City Council candidates talk issues, visions, viewpoints

Lothian vows to be voice for businesses

Laura Lothian is a successful realtor and businesswoman who hopes to bring a business perspective to La Mesa’s City Council. “The current balance of our City Council is three attorneys a medical doctor and a teacher. And I think if you had a private sector business voice on the City Council, you’d have better balance,” she said. “I think the businesses in La Mesa are crying out for some support.”

Lothian hopes to be that support for businesses if she is elected to the Council in November — her third attempt at a seat in City Hall. She ran for mayor of La Mesa in 2010, coming within a few hundred votes of unseating incumbent Art Madrid.

City hosts town hall on policing, race, riots

Chief Vasquez announces retirement on same day

In a surprise move, La Mesa Police Chief Walt Vasquez announced his retirement on the same day as a town hall where he was a prominent speaker. In a press release sent out during the live event, the police department announced his retirement will be effective Aug. 27 after five years as the top cop in La Mesa. The release said Vasquez had previously planned on retiring but he stayed longer than expected to guide the city through the coronavirus crisis.

Before his retirement, he weathered another crisis as well: Peaceful protests of aggressive policing that devolved into riots on May 30. At the Aug. 13 town hall where he faced many tough questions from the public, Vasquez provided an update on those events. He said the investigation into the serious injury of Leslie Furcron at the protests had been forwarded to District Attorney Summer Stephan. Meanwhile, he announced that Matt Dages, an update on those events. He said the investigation into the serious injury of Leslie Furcron at the protests had been forwarded to District Attorney Summer Stephan. Meanwhile, he announced that Matt Dages,
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Representing Business

Lothian is now hoping to take those million other things that her business experience helped her with and help La Mesa businesses get some “love” from City Council, which she said has stifled the local economy with too many rules and regulations. In her work as a realtor she said she witnessed how homeowners struggle with doing things like remodels because City Hall doesn’t take a “customer-friendly” approach to permits.

“It’s one problem,” she said. “The other problem is all the businesses and the permits and the licenses and the regulations and the inspections. I think we forget that our businesses is what fund our schools, our fire and our police and our neighborhood parks and our infrastructure. I’m going to be more about what we can do to make it easier for you open your doors and keep your doors open, instead of being constantly an obstacle.”

Regulatory obstacles are especially intrusive right now, she said, because of the coronavirus pandemic.

“This COVID has magnified every thing that has been wrong for a long time,” she said.

“As an example, Lothian described a recent outing walking down La Mesa Boulevard and seeing makeshift patios with seating full of customers — made possible because regulations stopping restaurants from using sidewalks for seating and rules that don’t permit alcohol sales there have been temporarily revoked during the pandemic.

“To me, it’s like seeing the moment the government says, ‘Hey let’s loosen up the rules and regulations,’ business is born,” she said. “At that point, whatever is wrong with our businesses is what fund the man was because he was smoking a cigarette next to a trolley. And the way for police to hassle people is when they smoke it's been a beautiful thing.

“...is for them not to have stupid laws and regulations saying maybe we shouldn’t do a smoke break out back. But once passed, the ordinance then created a way for police to hassle people for smoking.

“To me, what makes hostility between the community and the police department, is when they hassle people,” she said. “If you got cops showing up because of an assault or a robbery or vandalism or arson, they are heroes. But when they’re going around harassing people because they’re smoking a cigarette next to a trolley, there’s where your conflict happens.”

Many observers point out that Black Lives Matter protests in La Mesa on May 30 that evolved into riots were brought to the city’s doorstep because of some regulations hampering business. Lothian also points to their effect on personal liberties — and she sees a correlation between recent rules passed by City Council and the protests and riots of May 30. Specifically, she pointed to an ordinance passed unanimously by the council in January of this year to ban smoking in the city.

“It was like the City Council was in search of a problem,” she said. “We don’t have a huge smoking problem in La Mesa.”

Before the ordinance was passed, Lothian said, there weren’t many people smoking cigarettes out in public spaces, except for the occasional worker taking a smoke break out back. But once passed, the ordinance then created a way for police to hassle people for smoking.

“For those that know Lothian, ‘not trying hard enough’ would be abnormal.

Lothian was born in Hammond, Louisiana and lived there for 12 years before moving to New England and then to Southern California when she was 20 years old.

Her father was a physicist for NASA and her mother, a Guatemalan immigrant, was a real estate agent — a role Lothian would later step into herself, but not right away.

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the officer behind the Amaurie Johnson arrest, was no longer with the department.

Also of note was a discussion about why the charge of resisting arrest against Johnson was dropped. Vasquez said after he viewed the body cam footage of the incident, he did not feel it was appropriate to send the arrest to Stephan for criminal prosecution.

Vasquez said the question that hit him the most was the very first: how is the La Mesa Police Department going to regain the trust of the community?

“Must tell you, it is an every second effort. We just have to keep working hard to maintain and regain that trust of the citizens,” Vasquez said.

The department will have to do that without Vasquez soon though. In the last two years, he added delays to the vetting process for officers and updated the use of force guidelines.

The town hall meeting was plagued with technical difficulties, highlighting the disconnect the virtual format created for the community. At one point, Council member Christine Alessio streamed the meeting on her phone to Facebook Live because the city’s page was not functioning correctly. Speakers were often muted and long pauses occurred between each person.

Still, the public did receive more information than at previous meetings while investigations were ongoing. A lawyer specializing in employment advice to public agencies explained the process of police investigations and the disciplinary process, which can take up to a year. Unlike in the private sector, employees are not at will and have significant workplace protections surrounding termination.

During public comment, Mayor Mark Arapostathis revealed since the protests exploded the city attorney had been educating the city council on their limited legal options while the public demands immediate action.

“We’re finding is we have different powers because of unions and California’s due process,” he said. “It’s frustrating because trying to explain that to the public—it’s very arduous.”

It was also announced that the firm Hillard Heintz will be conducting the promised independent review of the city’s response on May 30.

While many asked tough questions of Vasquez during the public comment, those who weighed in on the issues revealed a divided public. Forty-year resident Trenton Smith said the protesters were in and the grand- mother (Furcron) who was seriously injured should not have been participating with the rioters.

“I support vigilante justice,” a man said, praising Alessio and other people’s involvement in the La Mesa Civil Defense Group as well as the group’s Defend East County which has brought in counter-riots to groups that have participated in Life Matters events in La Mesa. A recent San Diego Union-Tribune report found the 210,000 strong group is filled with racism and QAnon conspiracy theories.

