Football recruitment in COVID era

By JEFF CLEMETSON | La Mesa Courier

Despite being denied a chance to don a Scotties jersey this year and lead Helix Charter in a championship season, quarterback Tyler Buchner is still having a fantastic 2020.

In August, Buchner made the Sports Illustrated All-American team, coming in at No. 55 of the magazine’s top 99 high school players in the country. The senior has already committed to play for Notre Dame and is on track to complete his high school career.

Plan for community oversight, auditor of police moves forward

By KENDRA SITTON | La Mesa Courier

La Mesa City Council voted 3-2 in favor of creating a citizens police oversight board and hiring an independent police auditor in a city council meeting on Oct. 13.

The two Council members who voted against the ordinance in its second reading, Kristine Alessio and Bill Baber, were worried that without holding an official “Meet and Confer” with the Police Officer’s Association (POA) they can, but not in the elongated process required by a meet and confer.

She pointed out there was a representative of the POA on the task force that created the ordinance and in the three weeks since the ordinance passed its first reading, the POA could have asked questions or asked for specific changes in the ordinance. Instead, she said, they wished to continue a casual dialogue on the ordinance they can, but not in the elongated process required by a meet and confer.

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The program will include a brief history of the La Mesa Historical Society’s Home Tour heritage, including a look back at each year’s tour homes along with presentations featuring previous tour homeowners, including updates on the homes today, along with real time Q&A sessions.

The free event is sponsored by EDCO and real estate broker Tracey Stotz.

COMMUNITY MEETING ON YOUTH ISSUES

The City of La Mesa Community Relations and Veterans Commission along with the Youth Advisory Commission have scheduled a round table discussion event titled “Livable La Mesa: Youth in the Age of COVID-19” to take place on Wednesday, Oct. 28 at 6 p.m. The goal of the 90 minute virtual event is to bring together youth leaders and members of the community to discuss the needs and challenges facing youth in La Mesa during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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curriculum this year and be moved to South Bend, Indiana and start training with the Fighting Irish in the spring of 2022.

The early departure for Buchner means that if pandemic rules loosen enough for high schools in California to have a season in the spring, Buchner will be taking the field without its star quarterback who as a junior completed 267 of 422 passes for 4,474 yards, 53 touchdowns and only six interceptions. He also rushed 128 times for 1,610 yards and 28 more scores.

“Now it’s his bitter sweet,” said Helix head football coach Robbie Owens. “I’ve loved the opportunity to work with him and I still hold these minute hopes that something happens that he decides he wants to stay, but in my heart I know he’s most likely going to go. I think on paper, yes, he’s the best kid on our roster, but I’ve had teams that I’ve had since I’ve been here. Losing Tyler, obviously, is a big hit to that. He’s a tremendous talent.”

Owens describes Buchner as having all the attributes of a great quarterback: 6 feet 2 inches tall, 200 pounds, rifle arm and he is quick on his feet. Buchner is a smart student with over a 4.0 GPA and has great leadership skills, attitude and work ethic. “He’s the best I’ve ever coached. His future is very bright,” he said.

“There’s definitely going to be some casualties, recruiting casualties, from this pandemic,” he said.

At Helix, some of those casualties could be players such as wide receiver Clay Petry, offensive lineman Shawn Martinez, defensive end Blaze Zito, free safety Dominick Schoop and linebacker Jerry Riggins.

Coach Owens pointed to Riggins, a senior and an example of a player who could possibly miss out on scholarship opportunities from large schools.

Owens said Riggins is “as good a football player I’ve ever coached. He’s a kid who would have offers. I have coaches who called me last week to say, ‘We really like Jerry, but we really want to see him in person.’ He should already have those offers.”

Normally, Helix attracts recruits from around 90% of Division I schools to visit in the spring and start scoping players, Owens said. “These are under stricter guidelines, so this was the deal part for them. They haven’t been able to come out since COVID started.”

Owens said, adding that he’s seen videos of football players playing other sports to show off their athleticism, even a kid who sent a video of him pulling a truck to other management decisions to make because they may not have to fill as many positions.

“Until the NCAA completely adjourns the scholarship numbers and things like that, it could create a little more hesitation in recruiting this 2021 class,” Garcia said.

Although players like Riggins — those on the cusp in the minds of recruiters — might fall through the cracks because of a lack of in-person evaluations by Division I schools, smaller and local schools could reap the benefits. Recruiters from places like Ohio or Georgia that normally come to @ouch talented football programs in California aren’t flying and that leaves players with options closer to home, Garcia said. Owens said even a school like USC might skip over players they normally would take and leave SDSU reaping the talent.

Of course, players might still end up at bigger schools by transferring. “The transfer portal is going to be as busy as ever in the next 18 months,” Garcia said. “Some of those schools that are preparing to play now. Big 10 and 12, we’ve seen a lot of movement just in the last few weeks so I can imagine once it turns over to 2021, you’re going to see a lot more of that once you see this group of kids enroll and begin their college career.”

