For the love of sandcastles

(Photos courtesy U.S. Sand Sculpting Challenge)

Port of San Diego U.S. Sand Sculpting Challenge and Dimensional Art Exposition heads to town Labor Day weekend.

While some artists choose watercolors, oil paints, or other favorite mediums, a select few prefer sand. Almost like the kind you stomp around in at the beach, just better. And if you love to watch talented artists in action, you might want to attend the upcoming annual Port of San Diego U.S. Sand Sculpting Challenge and Dimensional Art Exposition headed to San Diego's Downtown waterfront from Aug. 31 through Labor Day weekend.

Will ‘Grand Central Station’ become reality?
Navy, SANDAG to explore options for Point Loma OTC site with MOU

Nothing is official and everything is on the table. This sums up sentiments shared in recent weeks from a cross-section of officials as long-range plans for the aging Naval Base Point Loma Old Town Campus are going under the microscope.

The Navy Region Southwest, which has oversight of Point Loma’s various properties, has agreed to enter into a MOU with the San Diego Association for Regional Cooperation to explore options for the old Navy site.

San Diego native Frankie Sciuto is the general manager of Downtown’s Side Bar, one of the more popular nightspots in the Gaslamp Quarter. He’s hanging out in the front bar room with his vice president of nightlife operations, Pablo Aguilar. As they go over business, he multitasks by sampling a new craft cocktail offered up by his mixologist. “It’s sweet, is it supposed to be sweet?” he asks. The bartender nods as Sciuto studies the flavor. This is typical of Sciuto’s hands-on style of management at Side Bar.

Side Bar recently went through a complete remodel where it had to be shut down for a few months. Now, with summer in full swing, the nightspot is up and running with a whole new look and feel. The vibe is very high end with the ambiance of a modern Las Vegas nightclub. Sciuto had a big part in coming up with the new vision, but also credits his team with helping to see it through.

Side Bar’s vice president of nightlife operations, Pablo Aguilar, and General Manager Frankie Sciuto (Photo by Vince Meehan)
Nature play is back with new exploration area

Shamli Tarbell (Photo by Delle Willett)

The average cost of a new playground is upwards of $300,000. Parker tasked the committee with the daunting challenge of creating the pilot NEA for less than $15,000.

Significantly less expensive than traditional playgrounds, NEAs can be almost anywhere. From existing parks and open space to vacant lots, nature playgrounds can be implemented throughout San Diego.

The park uses materials the Parks and Rec Department can easily, and cheaply, procure. Large logs were salvaged from city parks when a huge windstorm knocked down over 300 trees. Massive boulders were repurposed from a local decommissioned beach project. Sand from an old playground was salvaged to create a new sandbox digging area instead of sending it to the landfill.

Native and drought-tolerant trees and shrubs from the city’s Balboa Park Nursery were added to create shade and interest. Other than engineered wood chips for safety surfacing and decomposed granite for access to the site, all materials were free and creatively repurposed for nature play.

The NEA is intended to whet a kid’s appetite for more adventure in nature and the adjacent trail system facilitates the opportunity for miles of hiking and exploration. Morley Field is also located within a highly urban area and the committee wanted to ensure the play area would be within reach of kids who may not have a lot of experience outside in nature.

“I often see families here constructing forts or whipping up kitchen-play ‘foods’ with the natural loose materials we provided at the site,” said Tarbell. “There are a few constructed elements to serve as a rough framework, but the site is really designed to encourage creativity and imaginative play.”

Vertical branches set in the ground create the frame for weaving in branches and reeds to create a log cabin-like fort. Tree cookies often serve as plates while sand, cobble, wild berries and pinecones serve as pretend “foods.” Upright boulders with natural notches support branches for a small lean-to-style fort.

“One thing can be expected in this area,” explained Tarbell. “Every time you visit, you will find different forts and structures created in different ways and places. Come and make your own!”

What especially interests Tarbell is the programming that can be developed to go along with the design of the nature parks at Morley Field and another at Golden Hill Park.

“As a public agency, we have the opportunity to connect programing with design with that you can’t do in the private sector, where I often found myself wanting to design things to be programmed but that was never part of our scope.”

Explained Tarbell, “here at Parks and Rec we can talk to the kids and parents and develop nature-based programs with them to dynamically activate the space. In addition to free play, at the Rec Center at Golden Hills, kids can take part in nature play activities like crafts and mud play.”

Landscape Architect Ilisa Goldman of Rooted in Place Consulting, and a temporary executive for over 30 years, with an emphasis on conservation of the environment. She can be reached at dellawillett@gmail.com.

There are numerous studies supporting the benefits of kids spending time in nature including higher test scores, improved health, and better grades (which alleviates ADD) and care and respect for nature.
non-binding memorandum of understanding, or MOU, with the San Diego Association of Governments on the 70-acre Old Town site.

While the MOU on paper is between the U.S. Navy and SANDAG, other governing entities — including the City of San Diego — also have stepped up to the plate and expressed interest in helping pave a path forward for the Old Town Campus.

Conceptually, a number of possibilities have been floated for all or portions of the Old Town Campus. SANDAG has been advocating for the use of a portion of the site for a “Grand Central Station” that could serve as an important transportation hub that could connect the trolley system to the airport. Other reuse possibilities for portions of the campus include a hybrid, mixed-use development scenario that could bring more housing, office space and retail to Downtown.

The MOU, officially signed July 10, outlines why the Navy is exploring different options for the Old Town campus at this time.

“The existing space is currently underutilized and is functionally obsolete, given the 1940s-era facilities’ design,” a passage with underutilized and is functionally obsolete.

Navy officials have indicated the importance of the Old Town Campus to optimal use of the Old Town Campus for a number of years.

“This agreement, this MOU, gives us a framework to work with the City of San Diego,” Edelson said. “The Navy needs to develop [the campus] for war-fighting purposes to protect the country. If we can have a framework to collaborate and communicate on the redevelopment of this site... that is a wonderful opportunity.”

While the Navy will determine the ultimate next steps for the Old Town Campus, Steve Vaus, chair of the board overseeing SANDAG said he looks forward to having the organization have a seat at the table as well.