City Council candidate Jack Shu, who recently stepped down from the task force charged with developing a citizen oversight board of LPMD, said, “We may be lucky that Leslie Furcron did not die… We really do need an independent police oversight board.”

The Citizen Oversight Task Force will present their findings at the September City Council meeting.

—Contributing editor Kendra Sittton can be reached at kendra@sdbnews.com.

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Inclusion

The city selected Home Start to administer the program. Home Start is a local nonprofit that specializes in helping families in need. Home Start will accept and review applications, answer emails and calls from residents, and assist the city with program administration. More information about the program can be found on Home Start’s website: home-start.org/city-of-la-mesa-rental-assistance.

To help residents prepare for the application process, Home Start will host an online webinar on Thursday, Aug. 27 at noon. During the webinar, Home Start will provide an overview of the application process in English, Spanish, and Arabic as well as answer other questions: zoom.us/j/93662736572.

The application period will begin at 8 a.m. on Monday, Aug. 31 and close at midnight on Sept. 4. Residents that wish to apply should contact Home Start at 619-430-0032 or email lamesarentalassistance@gmail.com for more information.

City to Conduct Nationwide Search for New Police Chief

The City of La Mesa plans to hire an executive recruiting firm to conduct a nationwide search for its next Chief of Police. There will be a community input component to the selection process. The process is expected to take several months to complete. Once the recruiting firm is hired additional details will be released.

Captain Matt Nicholass will assume the role of Acting Chief of Police on Aug. 28.

Oktoberfest Will Be a Virtual Experience

In light of current events and safety protocols, organizers of the 47th La Mesa Oktoberfest believe it’s in the best interest of the community to produce and stream the event from home instead of an actual large gathering.

The event will feature Oompah bands, bier tastings, craft demos and friendly competitions. The event will include free streaming of entertainment like the chicken dance, German sing-a-longs and polka. The organizers will also offer an upgrade “Party Pack” filled with Deutches goods like a “Prost Pack” of German biers paired with a one-of-a-kind brewarmaster tastings, a commemorative t-shirt and a party making Chicken Hat. Also offered for sale will be boxie boxes with items like Bavarian pretzel brats with sour kraut and more.

Although the large-scale events of Oktoberfest are cancelled, all weekend Friday, Oct. 2 through Sunday, Oct. 4 the businesses of the La Mesa Village will offer deals and specials for visitors looking for some early holiday shopping. Local restaurants will also have specials for outdoor dining or take out. Visit LaMesaOktoberfest.org to find local businesses and unique offerings for the Oktoberfest weekend.

Chamber Business Assistance Funds Now Available

The businesses damaged in La Mesa on May 30–31 have received additional support from several local benefactors. These concerned businesses and organizations wish to assist in the rebuilding of the damaged La Mesa businesses, as well as their lives. These donations have been made directly to the La Mesa Chamber of Commerce with the request that the Chamber disburse the funds to the damaged businesses. These generous donations have required the need for the Chamber to create a fund — the La Mesa Business Assistance Fund.

Randall Lamb Associates, a business that was destroyed by the fires on May 30 made a generous contribution to begin the fund. Several others followed suit to donate to this local fund. To date the donors are: Albert’s Mexican Food, The La Mesa Lions Club, Gary Green and Jeff Phair, partners in the La Mesa Summit Estates development, The La Mesa Strong T-Shirt Team and several personal donations, as well as anonymous donations to assist these businesses.

The La Mesa Chamber encourages those businesses that were damaged during the civil unrest to apply now to receive a portion of these funds. There have already been donations made from the community for these businesses and the Chamber is “happy to play a small role to distribute these funds, that were given with the same passion,” according to a press statement.

Small business owners can now apply for funds by filling out the form online:tinyurl.com/lm-businessassistancefund or call the office 619-465-7700 to request a form and then email it to the chamber: chamber@lamesachamber.com. The application process began Aug. 10 and will close on Aug. 31.

Youth Advisory Commission Accepting Applications

Do you want to help plan the activities for the youth in La Mesa? Applications are being accepted for several openings on the City’s Youth Advisory Commission. Applicants must live within the city limits of La Mesa and be at least 15 years old. Applications can be obtained at the La Mesa Community Center, www.lamesaevents.org or by calling 619-465-7700. All interested parties must submit completed forms by Thursday, Nov. 5. For more information, contact the La Mesa Community Center at 619-465-7700.
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The constitutional right we cannot afford to waste

By TONY ATKINS

Every decade, each person in the United States, young and old, regardless of citizenship, has the Constitutional right to be counted in the Census. This is the only way for us to determine the true definition of America — whether you live in the largest metropolitan cities or miles down rural routes.

Reminders about taking the 2020 Census are emblazoned on billboards, featured in television commercials, and sprinted into social media news feeds. It makes sense, given that approximately $1.5 trillion in federal dollars in federal funding is at stake.

Breaking that down, that means for every person left out of the Census count, California could lose $1,000 per person — per year — for the next 10 years.

That’s a loss of $10,000 per uncounted person until the 2030 Census.

If you have a family of five, your community could lose out $50,000.

The Census is like planning how much cake to have at a birthday party based on the number of RSVPs. No one wants to miss out on cake because you thought it was OK to just show up unannounced.

The total pool of funding is distributed to communities based on population and head counts. This includes babies, children, teenagers, seniors and non-citizens.

The current COVID-19 health crisis also affords an all-too-realistic example of why you need to be counted.

We need to ensure that we get our fair share of funding and resources in emergency situations. Funding for a community health clinic in your neighborhood is based on population only. You can only provide care if the fund data programs and resources like senior services, child health programs, higher education, and job-training.

Our population is aging. The first Baby Boomers hit 65 in 2011. That population will continue to grow, and senior services must be properly accounted for. By filling the Census form out, you are declaring, “I am here. I exist.”

More importantly, your answers help fund programs that serve your community and shape your future. It is important to note that this is not a citizenship survey. Despite the Supreme Court already having blocked the citizenship question from being included in the Census, the current administration continues to wrongful attempt to circumvent the law and exclude non-citizens in the 2020 Census. Those efforts are unconscionable and unconstitutional.

Now, more than ever, we need everyone to participate in the 2020 Census so that we can ensure the law, not division politics, governs our land. We cannot let people be bullied or made to live in fear. The Constitution is clear — all people must count.

If this current public health and economic crisis has demonstrated anything, it is that vulnerable communities have suffered the most. In addition, COVID-19 has had a significant impact on our public schools and higher education, which means it is even more important to plan for the next 10 years in communities hard hit by this pandemic.