“From the prospects’ perspective, you got to rely on technology. That’s all that’s sort of left. If you’re not in a state that’s playing, you still want to try to showcase that ability any way you can,” Garcia said. “You can go out there and you can do all those things – but it’s not the same.”

Still, getting in front of recruiters virtually is better than not at all. And for players who are depending on a scholarship to help pay for school but are now faced with less opportunity to play in front of coaches, there are additional options like junior college football or post-graduate football programs.

Bottom line, Garcia said: “If you’re good enough, somebody will find you.”

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

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Police oversight continues from Page 1

the POA's reasons for wanting a meet and confer have remained vague. “I do have some concerns about how this request for a meet and confer has come up. The request for the meet and confer at the last moment on Sept. 15 makes me question the motives and the lack of transparency,” Dr. Akilah Weber said.

The motion passed with a second from Council member Colin Parent and a deciding vote from Mayor Mark Arapostathis.

Parent said he took the request for a meet and confer seriously, but after reading the memo from the city’s outside counsel he is it was clear to him that the ordinance did not fall under the legal requirements for holding a meet and confer.

The task force appointed by City Council to develop the police oversight ordinance also weighed in on the POA’s request for a meet and confer. In a letter to City Council dated Oct. 6, the task force wrote:

“We were deeply dismayed when, just hours before our [Sept. 15] presentation, the La Mesa Police Officers Association (POA) legal representatives delivered a letter demanding the initiation of a Meet and Confer. We designed and presented the Community Police Oversight Board (CPOB) so that it would not affect the wages, hours and working conditions of our officers because we did not want to delay the implementation of the oversight board with a Meet and Confer, a process that can take half a year to complete. We ask that you ensure that you have the capacity and the legal requirements for holding a meet and confer.”

The task force letter urged the POA for using a stall tactic at a time when “people are angry” and “unprecedented numbers of people are marching on our streets.”

The task force letter also noted the ordinances because the oversight board will be of benefit to everyone who lives, works in and visits La Mesa — and that includes police officers.”

The La Mesa ordinance is modeled after City of Davis which did not hold a meet and confer with its POA when its ordinance was created.

Before the first motion received a full vote, the city ended the substitute motion to adopt the ordinance as is with a 30-day time-line on a meet and confer. Baber seconded the motion but it failed without a third vote.

The City Council will have significant discretion to select the audit because qualifications were not included in the bylaws of the ordinance. The auditor will have access to the police department’s files and policies and typically focused on investigative work and law. This means that volunteers from the community on the oversight board will not have to conduct investigations on their own.

Many residents sent in public comments to the meeting in support of approving the measure. Several also called on Council members not to let the POA further delay the proceedings through an official Meet and Confer.

—Reach contributing editor Kendra Sitten at kendra@sdnews.com.

Workshop shows mixed picture on housing

On Oct. 15, the city of La Mesa held a virtual workshop for its upcoming housing element update to the general plan. The update will reflect the city’s needs for housing units based on more recent data. The update is required by law every eight years.

For the eight-year cycle beginning April 15, 2021 and ending in 2029, San Diego County’s Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) is 171,685 new units. La Mesa’s allocation of that — decided by SANDAG — is 3,797 units.

According to data provided at the workshop, La Mesa is already well on track to meet the 3,797 unit goal. Senior Planner Allyson Kinnard said there are 700 units currently under construction and approved for construction: a projected 800 accessory dwelling units (ADUs) will be built by 2029; “expected” projects in the city will bring an estimated 3,400 units; and there are 500 units that were identified in previous cycles that have yet to be developed, totaling 5,500 units the city is prepared to build without any rezoning required.

Whether or not that number of units will be built is not a require-

ment of the update.

“The update only asks if you are able to meet the housing goal by providing sites that are adequately zoned so that housing can occur,” said Veronika Tan, a consultant hired by the city to help with the housing element update. “It is not an obligation to build the units. It’s an obligation to identify the units — that you have the capacity locally to accommodate the RHNA.”

Although the workshop showed that the city is well prepared in its zoning to meet its housing requirements, there were some troubling data points on housing.

One is that data shows that La Mesa — and nearly all other cities of its size in the region — has a housing affordability problem. Currently, 47% of La Mesans are considered “cost-burdened” by housing, meaning they spend over 30% of their income on housing. Another issue of concern is overcrowding. Currently, 4.4% of households in La Mesa are considered overcrowded.