“Shoulder to shoulder, we’ll move closer to have a transportation system that meets the needs of every person in every part of the community, all while ensuring the Navy has what it needs to keep America safe.” Vaus, mayor of Poway, said at the news conference.

Navy officials have indicated plans of posting periodic updates on the redevelopment reviews of the Old Town Campus at their official website. cnic.navy.mil/regions/cswr.

— Dave Fidlin is a freelance journalist with a special affinity for the world’s greatest cities having all of their televisions.


“Theme is ‘Wonder’”

Wondering which TV show or movie to watch when you have some time to unwind? Cox Communications just made it even easier to find a new favorite show with its recent launch of Prime Video on Cox Contour TV.

Prime Video joins Netflix, YouTube, NPR One and others in the Contour TV family of apps. Cox Contour TV customers can use their voice remote control to easily and quickly access Prime Video and all of the other popularly acclaimed shows such as “The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel” directly on their televisions.

Other popular Originals include “Hanna,” “Tom Clancy’s Jack Ryan,” “Guava Island,” “Homecoming,” and "The Man in the High Castle.”

“Hanna” (1 Season)

Based on the 2011 film of the same name, “Hanna” is a brooding thriller about a young girl raised by her father in isolation in the woods and trained to be a lethal assassin. Thrust into the real world with no sense of social norms, the 12-year-old skillfully dodges an off-book CIA agent while searching for the truth about her identity.

“Jack Ryan” (1 Season)

This political action thriller follows CIA analyst Jack Ryan, a character from Tom Clancy’s well-established “Ryanverse,” who is pulled from the safety of his desk job to work in the field.

"Sandcastles" from Page 1

THE PLACE TO BE

Considered among the top 20 must-see festivals in the world, the San Diego Sandcastle Competition that ran from 1980-2011, is indeed one of the world’s most prominent sand-sculpting competitions.

It is also the focal point of activities that draw more than 200,000 visitors to the beautiful Embarcadero and Broadway cruise ship pier.

As for the competition, it will be among 12 world master sculptors who will carve solo for four days to create museum-quality sculptures as high as 15 feet tall and weighing more than 20,000 pounds.

“Sandcastles” from Page 5
Wonderfront 2019 campaign, Joyce explained. Sculptors will interpret this theme as they wish, from ephemeral ideas like “curiosity” to the greatest wonders of the world, or even whimsical renditions of Stevie Wonder or Wonder Woman. Gordon said it also lets patrons view the sculptures up close. The couple has been involved in the sand event since 2006 but took it over and made it their own in 2012. They renamed it and moved the event to the pier from Imperial Beach.

TALENTED ARTISTS

As for the sculptors, there are only about 50 in the world who create at this level and get paid to compete (this year’s prize and appearance money in San Diego is $60,000), Gordon said.

“Many started out in sand because they wanted to see their ideas before doing permanent sculpture like marble,” he said. “But they stuck with sand because they liked it and the fact that it is temporary art. Once it’s done, it’s pretty much destroyed because they liked it, and the fact that it is temporary art. Once it’s done, it’s pretty much destroyed.”

“Creating with my peers in San Diego and all over the world provides me with continuous possibilities to learn,” said Dmitry Klimenko of St. Petersburg, Russia.

“When my hands touch the material, when my heart opens to give life, when my head is illuminated by light, I become the co-creator of the universe. An artist is one who spiritualizes matter,” said Melineige Beauregard of Montreal, Quebec.

MORE ART

In addition to the sand sculptures, there will be the annual Dimensional Art Exposition where artists from as far as New Mexico and Montana exhibit and sell one-of-a-kind works of art. Visitors will be able to check out 2,000 items including handmade clothing and accessories, wood carvings and metal designs, beautiful gourds, glass art, jewelry, quilted greeting cards, ceramics and much more to buy and take home.

TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING

According to event planners, transportation and user-friendly parking options make getting to and from the event easy. MTS trolleys and buses, the North County Coaster and Amtrak trains take all event-goers within two blocks of the Broadway Pier. The Coronado Ferry disembarks next door! Lyft and Uber drop attendees at the festival’s front door.

If you’re driving, you may park at the USS Midway or B Street pier, within two blocks of the event, or just across Harbor Drive at the Lane Field hotels or Windham Bayside. There are other lots available nearby, including the Waterfront Park/County Administration Building on west A Street. On-street parking is free on Sunday and Monday — no meter feeding.

You may also park remotely and enjoy a ride along the bay on the Port of San Diego’s Waterfront Shuttle. It runs every 20 minutes in a loop from Sheraton Marina across from the airport on the north to Harbor Drive Bridge near the Convention Center on the South. Cost is $3. More info at portofsandiego.org/shuttle.

MORE 2019 SHOW FEATURES

San Diego Seals lacrosse stars will make special appearances to take photos with fans and sign autographs.

An expanded kid zone features sandcastle building lessons from master sculptors, and rides such as European bungee, bubble fun, bounce houses and more!

Families can picnic on the bay with food and drink from over a dozen gourmet food trucks and vendors including: Cousins Maine Lobster, Eat Your Heart Out, The Habitat Burger Grille, Matheny’s Wagon Works, Lolita’s Mexican Food, Sophia’s Kitchen, Pomodoro Rosso, Kettle Masters Kettle Korn, and Maui Wowi.

Live entertainment from bands paying tribute to the Beatles, Beach Boys, Bob Dylan, Journey and other greats are also scheduled, as well as special appearances by Elvis on Saturday and Sunday nights!

—Jill Diamond is a Southern California freelance writer with a penchant for interesting historical pieces. Reach her at JillDiamondHistory@gmail.com.
Atkins: Assembly bill will help address wildfires

By TONI G. ATKINS

The catastrophic wildfires of 2017 and 2018 were the most deadly and destructive in California history, leading to the deaths of 129 people and the destruction of entire communities. San Diego knows wildfires like these all too well. As San Diego and all of California enter the hottest months of the year, and peak fire season, Governor Newsom and the Legislature have taken a number of important steps to help prevent those kinds of disasters from happening again.

Climate change is affecting weather patterns and extending the fire season, but there are other factors, as well. For example, the five-year statewide drought parched our chaparral, forests and other wildlands, killing more than 100 million trees and making small, rural communities, and the boundaries of larger cities a kind of dry kindling for horrific blazes.