Census workers, called enumerators, will begin going door-to-door to collect Census data. They are not allowed to ask for your social security number, political preference, bank account information, or religious affiliation. It also illegal for the Census Bureau to share your information with law enforcement or any other government agency. And your information cannot be used against you in any way.

So please, consider this my “door-to-door” ask. Have you done a post on Facebook, sent a Tweet or uploaded a picture on Instagram? It’s just as easy to fill out your Census. You can do it online, over the phone or on paper. In fact, you may also be receiving an email, making it even easier to complete.

The next 10 years of funding can be determined in just 10 minutes of your time.


—Tony G. Atkins is President pro Tempore of the California Senate. Having previously served as Speaker of the California Assembly, she began her tenure in the Senate in 2016. At Senate for District 19, she represents the cities of San Diego, Coronado, Del Mar and Solana Beach. Website of President pro Tempore Tony G. Atkins: Senate.ca.gov/Akins.

It’s scary out there. Right-wing extremists are here, now, in East County, threatening Black Lives Matter protesters and openly displaying Nazi symbols.

But you can stop them, using the peaceful tools of democracy.

Next month, the second of a series. This is the second of a series. You don’t have to have heard Part 1 to join us in September, but we do urge you to watch if you missed that first episode. The channel; you can find that link — and all the links referenced for this article — at lmfds.org.

Our guest, Terra Lawson-Remer, is a candidate for San Diego Board of Supervisors, running against Republican incumbent Chris Piazza. If Lawson-Remer wins, that will establish a first-ever Democratic majority on the San Diego County Board of Supervisors, which is helping shape the future of the San Diego political landscape.

Terra is an economist, small businesswoman, and...
POLITICS

Republican Women looking ahead to November election

Navajo Canyon Republican Women of California is looking forward to a Zoom meeting featuring San Diego County Deputy District Attorney Tia Quick on Sept. 8. Deputy DA Quick will speak on the current state of law enforcement and public safety in San Diego today, as well as other related law enforcement and judicial issues.

Our members will be given the information on how to “join” the Zoom meeting and participate in a discussion after registering. This is just another incentive to join Navajo now and be able to attend our Zoom meetings and be kept up to date on the latest political and campaign events.

For information about becoming a member please visit our website at rwcNavajo-Canyon.org and visit us on Facebook at Republican Women of California-Navajo Canyon.

The Republican Women of California San Diego County is host of California-Navajo Canyon.

By PAT BOERNER

What can we do to assure the legitimacy of our elections? For more information and to make a reservation, please contact rdlmart@cox.net or waskahwhelan@aol.com.

Americans are increasingly frustrated with the failure of their elected leaders to protect property and the citizens. Are you paying attention to what is happening in Portland? This is our opportunity to affect a great outcome in the November 2020 election. Now is the time to volunteer and remind the public how poor leadership has led to so much chaos, destruction and lack of respect for law and order. There is a wealth of examples to consider. Phone calls to other Republican voters and getting them to promise to vote is so simple, yet vitally important.

Tired of biased reporting from major sources such as Twitter, Facebook, Google and Amazon? There is now an alternative to Twitter with Parler Free Speech Social Network. Parler is an unbiased social media focused on real user experiences and engagement. Parler never shares your personal data. You can access Parler by adding the app Parler.com on your computer.

There is now an alternative to social media focused on real user experiences and engagement. Parler never shares your personal data. You can access Parler by adding the app on your smartphone or by accessing parler.com on your computer.

Another idea: Next time you go into your Facebook account, type “Team Trump” in the search bar. This is an excellent source of information, including Women for Trump videos that are worth watching!

Please consider joining Republican Women of California - Navajo Canyon. There was never a better time to get involved and influence the direction of our country. Any questions or for more information regarding volunteering, please contact RWC-NC president Waskah Whelan at waskahwhelan@ad.com.

—Pat Boerner writes on behalf of the Navajo Canyon Republican Women of California.

LMFDC

eductor, who served as senior advisor in the Obama Administration developing environmental policies to cut pollution from oil drilling and mining. She supports an evidence-based approach to COVID-19, affordable childcare and housing for San Diego, racial justice, environmental protection, a sane transit policy and more. Find out how to help Lawson-Reimer become the second Democrat on the Board of Supervisors and help tilt the balance toward the people.

We’ll hear from La Mesa City Council members Colin Parent and Aklilah Weber about the city’s public safety oversight task force and the aftermath of the terrible rioting downtown in May and ongoing demonstrations. Christian Bilson, lead volunteer organizer for Southern California for Joe and Kamala group, will discuss how you can help send Joe and Kamala to the White House by building support in swing states.

And Ali Zaidi, engagement coordinator for the San Diego County Democratic Party, will talk about how you can do to help elect Democrats up and down the line.

Want to do more? We’re grateful if you do. Visit our website Lmfdeems.com/links to find out where you can sign up to phone-bank from home. You can call voters in swing states, drum up support for California state propositions, and help Kate Schwartz for Assembly District 75 and Ammar Campa-Najjar for Congressional District 50.

Join us Wednesday, Sept. 2, for our regular monthly meeting, on Zoom. Social time starts at 6:30 p.m., programming at 7 p.m. You know where to find the Zoom URL, right? Lmfdeems.com/links.

Also, we’d like to take a moment to thank and recognize Jeff Benesch, the club’s programming vice president, who resigned this month. Jeff made an enormous contribution — his meetings were informative, enjoyable and packed in literally hundreds of people. He also organized regular anti-war protests in the 2000s, and worked tirelessly for local candidates and causes.

—Tina Rynberg is president and Mitch Wagner directs social media and communications for the La Mesa Foothills Democratic Club. Contact us at lmfdeemsclub@gmail.com.

POLITICS

Rain, Wind, and Fire...

“The three menaces to any chimney, fireplace, or stove.”

Every year there are over twenty thousand chimney / fireplace related house fires in the US alone. Losses to homes as a result of chimney fires, leaks, and wind damage exceed one hundred million dollars annually in the US.

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For a limited time, readers of this paper will receive a special discount on our full chimney cleaning and safety inspection package with special attention to chimney water intrusion points in preparation for the rainy season.
Take a vacation in your mind with fantasy reads

Sometimes you just want to escape to another world. Luckily, fantasy is great for that and the San Diego County Library has you covered with some great reads. All these books are available for request at sdcl.org and in ebook at sdcl.overdrive.com.