Included in the RHNA are housing goals for different income levels, although there are no provisions to mandate cities to build them. Instead, cities and the state rely on incentive programs and negotiations with developers to get more affordable units built. For the upcoming eight-year cycle, La Mesa’s income level goals are 859 very low income units; 487 low income units; 577 moderate income units; 1,174 above moderate income units. Income level housing is based on a household’s area median income (AMI), with very low being 50% or below AMI; low, 51 to 80% AMI; moderate 80 to 120% AMI; and above moderate above 120% AMI. As of April 1, 2020, the median income in San Diego is $108,300.

A workshop attendee pointed out that the goal for low income housing is nearly double that of the previous housing element cycle and the city was unable to meet that goal by a wide margin. “Virtually no jurisdiction in the state does [meet its low income housing goals],” Tan said.

It was also noted that the low income housing goals for the previous cycle were created during a recession and the goals for this upcoming cycle were created during “peak conditions” for production. Tan said that the numbers cannot be altered by law once approved by the state, despite the fact that economic conditions could deteriorate to a worse level and the state would be required to re-examine due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

One area that the city will be able to look at and update ordinances for are homeless shelters.

Specifically, when it comes to shelter options and housing options for the homeless, for all income and all ability, the city will be updating or amending its housing ordinance.
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Oct. 23 – Nov. 27, 2020

La Mesa Courier
By KIM BERRY JONES | DR. JAMIE GATES

Q’Anon threatens to unravel the work to end human trafficking

By Kim Berry Jones | Dr. Jamie Gates

Part of an $830 million under 
ground illicit sex economy in San Diego alone, human trafficking is hiding in plain 
sight in our community. It impacts people from all ages and backgrounds. At 
the same time, our mobile phones ping us with notifications through out our day: we are constantly 
filtering social media messages, determining what’s important and what we need to 
ignore. Now a doubleshot and even more Annie of strings of messages has cropped up: an 
attempt by Q’Anon sympathizers and supporters to co-opt the fight against human 
trafficking.

The work to end human trafficking is a decades-long collaborative ef 
sort supported by multi-sector partners who work to identify 
those who are exploited, provide services to restore 
victims and track down and prosecute traffickers. A critical 
part of this effort is public awareness, helping our com 
mmunity understand what human trafficking is, how and 
where it happens in San Diego and what each one of us can 
do to end it.

Enter the social media mes 
saging of Q’Anon supporters and 
trafficking, luring people into a web of lies that threat 
en to distract, mislead, divide 
and tear apart decades of hard-fought advances in the fight against human 
trafficking.

While human trafficking is an intractable social issue, it 
consistently draws biparti 
san support with the Trump 
administration and past ad 
nimations funding ser 
vices and visibility that has 
done much to advance the 
cause. Q’Anon’s entrance to 
the conversation around hu 
man trafficking threatens to 
unravel this important collab 
oration across the aisle of po 
itical rivalry. Q’Anon, once a fringe phenomenon is now 
a rapidly spreading set of con 
spiracy theories flooding so 
cial network platforms. 
Q’Anon supporters and sympa 
thizers confuse the public 
carefully and precisely im 
data trafficking victims and 
tracking down and prosecuting 
traffickers. Q’Anon proponents and sympa 
thizers call the public with misleading human traf 
icking statistics, misleading 
characterizations of the nature and scope of human 
trafficking, and misleading claims about the fundamen 
tal causes and sources of this heinous crime.

Increasingly losing this battle, opportunistic 
politicians are blurring the lines between legi 
ate human trafficking 
data and concern and the ad 
option of misleading false 
thinking. Q’Anon proponents are making their way into 
current political campaigns. 
It is incumbent upon those of us that know better to call out the 
false and misleading statistics and theories in the 
ongoing false narratives.

The influence of Q’Anon 
related ideologies continues to grow. Recent 
ity reports out of the United Kingdom high 
lights the growth of Q’Anon 
be 
yond U.S. shores. Twitter and 
Facebook are scrambling to prevent Q’Anon and its ide 
olog 
es from spreading any fur 
thor, but Facebook, at least, is taking steps to shore up 
the Q’Anon page. 

Shutting down the conspira 
cy pages and hashtags has 
seemed to cause some of the other 
ous effects, including the claims that there is a con 
spiracy against them.

At Point Loma Nazarene 
University, research has 
highlighted the casual 
observations of the anti 
trafficking movement. A 
Christian University with 
a strong commitment to 
 combating human 
 trafficking in 
the community, PLNU and it 
s Center for Justice and Reconciliation have played a crucial role in 
studying and engaging against human trafficking in San Diego County since 
2005. The Beauty for Ashes Scholarship for survivors of human trafficking and kN0w MORE Anti-trafficking 
campaigns are critical pieces of the puzzle to explore the 
lengths traffickers and their 
victims to help. We also co 
ordinate quarterly meetings and annual conferences for researchers of 
trafficking, PLNU professor 
Dr. Jamie Gates, with Dr. Ami 
Carpenter (USD), co-authored 
the groundbreaking study 
measuring sex trafficking in 
San Diego County in 2016.