In some cases, the ignition sources for these fires came from the vast network of electrical lines erected by private utilities — such as Pacific Gas & Electric. In addition to the tragic loss of life, the fires sparked by electrical lines caused billions of dollars in property damages and terrible losses to residents, businesses, and public agencies. These damages affect PG&E, but also Southern California Edison and San Diego Gas and Electric.

Utilities rely on their good credit to borrow and finance costs in order to invest in their infrastructure to prevent future fires, to compensate fire victims and to procure the clean energy that is the backbone of our state’s climate efforts. Without legislative action, the credit rating of the three utilities was in danger of being downgraded significantly, resulting in increased borrowing costs, possible bankruptcy, and, most importantly for the people of California, higher costs on household energy bills.

If we did not act, the economic and environmental costs to the state would be massive. Clearly, this was an unacceptable outcome for my colleagues and me in the Senate.

Working with the governor and our colleagues in the Assembly, we crafted a measure, AB 1054, that ultimately received strong support from Democrats and Republicans alike. AB 1054 requires utilities to invest $5 billion immediately to make their infrastructure safer to prevent future fires. It creates a new independent board to oversee fire safety so that utilities put safety first. AB 1054 further requires utilities to obtain extensive safety certifications that are reviewed annually. It also establishes a catastrophic wildfire fund to help pay wildfire victims, with first priority for funding coming from the pockets of utility shareholders, who will pay billions of dollars more into this fund than utility consumers. Only if a safety certification is issued and maintained would a utility be able to participate in a fund to cover the damages from future wildfires.

The Senate fought for a number of additional provisions, including stronger utility safety requirements through field audits and annual review, which, oddly, wasn’t happening. It also took on the corporate culture of utilities by requiring strict new compensation executive requirements, including tying salaries and compensation such as bonuses to safety performance.

As with any big issue affecting our state, no single piece of legislation is perfect. However, AB 1054 is a step forward. There is more work to do. When the Legislature reconvenes on Aug. 12, wildfire preparedness — including insurance issues, additional investments in defensible space and structure protection — will be among our top priorities.

—Toni G. Atkins represents District 39 in the California Senate. Follow her on Twitter @SenToniAtkins.

OPINION

Medicare and foreign travel

GREG DILL | FREELANCE

Planning to travel abroad this summer? Before you go, keep in mind that Medicare usually does not cover health care services or supplies while you’re traveling outside the United States.

1. That doesn’t mean you have to travel abroad without health coverage. Here are three ways you can get health coverage outside the U.S.:

1. If you have Medicare Advantage or another Medicare health plan (instead of Original Medicare), check with your plan to see if it includes coverage when traveling outside the U.S.

2. If you have a Medicare Supplement Insurance (Medigap) policy, check your policy to see if it includes coverage when traveling outside the U.S.

Consider buying a travel insurance policy that includes health coverage.

In some cases, Medicare may cover medically necessary health care services you get on board a ship within the territorial waters adjoining land areas of the United States. Medicare won’t pay for health care services you get when a ship is more than six hours away from a U.S. port.

Medicare also may pay for inpatient hospital, doctor, ambulance services, or dialysis you get in a foreign country in these rare cases:

• You’re in the U.S. when a medical emergency occurs, and the foreign hospital is closer than the nearest U.S. hospital that can treat your medical condition.

• You’re traveling through Canada without unreasonable delay by the most direct route between Alaska and another state where a medical emergency occurs, and the Canadian hospital is closer than the nearest U.S. hospital that can treat the emergency.

• You live in the U.S. and the foreign hospital is closer to your home than the nearest U.S. hospital that can treat your medical condition, regardless of whether an emergency exists.

Medicare drug plans (Part D) don’t cover prescription drugs you buy outside the U.S.

If you get sick or injured while abroad, in most cases you’ll pay 100% of the costs. In the situations described above, you pay 20% of the Medicare-approved amount, and the Part B deductible applies. In the situations above, Medicare pays only for services covered under Original Medicare:

• Medicare Part A (Hospital Insurance) covers hospital care (care you get when you’ve been formally admitted with a doctor’s order to a hospital as an inpatient).

• Part B covers emergency and non-emergency ambulance and doctor services you get immediately before and during your covered foreign inpatient hospital stay. Medicare generally won’t pay for services (like return ambulance trips home) in either of these cases:

—Medicare didn’t cover your hospital stay.

—You got ambulance and doctor services outside the hospital after your covered hospital stay ended.

• You pay the part of the charge you would normally pay for covered services. This includes any medically necessary doctor and ambulance services you get in a foreign country as part of a covered inpatient hospital stay. You also pay the coinsurance, copayments, and deductibles you normally pay if you got these same services or supplies inside the U.S.

The 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and American Samoa are considered part of the United States.

Foreign hospitals aren’t required to file Medicare claims for your medical costs. You need to submit an itemized bill to Medicare for your doctor, hospital, and ambulance services if both of these apply:

• You’re admitted to a foreign hospital under one of the situations above.

• The foreign hospital doesn’t submit Medicare claims for you.

Safe travels!

—Greg Dill is Medicare’s regional administrator for Arizona, California, Nevada, Hawaii, and the Pacific Territories. You can get answers to your Medicare questions by visiting www.medicare.gov or calling 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-631-4227).
Neapolitan pop crooner Patrizio Buanne comes to Little Italy!


For Patrizio, it is all about the voice and an instinctive ability to convey real emotion. The dark, rugged good looks and the singer who speaks six languages fluently, has already won over a legion of fans with previous albums released internationally and rooted in the pop traditions of his Southern Italian homeland.

Patrizio was born in Vienna, Austria, to Neapolitan parents, Franco and Alina Buanne. He spent his childhood living and traveling from an early age between his family’s hometown of Naples and Vienna for his parents’ restaurant business, all the while developing a passion for the languages he now speaks fluently: Italian, German, English, French, Spanish and Polish. At the age of 10, Patrizio graduated from school in Vienna and moved back to Naples where he attended university to study language.