If you like fairy tales and strong female characters, check out “Uprooted” by Naomi Novik. The cozy valley where Agnieszka lives is bordered by its evil influence only kept at bay by the powerful, mysterious wizard known only as the Dragon. While the Dragon’s powers allow the inhabitants of the valley to live happy, peaceful lives, he demands a steep price for his protection: every 10 years he takes a young woman to live with and serve him in his fortified tower. To everyone’s surprise, he chooses clumsy, awkward Agnieszka, and that choice changes everything, not just for her, but for the Dragon, the valley, and the Wood.

If epic fantasy is your thing, take a look at “Name of the Wind” by Patrick Rothfuss. Framed as tavern owner Kvothe telling his life story, it is full of amazing characters, thorough world-building, and a detailed plot. Orphaned when his parents were violently murdered by mysterious assailants, Kvothe spends most of his childhood on the streets of a dangerous city, but never forgets his parents’ deaths, and his desire to learn the truth eventually leads him to university to study magic. Despite the many distractions of friends, women, and rivals, he remains diligent in his studies with the intention of uncovering the identity of his parents’ assassins and exacting his revenge.

Winning multiple awards, “The Fifth Season” by NK Jemisin weaves a complex tale with themes of loss, regret, and the consequences of oppression. In the world known as the Stillness, orogenes are people with the power to move and reshape the earth. They are both despised by the public and exploited by the ruling class to consolidate their power. Told from the perspectives of three orogenic women in different parts of their lives, this book explores what happens when people with powerful abilities are...
100-year-old artist honored

A notable local artist, Phebe Burnham, celebrated her 100th birthday this year, but her birthday party had to be cancelled because of the Covid-19 epidemic. However, Phebe’s friends and family wouldn’t let the day go uncelebrated. On her birthday, a colorful drive-by parade was followed by a family lunch. Even the County of San Diego Board of Supervisors honored Phebe by proclaiming July 24 as Phebe Burnham Day in San Diego County. The Foothills Art Association joins in celebrating Phebe’s birthday by honoring her as the Foothills’ Featured Artist for the month of September.

Known for her colorful, often whimsical paintings, Phebe uses a variety of media and has developed a technique using gouache paint, pastels, and India ink to achieve dramatic contrasts of light and dark. Loving to travel, Phebe’s vibrant paintings often depict images she captured with her camera on her many trips. One of her favorite destinations was Oaxaca, Mexico and it is the subject of many of her paintings. She taught art at the college level and, for ten years, had a successful jewelry business, Eyeglass Arte, creating decoupage miniature reproductions of famous paintings on eyeglass lenses which were sold in museum gift shops nationwide.

Phebe was born in 1920 in New Bedford, Massachusetts. Her parents encouraged her interest in art. Her grandmother, also an artist, painted seascapes and landscapes and was an inspiration to young Phebe. She received degrees from the Swain School of Design and the Columbia University School of Painting and Sculpture. She also studied with the Art Students League.

With all her activities, Phebe still has found time to participate in the El Cajon Arts and Culture Commission. She has been a member of the Foothills Art Association since 1953. The Foothills Art Association is proud to honor Phebe Burnham and her lifetime accomplishments.

Phebe’s artwork will be featured on the Foothills website during the month of September. To view her artwork, as well as the artwork of other local artists, visit the Foothills Art Association website at: foothillsartassociation.com under the “Featured Artist” section.

—Linda Michael is editorial assistant of Footnotes, the monthly newsletter of the Foothills Art Association.
Grossmont High 100th anniversary postponed

Since San Diego County residents are advised to avoid gatherings of any size, it is impossible to plan a fall celebration for our 100th anniversary. All fall sports are delayed until December and learning is currently online. The celebration planned for Oct. 16 and 17 has been postponed until it is safe for the Foothiller community to gather. Perhaps, we can plan something smaller in winter 2020 as a precursor to a larger celebration in Spring 2021. As we all know, this pandemic has thrown us all off track. However, we look forward to seeing you at the 100th Anniversary Celebration, whenever it is held. We are hopeful that our previously shared plans will remain the same for the events held on campus during the celebration.

We still hope to play the Sweetwater High vs Grossmont High football game to celebrate a historic rivalry with the “Sweeties,” a 41-year consecutive game rivalry from 1920-1961. In 1920, GHS’s first football game was against Sweetwater. Football has been the border first saying “Grossmont Hill” and “Sweetwater,” then in 1924, the border was “Grossmont Union High School 1920,” which it remained. A charming art deco feature of the “O’s” in “School.”

When we began the museum in 2007, we chose the original school logo to be the museum’s logo, a reminder of our historic origins, as Grossmont UHS was created to serve East County students after the closing of the Riverview Union High School campus in Lakeside and the original El Cajon Valley Union High School. In our museum collection, we have the original seal press that was used to impress the school’s seal on official documents such as graduation diplomas — and it still works! A more modern interpretation of the original logo is seen in the lobby of the 2016 GHS office. This beautiful four-feet-diameter granite medallion welcomes visitors, students, and staff to the office. Donated by Class of 1965 alumna Ginger Cheney Belilove and created by her husband Jim Belilove, the medallion reminds Foothillers of their history.

The committee President Amy Conrad shares, “We are so excited to be celebrating Grossmont High School’s 100th year and congratulate GHS design students for creating a logo to commemorate Grossmont’s rich history in our community.”

The 100th anniversary logo echoes the first logo used by Grossmont. In 1923, the cover of the second yearbook, El Recuerdo, was decorated with an embossed logo of a silhouette of a hill with the sun peeking above the mountain. In 1923, the same image was used with the added perimeter border first saying “Grossmont 1923;” then in 1924, the border became “Grossmont Union High School 1920,” which it remained.

To learn more about Grossmont High School’s 100th year celebration, please visit the GHS Museum website at foothiller-museum.com. Due to the coronavirus and our move into our larger museum space, the GHS Museum is currently closed, but we are checking our emails at ghsmuseum@guhsd.net and our phone messages at 619-668-6140.

—Connie and Lynn Baer write on behalf of the GHS Museum.
Cuyamaca College hosts cultural workshops

From women’s voting rights to the racial and economic disparities surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, the Culture and Community Circle workshops at Cuyamaca College cover a variety of important political and cultural issues.

All sessions, which will be offered through Zoom, are free and open to the public. To obtain the Zoom link, call the Cuyamaca College Student Affairs office at (619) 660-4612.

