puff systems, which users control by blowing into a tube.

Eye-tracking technology gives people living with conditions like paraplegia, Parkinson’s disease and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) the same access to their TVs as customers with the latest edition of Contour.

Cox partnered with organizations like Team Gleason to ensure accessible design and development of the product, increase awareness and education, and improve processes and procedures focusing on disability inclusion.

“We appreciate that companies like Cox continue to empower their users by adopting products like the Accessible Web Remote, which allows every customer to do something most people take for granted, like controlling their TV,” said Steve Gleason, founder of Team Gleason and a former New Orleans Saints football player who has been living with ALS since 2011.

Approximately 16% of people in the U.S. have difficulties with their physical functioning that make things like using a traditional TV remote either a challenge or impossible, depending on the condition.

Cox Contour customers can visit https://webremotecom.cox.com to sync their device and begin changing channels, set a recording, search for programming within the Contour guide, and access integrated streaming apps all with a glance of their eyes.

Spring into Contour TV movies on demand.

There’s a lot happening in April – including the start of baseball season, Earth Day and the Academy Awards – so why not… Contour TV?

Sports Fans: Search for comedies, dramas and classics about America’s favorite pastime.

“League of Their Own” (On Demand) – This baseball classic is a funny, heartwarming tribute to the professional women’s baseball league formed after male baseball players were called to serve during World War II.

“42” (On Demand) – The late Chadwick Boseman stars as Jackie Robinson, Major League Baseball’s first black player.

Outdoor/Nature Enthusiasts: Celebrate Earth Day (April 22) by watching a documentary that highlights the beauty of the natural world.

“Planet Earth: One Amazing Day” (On Demand) – This film captures the awesome beauty of nature over the course of a single day.

“Brave Blue World” (Netflix) – Narrated by actor Liam Neeson, the film explores how humans are using technology and innovations to help solve the world’s water crisis.

Movie Buffs: Go to Cox Contour TV On Demand and search the “Award Winners” section featuring the Best Picture, Best Director, Best Actor, Best Actress, Best Animated Film and Best Foreign Film movie categories.

Titles include recent winners such as “Parasite,” blockbusters like “Lord of the Rings, Return of the King” and classics including “The Sound of Music” and “Rocky.”

For more information, visit cox.com.
Family Health Centers has been critical in vaccinating vulnerable communities. San Diego County’s first COVID-19 chief, Jennifer Campbell, who is also a doctor, partnered with the organization and nonprofit People Assisting the Homeless (PATH) to administer vaccines to residents in transitionally housing.

Early in March, the CEO of PATH, John Roberts, called on Governor Gavin Newsom to prioritize the state’s 280,000 doses of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine for people experiencing homelessness.

“There are many barriers to accessing a second vaccine dose for an individual that is unhousted.

This population often lacks transportation and cellular devices to schedule an appointment and can be very hard to reach. Even for people who are stably housed, accessing a second shot has proven difficult,” Roberts said.

For VUSD, the vaccine distribution was a festive occasion. Staff applauded the veterans after they

People celebrate the vaccine event at Veterans Village. (Photo by Lisa Misraje)
Family Health Centers of San Diego is the #1 enrollment entity for Covered California in San Diego County.

For free enrollment help, call (619) 515-2363.

For 50 years, Family Health Centers of San Diego (FHCSD) has provided caring, affordable, high-quality health care and supportive services to everyone, with a special commitment to uninsured, low-income and medically underserved persons.

With over 23 primary care clinics around San Diego County, FHCSD provides care to over 227,000 patients each year. With a wide range of health care services throughout the region, the organization also includes 10 behavioral health facilities, eight dental clinics, two mobile counseling centers, three mobile medical units, three vision clinics, a physical rehabilitation department, a pharmacy and an outpatient substance use treatment program. As part of their ongoing dedication to ensuring everyone who needs health care receives it, FHCSD offers free Covered California enrollment assistance.

Covered California is a private health insurance exchange that was established through Affordable Care Act legislation for individuals and families not eligible for Medi-Cal. The program allows California residents to purchase quality health insurance plans to fit individual and family needs. The cost of each insurance plan is based on certain factors, including family size and income.

Covered California has extended its Special Enrollment Period from February 1 to May 15, 2021 without a qualifying life event.

Health Plan Benefits
All Covered California health insurance plans provide comprehensive services, including:

1. Preventive, wellness and chronic disease management services
2. Pregnancy, maternity and newborn care (both before and after birth)
3. Pediatric services, including oral and vision care
4. Mental health and substance use disorder services, including behavioral health treatment (this includes counseling and psychotherapy)
5. Rehabilitative and habilitative services and devices (services and devices to help people with injuries, disabilities, or chronic conditions gain or recover mental and physical skills)
6. Prescription drugs
7. Ambulatory and emergency services
8. Laboratory services and hospitalization (surgery and overnight stays)

For free enrollment help, call (619) 515-2363 or visit fhcsd.org/covered-california.
Vaccines
CONTINUED FROM Page 13

received the inoculation from COVID-19 and the check-in area was filled with balloons and doughnuts. Misraje said that although she is a single mother of six, she decided to purchase a new dress for the event. VVSD intake coordinator Danelle Harrington was dancing around because of her excitement.

“It’s exciting to see them all come in and some of the streets, some of our alumni that have already graduated from this program from like 10 years ago showed up today,” said Harrington.

DOUBTS ABOUT THE VACCINE

Despite the joy of the day, it did come with roadblocks. The center had 112 doses of the vaccine but only 26 residents signed up ahead of time. Harrington and an official with the VA went door to door to make sure residents were aware of the event. While some were already vaccinated because of their age, many remained wary of the vaccine and declined to receive it. Harrington said residents cited religious reasons, never receiving a flu shot either and conspiracy theories about being injected with a chip as common reasons they declined. The official with the VA tried to educate them on the vaccine but Harrington said many remained unswayed.

Emily Carpenter, a San Diego City College nursing student and president of the Nursing Students’ Association, said at Family Health Center’s Mission Beach vaccine distribution site, anyone apprehensive about the vaccine was assuaged by hearing her talk about it in person.

“I think a lot of people, just explaining the CDC guidelines, and them getting to hear that from an actual person as opposed to reading it on our website, helps make them feel a little more comfortable. I think for some people it’s just a little difficult to look at the website and feel comfortable with that and just hearing it from an actual person who was in the community feels a little bit better,” Carpenter said in a phone interview.

Alongside 30 other SD City College students, she has been administering the vaccine with Family Health Centers as part of her clinical hours to graduate as an RN. While she was stationed in Mission Beach, many other students administered the vaccine in Southeastern San Diego, which has been hard by the virus. For students, administering the vaccine has reminded them why they want to get into a helping profession in the first place.

“It’s been really rewarding and it’s been super humbling to be able to administer vaccines to people of San Diego who have been having a really hard time either finding somewhere to get vaccinated or feeling like they’ve been isolated for the last year,” said Larissa Johnson, vice president of the Nursing Students’ Association.

“People are so grateful and it’s just been a really cool experience to be able to witness that and just be a part of it.”

—Kendra Sitton can be reached at kendras@smdnews.com.

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VETERAN FLOYD FLAGG WITH AN I'M VACCINATED STICKER (Photo by Kendra Sitton)
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