Noticing that he would not be able to develop an international career from Naples, he started to look toward central Europe. With a great concept and full of ambition and passion, Patrizio was finally signed to Universal Music. With a line-up of classic and contemporary artists known for their enduring musicality, captivating narratives, and audience connections. Patrizio Buanne will perform at Little Italy’s Amici Park on Saturday, Aug. 17, from 6 p.m. to midnight, with a VIP reception starting at 5 p.m. in Little Italy’s Amici Park. Experience an evening of delicious food, well-poured drinks, a cigar and rum lounge, live music, a full casino, pirate-themed pageantry and much more.

- Climbed aboard as Little Italy’s Amici Park transforms for a night — all for a good cause. The Little Italy community will come together for Ferragosto’s sixth event in the series to raise money for historical preservation, youth programs and school scholarships. Pulling out all the stops this year, guests can expect a full-filled summer night of fun games, dancing, two live bands and delectable food from 18 of Little Italy’s favorite restaurants — including drinks, cocktails, appetizers, main dishes and desserts.

- You won’t want to miss out on a chance to win a trip to Italy or the cash jackpot that will be raffled off at the event. There will also be a live auction, allowing guests to collect some treasures of their own!

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San Diego’s favorite themed gala, Ferragosto, returns to Amici Park for its final year on Saturday, Aug. 17

Sail away for a night in San Diego’s Little Italy to celebrate the largest themed Italian-American gala in the country, Ferragosto! Returning for its final year with the theme, “Pirates Invade Sicily,” Ferragosto will take place on Saturday, Aug. 17, from 6 p.m. to midnight, with a VIP reception starting at 5 p.m. in Little Italy’s Amici Park. Experience an evening of delicious food, well-poured drinks, a cigar and rum lounge, live music, a full casino, pirate-themed pageantry and much more!

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New England transplant Steve Hamilton has been hired as executive chef for Jsix Restaurant. Located inside Kimpton Hotel Solamar, he will also oversee the culinary program for the hotel’s banquet and in-room dining options as well as for the property’s Upper East Bar.

His arrival this summer from Kimpton’s Nine Zero Hotel in Boston fills an overdue void for the position. Look for menu newcomers such as lobster mac-n-cheese, smoked chicken wings, and pasta tossed with crab and cheese, among other dishes.

‘Biggest party’ the annual event has raised $2 million to midnight, Aug. 17, in the park. The Little Italy Food Hall will host its final gala from 6 p.m. to midnight, Aug. 17, in Ingram Plaza at ARTS DISTRICT Liberty Station.

Good news for thirsty vegans. Puesto has introduced a plant-based version of its popular frozen horchata drink, which can be ordered with or without Malahat rum. The recipe came about through a partnership with Califa Farms, which furnishes the drink with unsweetened oat milk instead of standard whole milk. Through August, for every frozen horchata sold, Puesto will donate $1 to Chefs Cycle for No Kid Hungry.

Vegan horchata is now available Downtown at a gourmet taco restaurant. (Courtesy of Puesto)

During its 10-year run, the event has raised $2 million for three local non-profit organizations: the Little Italy Elementary School Foundation, and Our Lady of the Rosary Church.

This year’s closing theme is “Pirates Invade Sicily.” Nearly 20 neighborhood restaurants and drinking establishments will provide hors d’oeuvres, main dishes, desserts, drinks and cocktails. They include Civico 1845, Queenstown, Bar One, Davanti Enoteca, Mission Brewery, and more. The event will also feature casino games, live music and dancing. Attendees can dress in theme costumes, cocktail attire or summer clothing.

Tickets start at $115 for early-bird purchases (before Aug. 4) and increase to $125 and higher for singles and groups.

Attendees can dress in theme costumes, cocktail attire or summer clothing. Attendees can dress in theme costumes, cocktail attire or summer clothing.

The eye-catching fried chicken biscuit at You & Yours Distilling Co. —Frank Sabatini Jr. can be reached at fsabatini@san.rr.com.

Brunch alert: You & Yours Distilling Co. in the East Village recently debuted brunch service featuring several unique dishes. The menu is available from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sundays and includes bruléed grapefruit with maple-pecan granules; a fried chicken biscuit with a quail egg and roasted jalapeno gravy; and cherry-cream cheese French toast with a corn flake crust. Equally creative cocktails made with the distillery’s vodka and gin are part of the experience.

San Diego Day by Marna Schindler

August, for every frozen horchata sold, Puesto will donate $1 to Chefs Cycle for No Kid Hungry.
Wieners and sausages of a higher order

Restaurant Review

By FRANK SABATINI JR.

Think of the iconic foods we shoved down at baseball games — hot dogs and burgers, followed later perhaps by an Italian sausage to soak up those spendy beers we consumed by the sixth inning.

In terms of quality, Dog Haus Biergarten knocks them out of the ballpark. And with gentler hits to the wallet.

The Pasadena-based chain sized into San Diego about three years ago, coincidentally a stone’s throw from Petco Park. With about 35 locations across the country, including one in Vista, the East Village outpost is the largest in the collection.

Run by franchisee Henry Lee, who previously worked as a medical doctor, it spans 5,000 square feet and greets with a familiar industrial design that offers indoor/outdoor seating. The patio and lower-tier dining area inside are both dog-friendly.

The bill of fare titillates with a colorful variety of high-quality dogs and sausages made with “all natural” hormone-free meats. There’s also grass-fed “all natural” hormone-free dogs and sausages made with form-fitting King’s Hawaiian sweet rolls? Certainly not me in places where meats and condiments get tucked in places where meats

We started with a couple of mini corn dogs flaunting a sinful spin. They’re made onsite with root beer batter, which changes the course of sweetness from that stark, classic corn flavor to something faintly resembling molasses, hence the sarsaparilla derivative in the root beer. Add a few dabs of spicy mustard, and you’ve arrived to corn dog heaven.

Those same options apply to sausages and burgers.

We got our taste of the company’s chili via an order of “love boat” fries. It was a trifecta of excellent components: the fries were thin, clean and crisp; the chili was dense from small kidney beans and finely ground beef; and the “haus” coleslaw also on top was desirably crunchy. The roughage from the slaw, whether on the fries or as a side order, is the closest thing you’ll get to a salad here, considering there aren’t any. But who craves big bowls of vegetal matter on days when “cholesterol” and “carbohydrates” are foreign words.