Eleven workshops are being offered in September. They are:

- **Discussion about the film “13th.”** Wednesday, Sept. 2, 11 a.m.-12:15 p.m.
  Cuyamaca College Sociology Instructor Raquel Jacob-Almeida and History Instructor Moriah Gonzalez-Meeks discuss the film “13th.”

- **Racial and Economic Disparities of COVID-19: An Exploration of National and Local Trends.** Wednesday, Sept. 9, 9:45-10:45 a.m.
  Cuyamaca College Psychology Instructor Marissa Salazar and Hala Madanat, Director of the School of Public Health at San Diego State University, explore the ways in which COVID-19 disproportionately impacts communities of color.

- **Votes for Women: Why It Still Matters 100 Years Later.** Monday, September 14, 9:30-10:45 a.m.
  Cuyamaca College History Instructor Moriah Gonzalez-Meeks discusses current issues related to women, voting, politics, and how women organized and fought for the right to vote.

- **A Hidden Heritage: African Ancestry in Latin America.** Wednesday, Sept. 16, 11 a.m.-noon.
  Cuyamaca College World Languages Instructor Karla Gutierrez and Sociology Instructor Raquel Jacob-Almeida discuss racism and colorism in Mexico and Brazil, including the erasure of African heritage and the myth of a “racial democracy.”

- **A Dialogue on Racial Trauma.** Thursday, Sept. 17, 4-5 p.m.
  Personal Counselor Halima Eid discusses racial trauma, what it is, and how to discuss one’s experiences with racial trauma.

- **One Latinx’s Literary Journey and How You Too Can Tell Your Story.** Monday, Sept. 21, 11 a.m.-noon.
  Patricia Santana, author of “Motorcycle Ride on the Sea of Tranquility and Ghosts of El Grullo,” will discuss her journey as a writer and how you can begin to tell your story.

- **College Hour: Latinx Heritage Month.** Wednesday, Sept. 23, 11 a.m.-noon.
  The college hour is part of the celebration of Latinx Heritage Month.

- **Intersectionality and Social Justice.** Wednesday, Sept. 23, 6:30-7:30 p.m.
  John Kennon of People Assisting the Homeless (PATH) discusses intersectionality and its benefits, and the need for social justice.

- **Open Mic: Spoken Word and Poetry.** Thursday, Sept. 24, 1-2 p.m.
  Cuyamaca College English Instructors Lauren Halsted and Karen Marrúo will facilitate a workshop to share your voice by taking the mic or dropping in to listen or make new friends.

- **COVID-19: Chronicles Veterans Workshop Series #1: Managing Relationships.** Tuesday, Sept. 29, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
  Personal Counselor Michelle Cabaldera discusses connecting and making time for friends and family and creating healthy boundaries.

- **Importance of Local Politics.** Wednesday, Sept. 30, 9:30-10:45 a.m.
  Laila Aziz of Pillars of the Community and Homayra Yassufi-Main, a policy consultant, discuss laws and activism related to gang suppression and surveillance technology in San Diego.

The workshop sessions are sponsored by the Cuyamaca College Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Success and Equity; Student Affairs; and Associated Student Government.
Were Open For Take Out! ELAZTECA TACO SHOP Mexican food. 8506 Parkway Dr, La Mesa, CA 91942 619-466-4113
TACO TUESDAY! Mini Tacos Pollo Asada Carnitas Cabeza Burro Adecado
FREE DRINK WITH ANY COMBO

We’re Open For Pick Up! Call or Come By To Place Your Order!
Buy Any Taco & Get A FREE Quesadilla

La Mesa Restaurant Owners
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For More Information Call Heather 951.296.7794
Restaurant Review

By FRANK SABATINI JR.

It’s considered the Cadillac of tri tip.

We’re talking cuts of USDA choice beef extracted from the bottom sirloin and infused with burr-
gundy and black pepper through some secret process. Once grilled and eaten, consumers fall into
states of bliss as that elusive cate-
gory of taste known as “umami” makes starting sense.

In carnivore circles, the tri tip is
called “Cardiff crack” because
of its addicting flavor and gentle
texture.

The recipe was introduced
nearly 20 years ago at Seaside
Market in Cardiff, which attracts
shopping far and wide for the stuff
— whether eaten onsite or toted
away raw to be cooked at home.

Believe that good is on its
way!

Restaurant Review

By JULIE WHITE

Enjoy classics like our Crab Cake, Salmon, or Filet Mignon Benedict
along with new favorites like Coconut French Toast or the Filet
Mignon Machaca Burrito and great discounts on brunch cocktails!

Children’s breakfast/brunch items available! Brunch menu ends at 2PM.

’enjoy the SundaY

CRACK TACO SHOP
4242 Camino Del Rio North
619-269-2828,
cracktacoshop.com
Prices: Salads and bowls, $8.95 to $9.95; tacos and burritos, $2.95 to $12.95; quesadillas, $8.95 to $9.95; nachos and loaded French
fries, $7.95 to $11.95

I get the feeling that Crack Taco
Shop won’t stay so unassuming
for too much longer as more San
Diegos discover its food, particu-
larly the tri tip and al pastor.
In addition, Abbo makes no secret
that his team hopes to eventually
expand to other locations around
town.

—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 staff-
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You can reach him at fsabatini@san.
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Food & Drink

FOOD & DRINK

SUNDAY BRUNCH
OPEN AT 11AM ON SUNDAYS

We have so outdoor tables! Thank you to our local community for supporting us and helping to keep us and other restaurants busy!

Enjoy classics like our Crab Cake, Salmon, or Filet Mignon Benedict along with new favorites like Coconut French Toast or the Filet Mignon Machaca Burrito and great discounts on brunch cocktails!

Children’s breakfast/brunch items available! Brunch menu ends at 2PM.

See all our announcements, news, special menus, and get exclusive deals by friending us on Facebook!

We’re on Google Maps!

Anthony’s Fish Grotto

Tony’s Fish Grotto

Check out our Street View tour on Google Maps!

619-463-0368 • 9530 Murray Drive, 91942 • ANTHONYSFISHGROTTO.COM

Anthony’s Fish Grotto

Taco Shop

The chipotle salad with ‘crack’ tri tip

AI pastor taco in a freshly made corn tortilla

The celebrated meat is exactly what steered me here. Although a few other organic consumables surfaced, starting with slow roast-
ed al pastor winking at my companion and I from a vertical spit perched just behind the order counter. Hand-stacked and seaso-
0ned in-house, the spiced meat cone is capped by a traditional thick slice of pineapple.

The ‘crack’ burrito

The colorfully decorated eat-
ery was launched in May by Ron
Abbo, his brother Steve, and Pete
Najar, who co-owns Seaside
Market. The idea for it came about when Abbo was at Najar’s house for a party.

What’s Cooking with

Julie White

A delicious, crunchy, quick
dinner on a warm summer night!

INGREDIENTS:
• 10 ounce bag frozen baby
peas
• 1/2 cup chopped celery
• 2/3 cup sour cream
• 1 1/2 teaspoons curry powder

CURRIED CASHEW
AND PEA SALAD

DIRECTIONS:
Thaw and drain the peas in a
colander. Mix together re-
maining ingredients, except the
lettuce.
Refrigerate for at least 10
minutes.
Serve on lettuce leaves.

“Believe that good is on it’s
way”

— 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 staff-
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You can reach him at fsabatini@san.
rr.com.

CURRIED CASHEW
AND PEA SALAD

By JULIE WHITE

A delicious, crunchy, quick
dinner on a warm summer night!

INGREDIENTS:
• 5 chopped green onions
• 1 teaspoon salt
• 1/2 teaspoon ground pepper
• 4 slices cooked bacon, chopped (In the meat section of stores there is a package available of precooked bacon. This makes it super easy and there is no greasy mess.)
• 1/2 cup roasted cashews
• Washed whole lettuce leaves

CURRIED CASHEW
AND PEA SALAD

1/2 teaspoon ground pepper

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more than two decades ago as a staff-
er for the former San Diego Tribune.
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rr.com.
Shu is now running for City Council — his first attempt at public office — to bring what he sees is lacking to the city — a forward-looking vision.

“Our overall plan has to have a much better vision for La Mesa,” he said.

The United States didn’t make it to the moon because someone said to Kennedy: “That’s impossible, it’s a pipe dream, we can’t get there.” We made it to the moon because the president put a goal there, and he essentially gave us a goal to get somewhere that at the time someone would have said was impossible or unimaginable.”

EARLY YEARS
Shu grew up in Los Angeles, before heading north to attend college at Humboldt State University. “I wanted to go into something to do with natural resources and ended up with a degree in wildlife management,” he said.

After graduation, he went to work for National Park Service and Forest Service in California, eventually becoming a park superintendent at Cuyamaca and Palomar state parks in San Diego in the early ’90s while he was married to his first child.

After heading the local state parks, Shu spearheaded a statewide program to link urban populations, areas like parks and the outdoors. He also worked with groups to save forests and grasslands and helped form the Cleveland National Forest Foundation 25 years ago.

Shu said the Cleveland National Forest’s “claim to fame” was saving SANIDAG and winning with the help of now vice presidential candidate Kamala Harris who intervened on the side of the foundation when she was Attorney General for California.

“Overall, we saw how essential it was to get a buy in, to get a buy in with the power company and public safety agencies to monitor the situation and ensure the safety of its network and facilities to keep residental and business customers connected.

There are also some customers can do to prepare. Have a charged backup battery and corded phone. Most cordless home phones require electricity and won’t work in an outage.

Make sure you keep a corded wireline phone available for use during a power outage.

In addition, power is needed for your other telephone equipment to place and receive calls. If Cox’s network is operating during a power outage, make sure you have a charged backup battery to help ensure you can receive a Reverse 911 call. Purchase a backup battery by calling 855-324-7703 or visiting a Cox Solutions Store.

Get updates on Cox’s Twitter handle. During a PSPS or a disaster, Cox will post outage updates and other information on Twitter. Customers can follow Cox at @coxcalifornia.

Technology tips to help stay connected during wildfire season
Preventing and protecting your home or business in the event of a wildfire is a reality for those who call San Diego home.

A top priority for Cox during a natural disaster is to keep customers connected so they can stay informed, check in with family and friends, and access their shows away from home.

Cox also works to keep business customers, including hospitals and emergency responders, connected so they can continue to serve our communities.

Wildfire season now begins earlier and ends later, so Cox prepares all year long, reviewing its business continuity plan and running mock emergency events so employees know their roles and responsibilities during a disaster.

When strong winds and other weather conditions create an increased risk for wildfires, the power company may notify their residential customers, and business customers, that they will be implementing a Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS).

During a PSPS, Cox services may be interrupted in a neighborhood where the electric company shuts off power. During a wildfire, or PSPS, Cox works closely with the power company and public safety agencies to monitor the situation and ensure the safety of its network and facilities to keep residential and business customers connected.

There are also some customers can do to prepare. Have a charged backup battery and corded phone. Most cordless home phones require electricity and won’t work in an outage.

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Get updates on Cox’s Twitter handle. During a PSPS or a disaster, Cox will post outage updates and other information on Twitter. Customers can follow Cox at @coxcalifornia.

Download Cox apps before a wildfire or PSPS occurs:

- **Cox app** — Manage your account; receive outage notifications from the app when there’s an outage in your area and when the outage is over.
- **Cox Contour app** — Turn your smartphone or tablet into a portable TV, access programming available with your Cox subscription while away from home.
- **Cox Voice** — Your phone home away from home. Make or receive calls on up to four devices.
- **Consumer Disaster Protections**

Customers whose residential phone service is impacted during a state of emergency declared by the California Governor’s Office or the President of the United States may be eligible to receive Disaster relief protections such as a waiver of one-time activation fees for establishing remote call forwarding, remote access to call forwarding, call forwarding features and messaging services. For more information about these consumer disaster protections, visit cox.com/CaliforniaAssist.

Cox Contour app - Manage your account; receive outage notifications from the app when there’s an outage in your area and when the outage is over.

So our initial climate action plans were not only weak, but they couldn’t even copy a good climate action plan from the city of San Diego and at that time, that was one of the best ones.”

After several drafts that Shu graded as a “D” or “F,” the city eventually adopted a plan that is “much better,” he said.

If he becomes a Council member, Shu would like to add to the city’s CAP a drive through VMT (vehicle miles traveled) that would include measuring pollutants from cars traveling through the La Mesa segments of Interstate 8 and CA 125.

“I knew what I knew now with regards to what car emission causes for pregnant women, I would have second thoughts about living in La Mesa because the incidence of problems for the fetus caused by pollutants forms car so is great,” he said, adding that all three of his children have asthma.

Drive through VMT was left out of city climate action plans because SANDAG wanted control over it. Shu said, but if added to La Mesa’s plan, the City Council representative to SANDAG would have clear direction to influence better policy” on car pollution from San Diego area freeways.