The bratwurst was fabulous, an exceptionally mouthwatering link tucked into a bun and topped simply with caramelized onions and barbecue sauce. It was packed with cheddar cheese, crunchy pickle and crisp grilled onions. The surprise twist was a creation by Las Vegas chef and TV personality Chris Oh.

For August the dish is Korean chicken wings with honey glaze and Sriracha mayo, a creation by Las Vegas chef and TV personality Chris Oh. With nothing priced over $9, and given the wholesome quality of the meats, the establishment (albeit a chain) is a tasty standout on the East Village dining scene. And in all respects, it is dog-loving.

—Frank Sabatini Jr. is the author of “Secret San Diego” (ECW Press), and began his local writing career more than two decades ago as a staffer for the former San Diego Tribune. You can reach him at fsabatini@san.rr.com.

The “das brat” with sauerkraut, sauteed onions and spicy mustard

In addition, Dog Haus features an off-menu item authored by a celebrity chef once a month. Through every purchase, $1 is donated to the company’s national charity partner, No Kid Hungry. For August the dish is Korean chicken wings with honey glaze and Sriracha mayo, a creation by Las Vegas chef and TV personality Chris Oh.

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DINING

San Diego Downtown News
August 2019

Restaurant Review

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In addition, Dog Haus features an off-menu item authored by a celebrity chef once a month. Through every purchase, $1 is donated to the company’s national charity partner, No Kid Hungry. For August the dish is Korean chicken wings with honey glaze and Sriracha mayo, a creation by Las Vegas chef and TV personality Chris Oh.

With nothing priced over $9, and given the wholesome quality of the meats, the establishment (albeit a chain) is a tasty standout on the East Village dining scene. And in all respects, it is dog-loving.

—Frank Sabatini Jr. is the author of “Secret San Diego” (ECW Press), and began his local writing career more than two decades ago as a staffer for the former San Diego Tribune. You can reach him at fsabatini@san.rr.com.
It started as an interview project in a late father’s memory, side-stepped as a jukebox musical re-vue, and emerged as a celebration of both a man and the musical era his studio helped usher in.

Meet “33 1/3 - House of Dreams,” the world premiere musical performed by the San Diego Repertory Theatre in partnership with the San Diego School of Creative and Performing Arts and R&R Productions, LLC. The show runs from Aug. 1-25 at the Lyceum Stage Theatre.

“33 1/3 - House of Dreams” tells the story of Hollywood’s Gold Star Recording Studios: both the hit-making musicians in front of the mic and the crew behind it, including co-founder and lead engineer Stan Ross. The story is told to a tonal backdrop that samples from the more than 120 Top 40 hits and iconic songs the studio produced. The playlist includes such classics as “Summertime Blues,” “La Bamba,” “Be My Baby,” “Unchained Melody,” and “Wouldn’t It Be Nice.”

In its 33 1/3-year run—the title references both the number of years the studio was open and the RPMs on a record—Gold Star worked with just about every musical genre you can imagine. From Iron Butterfly to Ritchie Valens and The Beach Boys to Ike and Tina Turner, Gold Star produced it all. Legends like The Rolling Stones, Bruce Springsteen, Bob Dylan, and The Beatles all made trips to Gold Star to experience its magic.

“Gold Star was the mecca—the place to go to in the ’60s,” said co-writer Dr. Brad Ross. In later decades, even after it lost its commercial standing, the studio would still be a musical pilgrimage (The Ramones referred to it as “ballywog ground”—their own Abbey Road). But this rock ’n’ roll show didn’t start (or end) as a compilation of some of the best-loved songs of the last century. It started as a way for a son to discover more about his father.

FAMILY TIES
Brad Ross is the son of Stan and Vera Ross. Even though Brad grew up while Stan was still working in the recording studio, he was less starstruck and more just doing his own thing (although Bradadmitted that having Sonny and Cher at his brother’s bat mitzvah was quite the couple). Although Brad played the drums and was part of a cover band, his main career has always been dentistry.

“My father said, listen. The music business is really tough,” Brad recalled, referencing some of the great drummers his dad saw and what they had to go through. “I decided to do music as a hobby and pursue a different career.”

The choice paid off, as Bradestablished Mission Trails Dental Dentistry located in San Carlos in 1988. It remains a thriving practice, employing two other doctors and a full staff.

“He is meticulous, he is caring, and has great attention to detail,” bragged “33 1/3 – House of Dreams” co-writer and patient Jonathan “Jon” Rosenberg. You read that right—the writing team first met in the dental chair. Actually, they first met on the Little League field, when Jon’s son played T-ball as a “Dr. Ross Tooth Fixer!” Long after his son had graduated into other sports, Jon kept coming back to Brad for his dental needs.

When Stan passed away in 2016, Brad decided that he wanted to learn more about the man behind the legend. He planned to interview some of the surviving and close-by musicians Stan worked with. Brad recruited Jon to be his road trip and interview partner, due to Jon’s radio and musical background, which included disc jockeying in Michigan and interviewing for KPBS.

“Jon came in for a typical dental visit, and was my captive audience,” joked Brad. They started traveling to Los Angeles and Palm Springs in 2012, meeting with titans such as Brian Wilson and Bill Medley. The more people they talked to, the more the pair discovered just how well-loved Stan was. He treated people as individuals, with integrity and respect.

“Mentioning Stan’s name was like opening the keys to the kingdom,” Jon said in regard to getting time with musical icons.

“People loved him, and he loved them,” Brad said.

But about six months into their road trip, the men realized that this was more than just a collection of stories for Brad’s family.

“The message kept being, ‘Gold Star and your father and Dave [Gold; Gold Star partner] were a game-changer,” Brad recalled. “But I’m a dentist—I knew I had a story to share, and I knew I needed teammates. I could not do this by myself.”

ENTER THE EXPERTS
Jon and Brad wrote the first script together, and chose 10 different songs to represent Gold Star’s progression. But through readings in Jon’s apartment building and the Lamplighter’s Theatre in La Mesa, the reaction was consistently, “We love the music—work on the story.”

So, they did. At the urging of Jon’s wife, he reached out to Javier Velasco, the artistic director of San Diego Ballet and choreographer and playwright as well. The trio officially met at a piece that Steve Gunderson and Javier had conceived and mounted at the San Diego Rep as “Everybody’s Talkin’ - The Music of Harry Nilsson.”