POLICE OVERSIGHT
Most recently, Shu has worked on developing a police oversight committee in La Mesa — a reform the police said he is long overdue.

If he becomes a Council member, the Grand Jury recommended strongly to several cities including La Mesa to form citizens’ review boards. The police chief came out against it, said we don’t need one. City Council did nothing,” he said.

There the 2018 Helix High School incident happened, where a La Mesa police officer was filmed throwing a Black female student to the ground. The city conducted an independent investigation that took a year to complete and cost over $20,000 and “essentially told us nothing” because the investigation contract was written by the city attorney and city manager, Shu said.

“Some might say, had we done some work five years ago, the event at the trolley station would not have happened,” he continued.

“If we had a better system in the city to address these issues, perhaps that officer either would have had to leave the department or would have gone through some other training or something would have helped to prevent that whole thing.”

With the announcement by Chief Walt Vasquez that he will be retiring at the end of the month, Shu said he hopes the city hires an interim police chief from outside the department so that candidates from all over the state or country will have equal footing with candidates from inside the department.

Shu said the new police chief should look at La Mesa arrest data to see if racial profiling is happening and have a plan to address it if it is, because “policing depends on community.”

“It is the community that empowers the police to do their work. If the police do not have the support of the community they really are powerless and that’s why I got into this in the first place,” he added. “I’m not trying to hurt law enforcement, I have 23 years experience being a supervising
police officer, teaching community policing. I know our police officers need the trust of the community if they are going to get better and when that trust is eroded, that’s when police officers lose their authority and power.”

A citizens’ review board is one of the things that can help, he said.

COVID RECOVERY

In addition to dealing with the fallout from police incidents and the protests and riots that followed, the next City Council will also be dealing with budget shortfalls and economic recovery from the coronavirus pandemic.

“We know we’re going to have a very hard time with our budget, so there’s not a whole lot we can do, but I think we can be a lot smarter and make La Mesa different in some other respects,” Shu said. “There’s a lot we can do, but I think we can be a lot smarter and make La Mesa different in some other respects,” he said. “So the ideal situation may be the first story is for commerce, for businesses, and then the next three or four stories up is for residential. If you look at other successful urban communities throughout the world, that works.”

SHU’S VISION

Whether it is housing, climate or policing, Shu said his overall goal for La Mesa is one of compassion and fairness.

“I have a vision that La Mesa is a vibrant community from one end of the city to the other, that we leave no one behind, that we use our hearts as our jewel,” he said. “Our jewel is not a muscle or strength, our jewel is our heart and the heart of La Mesa is going to be big and it’s going to help build this vibrant community.”

For more information about City Council candidate Jack Shu, visit jackshu.com.

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

Lothian

CONTINUED FROM Page 2

chief following the retirement of Chief Walt Vasquez, Lothian replied, “The new chief should be looking at what the City Council is going to be like.”

FARMERS MARKET

Lothian also has criticism for the City Council’s handling of the Friday Night Farmers Market. Lothian was on the board of the La Mesa Village Association (LMVA) that spearheaded the effort to bring the market to the Village.

“The plan was to use farmers market to bring people to the doorsteps of businesses in the Village and to use money raised to promote La Mesa and hold other events,” she said.

Although widely popular among residents, the businesses in the Village itself were sharply divided on their support of the move. In deciding its fate, the City Council eventually voted to keep the market in the Village but to take control of it away from the LMVA.

“We created all these enemies and the one thing we promised to deliver was we were going to be able thousands and thousands of dollars that could have used those proceeds were robbed.”

As a Council member, she said she would continue to seek a compromise that keeps the market going but is less intrusive to the businesses who have issues with it.

BUDGET WOES

If she is elected to the City Council in November, Lothian said she will take a conservative approach to the city’s budget, which will be facing steep cuts because of the COVID crisis.

“I know that every person in this country gets hit with budget shortfalls in their lives — money dries up. And what you do is say, ‘OK, gotta say goodbye to cable.’ And all the things that are non-essential or luxury have to be back-burners,” she said. “So if you get right back down to the basics of government, our government is meant to be safety and infrastructure. The focus to me has to be safety, security, infrastructure. And everything outside of that has to be on a priority basis.”

For more information about the Laura Lothian campaign for City Council, visit LauraForLaMesa.com.

Laura Lothian says “no” to a refill of “rules and regulations” in a video posted to her campaign website. (LauraForLaMesa.com)

Laura Lothian says “no” to a refill of “rules and regulations” in a video posted to her campaign website. (LauraForLaMesa.com)
Six Tribes of the Kumeyaay Nation and an intertribal council of nine Kumeyaay governments submitted a demand letter to Customs and Border Patrol, the Department of Homeland Security and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers calling for a suspension of construction on the U.S.-Mexico border wall until measures are in place to protect culturally-significant resources from construction activities.

Frustrated with multiple federal construction activities along the border that have failed to properly detect and protect Kumeyaay religious sites, the Manzanita Band of the Kumeyaay Nation, the Ewiaapaayp Band of Kumeyaay Indians, the Iipay Nation of Santa Ysabel, the San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians, the Jumal Indian Village and the Kumeyaay Heritage Preservation Council (KHPC) demanded the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) temporarily cease all ground disturbing activities until CBP fully evaluates construction impacts on Kumeyaay religious beliefs, practices, and cultural resources. Federal law and CBP guidelines require that CBP meaningfully consult with the Kumeyaay on those impacts, and take appropriate steps to avoid or mitigate such impacts on tribal religious rights.

The Kumeyaay Tribes also object to federal agencies placing unwarranted restrictions on tribal monitors, which impede meaningful oversight of cultural resources. Given the agencies’ impediments, delaying construction is the only viable way to protect the sites, according to the Kumeyaay Nation tribes.

The multiple construction project sites are located in Kumeyaay aboriginal land that spans the border area and contains sacred sites, ancient village sites and certainly human remains. The tribes are proposing to work cooperatively with the CBP while construction is temporarily paused to evaluate the impacts, mitigate, and where possible, avoid irreversible adverse impacts.

“We are horrified that the government is moving forward with construction on the border without studying our Kumeyaay sacred sites and other cultural resources and how to protect them,” said Angela Elliott Santos, chair of both the Manzanita Band and KHPC. “Construction must stop in order to avoid further destruction of Kumeyaay cultural resources and sacred sites while studies are done in consultation with the Kumeyaay Tribes.”