Javier was immediately drawn to the potential the show offered. “The show was attractive to me on two fronts. First, this piece is about the creation of an artistic ‘space.’ Not a single artist’s story, but a crucible for artists.” He explained, “The second thing is that it dealt with regular ‘ordinary’ people: the regular people who supported the artists, and the people who supported the people who supported the artists.”

“33 1/3 – House of Dreams” doesn’t just tell the story of Gold Star; it tells the love story of Stan and Vera. It tells of the deep friendship between Stan and Dave.

“Stan was the persona of Gold Star, but there would be no Gold Star without Dave,” declared Brad. Dave was actually responsible for helping create and build all of Gold Star’s equipment. This includes the echo chamber that helped create the “Wall of Sound”

Here are a few of my favorite summer tips to help you save between 4pm and 9pm when energy prices are highest:

- Use a portable or ceiling fan to save big on AC.
- Keep blinds and curtains closed during summer days to block out direct sunlight and reduce cooling costs.
- Cool down your home until 4pm; set your AC 7° higher until 9pm. Take advantage of off-peak period pricing.
- Charge an electric vehicle before 4pm or after 9pm.
- If you have a pool, run the pump before 4pm or after 9pm.

Find more tips at sdge.com/whentomatters

A dream musical born in a dentist chair
The recently remodeled Side Bar (Photo by TK)

A charcuterie board is one of Side Bar's favorite new bites. (Photo by Vince Meehan)

San Diego's craft beer scene is well represented at Side Bar.

San Diego's craft beer scene is well represented at Side Bar. A charcuterie board is one of Side Bar's favorite new bites. A charcuterie board is one of Side Bar's favorite new bites.

Sciuto says the difference is night and day from the previous design compared to the new remodel. “We definitely wanted to go with a lighter feel. Before... Side Bar was very dark, a lot of reds and blacks, so we wanted to do something completely different. And along with that, we added the food element. And another thing we did was to open up the windows along Sixth Avenue. So there are a lot of changes that we’ve added. We even opened up the front doors that haven’t been opened in 11 years.”

One hallmark of Side Bar is the weekly industry night event on Wednesday nights. Given the fact that the hospitality industry works over the weekends, Wednesdays are pretty much a different world. Side Bar is open from 6 p.m. until 10 p.m. Thursday through Saturday for the bartenders, which is when they have been working the full week. This camaraderie within the industry has other benefits such as mutual cooperation with special projects. This includes reviving the Side Bar kitchen, which stood dormant for many years. “We actually had a lot of help from Chef James, who is going to be the chef at Huntress, who came and helped us out,” Sciuto stated. “And along with members of our team, we came up with some small plates, and it’s actually worked out really well. We have everything from a charcuterie board, to our cauliflower bites that people love, to our Tokyo bites, some flatbreads flower bites that people love, to our cauliflower bites that people love, to our Tokyo bites, some flatbreads...”

Sciuto adds that the Side Bar kitchen, which stood dormant for many years, is now open from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. every night, which has been going on for almost 10 years.” Sciuto said, “We’ve got some fun bartenders from different venues come serve drinks, and other venues even bring tasters of their own food or their cocktails. Their staff will soon be in and they’ll get them bottle service and let them blow off some steam after working the full weekend.”

Side Bar is actually two venues in one, the first being the front bar area that now is open to the street via large windows. The second is the more secluded rear room, via large windows. The second area that now is open to the street is the more secluded rear room, via large windows.

DJ Chris Salguido spins at Side Bar (Photo by Vince Meehan)

San Diego Downtown News
August 2019

A way to approve is “Yes.”

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San Diego’s craft beer scene is well represented at Side Bar.

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The recently remodeled Side Bar (Photo by TK)

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Get Spritzed

To kick off an August cocktai\l special, Upper East Bar is hosting a “Get Spritzed” rooftop pool party. Located at the KimptonSolmar Hotel at 435 Sixth Ave. in East Village, the 1920s-themed event will feature two passed canapés, music and plenty of Aperol Spritzes to go around. 4-6 p.m.

“Straight”

Loud Fridge Theatre Group is producing the San Diego premier of “Straight”, the provocative new play by Drew Fornarola and Scott Elmegreen, that deals with fidelity, sexuality and identity in “post-equality” America, directed by Kate Rose Reynolds and Andesia Agosto. “Straight” The New York Times Critic’s Pick, chosen for its “smart, bracing writing brimming with clever wise-cracks and thought-provoking observations,” made its off-Broadway debut at the Acorn Theatre in 2016. Now, “Straight” is making its California debut, after enchanting audiences in New York City, Mexico City, Austria, Berlin and much of the East Coast. Playing from July 25 to Aug 4 on Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. Tenth Avenue Arts Cen- ter, Forum Stage, 330 10th Ave. Tickets range from $17.50-$35 and can be purchased online at loudfridgetheatre.com/straight.

Saturday, Aug.3

A Short Walk Home

Several hundred San Diego res- idents will lace up their sneak- ers and walk two miles to get active in solving the region’s homelessness crisis during A Short Walk Home, San Diego’s only walk to end homelessness. After walking through the goal at the finish line, partic- ipants will have the chance to explore Falsehood Villages programs and join staff in vari- ous activities, including writing notes of encouragement to be placed at the Village.

The Not-So-Silent Short Film Festival Celluloid Soiree

What happens when viewers get to take part in the creation of a cinematic experience? Van- guard Culture and the La Jolla Historical Society present the Not-So-Silent Short Film Festival, featuring a selection of short silent films curated by award-winning soundscape artist Scott Paulson. Cosets are encouraged at the family-friendly event. Tickets include complimentary tastings by Boochooastrod Infine Tequila, gourmet popcorn by Chef Daniela de la Puente and one craft cocktail. General admission is $15.95 p.m. at IDEA1, 899 Park Blvd.

Swim & Spin Saturdays

KimptonSolmar Hotel is partner- ing with Fit City Adventures to offer mermaid core and spin classes, $25 per class at Upper East Bar. $25 per class. Mer- maid core at 9 a.m. Spin at 10 a.m. 435 Sixth Ave.