Elliott Santos added, “the Kumeyaay people, our people, have occupied this region, on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border, for many thousands of years. Trenching for the new border barriers is destroying an important part of our legacy and likely the precious human remains of our ancestors. Until we can study the area, we will not know the extent of the damage. We remain willing to work with the government in a reasonable time frame to ensure that the Kumeyaay history and religion are not illegally desecrated further by the border wall construction projects.”

Each Kumeyaay Tribe is a federally-recognized tribe with ancestral and reservation lands in Southern California. The Kumeyaay Heritage Preservation Council represents nine federally-recognized tribes of the Kumeyaay Nation and is charged with protecting Kumeyaay spirituality, cultural resources, and heritage within the aboriginal territory of the Kumeyaay people.

Map of Kumeyaay Nation at the turn of the century (kumeyaay.info)

News briefs
CONTINUED FROM Page 4

least 13 years old, but not more than 20 years old, at the time of appointment. Participating on the commission is a great way for young people in middle and high school to work with their peers to explore and develop activities that promote positive youth relations in the City and gain volunteer experience that can be applied towards community service hours. Being a commission member also looks great on college and job applications. Commission meetings are held on the second and fourth Monday of each month at 4:30 p.m. in the Community Center, 4975 Memorial Drive, La Mesa. Applications must be returned to the City Clerk’s office no later than 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 7, 2020 to be considered in the Sept. 14 interview process. Applications may be obtained from the City’s website, cityoflamesa.us, or at La Mesa City Hall, 8130 Allison Ave., La Mesa, during normal business hours. Further information can be obtained from the Office of the City Clerk, 619-667-1120 or by visiting the City’s website cityoflamesa.us.

Best of La Mesa
Winner of 2020 Professional Award for Commercial/Residential Interior/Exterior Property Management Clean & Professional

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When You’re Sick of it being Done Wrong, call:
FREE ESTIMATES
(619) 977-0241
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FREE ESTIMATES
(619) 977-0241
Local dentist highlights safety measures of COVID era

By DAVE SCHWAB | sdnews.com

Dr. Larry Pawl, DMDS, has installed advanced technology to make his La Mesa dental office super safe during COVID and beyond.

“We took a three-prong attack on COVID,” confided Pawl, whose office has been at 7199 El Cajon Blvd., Suite F for 14 years. “We went with a MERV 13 air filter, which is one step below hospital-grade filters.”

MERV 13 is a pleated filter utilizing an electrostatic charge to remove very fine particles from air. MERV 13 filters trap 98% of airborne particles as small as .3 microns. It is claimed MERVs work up to 30 times more effectively and last three times longer than ordinary fiberglass filters.

“That next prong of our attack was to stop the aerosols (sprayed droplets) coming out of patient’s mouths,” said Pawl. “We use an isolite dental mouthpiece, a mouth piece that is soft and the patient comfortably bites down on it, and it has suction, which not only keeps the aerosols down, but keeps the humidity in the person’s mouth down which gives wonderful, long-lasting restorations because there’s no moisture to contaminate fillings.”

The third and final anti-COVID ‘prong’ said Pawl involved investing in a Jade air purifier to cleanse every one of his dental office rooms. “It’s touted as the world’s most advanced, stand-alone, medical-grade air purifier that will completely purify the air in a room every three minutes,” he said. “And the noise level is equal to the sound of a dishwasher working.”

Added Pawl, “The air that’s coming out (purifier) is like the air that you breath after a rainstorm. It has that clean, fresh feeling. I’m no longer tired at 3 p.m.

And knowing that the room is completely clean of dust, bacteria and viruses every three minutes is a wonderful sense of security.”

Pawl pointed out he’s glad he spent the money “to do it now because in the future, I think it (air purifiers) will become mandatory for all dentists.”

Pawl’s patients are appreciative of his technology upgrades.

“They are very aware of it,” he said. “They thank me for investing in this technology to make them safe.”

Asked if he always wanted to be a dentist, Pawl replied, “From age 9 I wanted to be a marine biologist and work with Jacques Cousteau. But in my sophomore year of college, my marine biology bubble was burst. I realized working with Cousteau was not going to happen.

Through serendipity, I had a dental appointment that afternoon and talked with my family dentist. I decided then and there, that’s what I was going to do.”

Of his profession Pawl said, “Like being a general dentist because you do a little bit of everything, and you have to have a broader knowledge of all the fields of dentistry.”

Looking ahead to the future of dentistry, Pawl gave a prediction.

“Miniaturization is going to be a part of dentistry, having a camera small enough to fit on a dental hand piece that the dentist can look at on a screen,” forecasted Pawl. “The materials used to fill cavities will be better, stronger, last longer. They may even eventually come up with some sort of vaccine to keep teeth from becoming susceptible to decay.”

Pawl gave some helpful advice for tooth care.

Chamber of Commerce announces ‘La Mesa Live’

The La Mesa Chamber has launched a new program to promote business members in a unique and informative way.

“La Mesa Live” is an on-site video interview, allowing business owners to have an engaging conversation with Chamber President and CEO Mary England, share interesting facts about their business and talk about the goods and services they provide.

The video offers a views way to meet local business owners and have them share their history, their passion for what they do and how they embarked on their journey of opening their business. If they are a spokesperson for a larger company, they will share the company’s goals, vision, vital statistics about that company and possibly give the viewers a behind-the-scenes tour of that business.

The current challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic offered a unique opportunity to put this creative marketing tool into action. Restaurants are the first targeted businesses to be interviewed, as the pandemic caused public health authorities to ban indoor dining.

When possible, restaurant owners are adapting their business model for their locations. Owners are creatively modifying their outdoor space to provide tents, fencing, canopies, umbrellas, decorative plants/foliage, as well as implement the social distancing restrictions, in their efforts to entice customers to dine with them.

Currently, La Mesa Live has video interviews featuring local restaurants Marie Callenders, Nono’s Ristorante Italiano and Little Roma Restaurant.

La Mesa Live would not be possible without the commitment and expertise of Marvin Sears, owner of Studio M.I.F. Studio M.I.F. specializes in audio production, photography and videography.

“Sears brings a can do attitude to this project and is the perfect partner for this new marketing endeavor,” Engand commented in a press release.

La Mesa Live interviews are posted on the Chamber website and can be viewed at lamesalivemedia.com.
Dr. Lucia Kearney AuD
Dr. Robert A. Faillace AuD

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—Ramona Price is a librarian at the La Mesa branch of the San Diego County Library.
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