Monday, Aug.5

The Experiential Movement Lab

This workshop explores how physical movement can be a metaphor for finding balance in life and overall health. Taught by Rachel Alsop, the Experiential Movement Lab will help attendees explore how physical movement is connected to life balance and overall health. The series re- veals how people can break the sedentary patterns in daily life that lead to physical and creative atrophy. Attendees will learn to eliminate fear and self-doubt in their interactions with the world around them, using movement as a catalyst for identifying one’s greater purpose. IDEA1, 899 Park Blvd. 7-3:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Aug.7

Flexible Flights Webinar

SANDS will host a series of five, 45-minute webinars to dis- cuss its “5 Big Moves.” These strategies set the framework for a bold new transportation vision for San Diego Forward. The 2021 Regional Plan, which will enhance connectivity, increase safety and sustainability, and improve quality of life. Explore how these moves can build up on the popularity and success of shared, on-demand services like ride-share, ride-hailing, micmicnut, bike-share, scooters, and delivery vehicles. These flights provide personalized and convenient travel options for all types of shared vehicles available 24/7 for different types of trips, which can reduce the need to own a car. The webinar will begin at noon and last un- til 5 p.m. Register at SDForward.com/webinars.

Thursday, Aug.8

Business Strategies for Creatives

In partnership with Cassidy Creative Solutions, Vanguard Culture presents a series of workshops to help creatives take their art practice to the next level. Attendees are invited to participate in candid conversations about how to make one’s art practice both market- able and profitable. Noon-1 p.m. IDEA1, 899 Park Blvd.

Summer Family Fun with Zovara

Get ready for a fun, interactive adventure starring wild animals! This show is one of several of a free kids program at Mission Valley Library’s summer reading program! Visit sandiegozoo.org for more information. 10:30-11:30 a.m. at the Community Room inside Mission Valley Library.

Mike Hess Brewing Dinner

Top of the Market Restaurant in Downtown San Diego will host a five-course dinner highlighted by Mike Hess Brewing’s best beers. Executive Chef Jeremy Loomis and Lead Brewer Paul Deras are putting together an exciting menu showcasing each season’s brew and cuisine in bell California, and how seriously it can be elevated with an ice- cold glass of brew. Tickets are $90 per person. 6:30 p.m.

Friday, Aug.9

Sip & Swim

Celebrate the end of one of TV’s most-loved events at this Shark Week-themed Sip&Dwinautur- ing shark floats and a signa- ture Sharka-POO-laoo drink. As always, the Weissmuller Pool will be the perfect place to lounge, dance and have fun, with live music by Lady Dottie &the Diamonds with feel-good sounds by local-friendly duo Truly Hard Seltzer. Admission is $30 and includes the signature cocktail. The pool party starts splashing on-site and lasts un- til 5 p.m. Register at SDForward.com/webinars.

Friday, Aug.9

Gay Men’s Book Club

The Gay Men’s Book Club will meet on Tuesday, August 13, to discuss this month’s selec- tion, “What Belongs to You” by Garth Greenwell, a novel about a gay American teacher’s erot- istic and edgy relationship with a hustler he meets in a public rest room in Bulgaria. Anyone interested in novels, memoirs and plays with gay themes is welcome to join the club. 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Mission Valley Library Community Room, 2133 Parnon Parkway. Register at bpt.me/4273781.

Saturday, Aug.10

Soldiers and Citizens

This wildly popular festival cele- brates literacy and the literary work of Mark Twain and other 19th-century authors. Experts from famous works will be de- picted by costumed San Diego actors at a variety of park ven- tures throughout the day. Old Town State Historic Park. 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

Swim & Spin Saturdays

KimptonSolmar Hotel is part- nering with Fit City Adventures to offer mermaid core and spin classes, $25 per class at Upper East Bar. 5:30 p.m. Mer- maid core at 9 a.m. Spin at 10 a.m. 435 Sixth Ave.

Monday, Aug.12

Live Electronic Music Workshop

Attendees will learn the ele- ments of production and live performance with two-time Grammy Award nominee Ramon Ramirez of the Porch-itch-Nortec Collective. Open to novice, intermediate, or ad- vanced level musicians. Limit- ed to 20 participants. Free with early registration. 6:30-9 p.m. IDEA1, 899 Park Blvd.

Tuesday, Aug.13

OASIS presents: ‘Georgia O’Keeffe: Her Early Years’

Georgia O’Keeffe is one of the most-known and ad- mired artists, but what do we know of her early life and work? Join scholar AnikaMalakrynco to learn about this child prodigy, her mother’s great in- fluence, her art education and the impact of William Merritt Chase and Arthur Wesley Dow on her work. We will also dis- cuss O’Keeffe’s years of teach- ing in Virginia and Texas and her experimentation at this time which greatly influenced her later work. This presentation is free and open to the public, and there is no need to pre-register. 12:30-2:30 p.m. at the Com- munity Room inside Mission Valley Library.

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Saturday, Aug.17

A history of the Balboa Park Carousel

Local nonprofit Friends of Bal- boa Park will be hosting a his- torical lecture about the histori- cal significance of the iconic Balboa Park Carousel and Friends’ plans for its future. The event will feature prominent local historical architect David Marshall, Presi- dent of Heritage Architecture & Planning and board chairman of nonprofit Friends of Balboa Park, who will be highlighting the landmark, one of the oldest of its kind in the nation, for its architectur- al and historical significance for San Diego. 6-7:30 p.m. at the Balboa Park Carousel. $20 in- cludes carousel ride. RSVP at bit. ly/Zzn3237 or events@friendsofbalboapark.org.

Sunday, Aug.18

Summer in the City: A Downtown Music Festival and Celebration

The City is unique summertime music festival and celebration in support of Voices of Our City Choir and the work it does with San Diego’s home- less/unsheltered residents. It will be a fundraising event featuring local bands, auctions and give- aways in support of the San Di-ego Homeless Coalition. 4-9 p.m. Quarterday Event Space, 1301 Market St. Tickets are $25 for adults. Free street parking.

Monday, Aug.19

The Experiential Movement Lab

This workshop explores how physical movement can be a metaphor for finding balance in life and overall health. Taught by Rachel Alsop, the Experiential Movement Lab will help improviser and founder of Improv- isation Project Network, Patri- cia Maldonado, the Experimen- tal Movement Lab will help at- tendees explore how physical movement is connected to life balance and overall health. The series reveals how people can break the sedentary patterns in daily life that lead to physical and creative atrophy. Attendees will learn to eliminate fear and self-doubt in their interactions with the world around them, using movement as a catalyst for identifying one’s greater purpose. IDEA1, 899 Park Blvd. 7-3:30 p.m.

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Get ready for a fun, interactive adventure starring wild animals! This show is one of several of a free kids program at Mission Valley Library’s summer reading program! Visit sandiegozoo.org for more information. 10:30-11:30 a.m. at the Community Room inside Mission Valley Library.
Ashley Eckstein hosted the sixth annual Her Universe fashion show at the Manchester Grand Hyatt Hotel on July 18. This event was on the Thursday night agenda of Comic-Con. Eckstein is the founder of Her Universe, the voice of Ahsoka Tano in “Star Wars” and the author of “It’s Your Universe.”

“The theme for the evening was “The Power of Fashion.” Eckstein greeted the crowd wearing a She-Ra-inspired gown created by 2014 winner Andrew MacLaine. DreamWorks’ “She-Ra and the Princesses of Power” currently airs on Netflix. Co-host for the evening was DJ Amanda Jones, who also created the evening’s soundtrack with themes ranging from “Star Wars” to Disney to “Game of Thrones.”

This year, the winners will be able to collaborate with Eckstein on the “Her Universe” collection for Hot Topic. The theme will be a Wonder Woman collection for release next year. The judge’s winner was San Diegan Adria Renee. Her entry was titled “Destination: Isla Nublar” inspired by Star Wars’ “Jurassic Park.” Sarah Hambly was the audience winner for her “Bodak Green,” which was inspired by Marvel’s Loki character. Eckstein changed her outfit to a custom pantsuit in celebration of the 50th anniversary of Disneyland’s Haunted Mansion Ride. The 2015 “Her Universe” winner Leetal Platt designed it. Harmony Leiker created jewelry for Eckstein that was handcrafted and vintage-inspired. Eckstein also revealed an On Our Sleeves-themed dress that was a design for mental health to raise awareness as part of her work with Nationwide Children’s Hospitals.

This year, Cartoon Network brought back the Junior Designer Showcase in partnership with Bionicle, cheesecake factory luncheon, fashion show and luncheon to benefit St. Madeleine Sophie’s Center at the Hilton San Diego Bayfront. For tickets, visit smsmc.org/center-events/register-for-late-with-heart-fashion-show/

Junior Designer Showcase winners Emily (“Pearl Gala”), Eckstein wearing OnOur Sleeves dress, and Emerson (“Emerald Business Evil”)

Sarah Hambley with model wearing the winning Audience Choice award for “Bodak Green” (Photo by Diana Cavagnaro)

Adria Renee models her winning entry (judges choice), “Destination: Isla Nublar,” which was inspired by “Jurassic Park”

Upcoming events
Aug. 10 - “Dreaming of Style” - 42nd Haute with Heart Fashion Show and Luncheon to benefit St. Madeleine Sophie’s Center at the Hilton San Diego Bayfront. For tickets, visit smsmc.org/center-events/register-for-late-with-heart-fashion-show/

Sept. 15 - Fall Bridal Bazaar with fashion shows presented by Gretchen Productions at the San Diego Convention Center. These shows presented throughout the day. For more info: 760-334-5500


“My Hot Vogue” (“My Hero Academia”) by Sami Haag

“The Spirit of Hope” (“Star Wars”) by Lisa Truong

“IT Girl” (Stephen King’s “IT”) by Samantha Strickland

“Icy Hot Vogue” (“My Hero Academia”) by Sami Haag

“Pearl Gala” with a beautiful headpiece to coordinate with the gown.

Before the evening concluded, the audience was given the chance to walk the runway and show off their costume. If you have not attended this event before and love Comic-Con, then look forward to it next year or follow them during the year at heruniverse.com.

—Diana Cavagnaro is an internationally renowned couture milliner based in the historic Gaslamp Quarter. Learn more about our hat designer, teacher and blogger at www.DianaCavagnaro.com.

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FASHION
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August 2019
No nods from Lady Luck!

SDNEWS.COM

production style made famous by Phil Specter, Larry Levine, and their team of studio musicians famously dubbed “The Wrecking Crew” (who were also profiled in a critically acclaimed 2008 documentary film). Although Dave is not directly involved in the show due to health reasons, Brad stressed that they are trying to honor him in the musical as well.

LEAVE THE QUARTERS AT HOME

Although “33 1/3 – House of Dreams” features many of the storylines and songs in Gold Star’s history, what it doesn’t do is become a musical revue. This was Brad and Jon’s vision from the start, and Javier picked up the charge.

“No matter how good it is, I don’t know that the world needs one more jukebox musical,” said Javier. He said what it does need is what the show provides, “a celebration of good deeds and the bonds of friendships and love we make during our lives.”

Javier agreed to direct and choreograph the production. He brought in Steve, one of his long-time creations — and a musical director, arranger, and script contributor.

Steve was also nervous about doing a “jukebox musical,” especially after his success on one of the original music compilation shows, “Suds.” But he was drawn in by the incredible history of Gold Star.

“It’s a match made in heaven,” gushed Jon. “They’re local boys, and the crème de la crème of San Diego theater.”

The four still have almost daily conversations — and Jon notes it will probably be that way until the end of the show’s run.

“Each one of has a seat at the creative table, and I think we challenge each other, and in the end, bring out the best in each other,” explained Steve.

The show also brings out the best in the San Diego Rep, fitting in perfectly with its mission of providing work that is intimate and sometimes provocative, and focusing on stories that highlight California’s rich culture.

A portion of actors and musicians are also students from the San Diego School of Creative and Performing Art’s Exchange X pertise program, which allows a select group to participate in a Repertory Theatre production from rehearsals through public performances.

For more information or to purchase tickets to “33 1/3 – House of Dreams,” visit sdpreg.org or call 619-344-3000.

—Freelance writer Joyell Nevins can be reached at joyellj@gmail.com. You can also follow her blog Small World, Big God at swyblig.wordpress.com.
Neuman & Neuman Real Estate successfully represented more buyers and sellers in 92101 than any other agent, team, or brokerage during the past 12 months with 116 closed transactions.

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