In particular, we are deeply 
troubled by signs of how deep and wide and with what ease 
Q’Anon is spreading through 
Christian communities across 
the U.S. Christians in partic 
ular are prone to the dangers of the 
lines of the anti-trafficking movement, and people 
of faith have been a driving force 
building the current anti-traf 
icking movement. Q’Anon’s 
claim that our U.S. 
has been a hard road 
forcing social media mes 
sage to its users. Q’Anon 
proponents and sympa 
thizers confuse the public 
for year 2018. That bill, which went into effect in 
January of this year, was hailed as the most expansive consumer pri 
vacy law in the country and a win for consumers who want to protect 
all of the praise and hype. It’s important to note what the bill actually did. It 
shed a light on what kinds of data lies in an ad that is built on lies, and who it was sold to or dis 
closed to. It also allowed customers to request that their data be deleted and that 
companies not collect their data all without fear of discrimination. CCPA 
was both a landmark achievement and basic common sense. U.S. con 
mpanies have stood up for privacy protections that a few simple prov 
lusions are considered an incredible success.

This year, Californians have 
the opportunity to vote on and re 
formulate those protections, filling the gaps in the CCPA, and give the state government more capacity to en 
fis. Proposition 24 would allow consumers to tell businesses not to share data about them. It would also allow customers to opt-out of having their sensitive personal information sold or used for advertising, and pro 
vide a host of additional protections for minors.

Perhaps most importantly, Proposition 24 would establish a new California Data Protection Agency which would take over ad 
ministering and enforcing these provisions as well as those protections in the now active CCPA. This new Data Protection Agency would function 
kind of like the FDA or other con 
sumer watchdog agencies. Staffed by knowledgeable experts in 
sumer protection and privacy law, it would be in charge of developing regulations, providing guidance to businesses and consumers, and raising public awareness about the dangers of businesses abusing our data. The agency would protect the digital rights of all Californians and

By Brian N. Schrader

Californians deserve 
better data protection

This November will be monumental for Californians. Voters will be tasked with making decisions on a swath of ballot measures addressing a wide 
range of issues from voting rights res 
toration and bail reforms to changes in consumer privacy law and property tax assessments.

In one of the most important mea 
sures, Californians are being given 
the chance to improve our control 
over the data that businesses col 
collect on us. California Proposition 24, also known as the Consumer Personal Information Law and Agency Initiative, builds on the re 
cent victories won by the California 
legislature and voter-approved measures. The 
time, Build on the foundations 
and promote consumer privacy 
the digital rights of all Californians and 

cracy with a view to ensuring 
productivity and safety, 
and the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA), 
was both a landmark achievement and basic common sense. U.S. con 
sompanies have stood up for privacy protections that a few simple prov 
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Guest Editorial

East County suicides down, but goal should be zero

By JACQUELINE ANDERSON

Every day, 134 Americans die from suicide. Now, here in California, the annual suicide rate is an estimated 10.8%. California has one of the lowest rates in the U.S. However, should we be proud of that number? There were 11.3 suicides per 100,000 people in the East County last year. That’s the lowest it has been in many years and down significantly from 2018, when there were 18.5 suicides per 100,000 people. The data is from the San Diego County Medical Examiner’s Office.

We can do more to prevent suicide. The goal should be zero. Suicides can surge under small change in context. Time, environment and specific situations can influence suicidal thoughts. If someone is having these thoughts, a good friend or other person may notice subtle changes in behavior and help that person seek resources for mental wellness.

If the person with suicidal thoughts is accompanied by a good friend, they will notice the signs and ask what’s wrong. They will form a supportive and nonbiased environment in which they will comfort them. We can all keep the suicide crisis help line information available in our purse or wallet, to have it ready when we need to support a friend, or even ourselves.

The San Diego Access and Crisis Line is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week at 888-724-7240. The service is free and available in multiple languages.

Thanks to organizations like East County Youth Coalition, I feel educated on mental health. I feel that I have some important knowledge on how to approach such a delicate topic like suicide. I know that I have the power to halt suicide, and I know that everyone else does as well. It’s just a matter of taking threats seriously, and helping our loved ones connect with the help they need.

Suicidal people, about 81% of the time, tell someone what they are going to do and when. Through this fact we can conclude that avoiding suicides is just a matter of taking threats seriously. The reason why these warnings go unnoticed is because they are either underestimated, less valued than a relationship, or they are avoided out of fear of not knowing what to say.

People may not see the gravity of things. They think certain suicidal phrases are normal. Suicide notes and messages can be found any place nowadays. They are found written in a public restroom. They are sung in popular songs and are in the most popular slogans. After seeing these threats so often, people begin to think nothing about them. This contributes to not being able to detect warning signs when they are actually real.

Another reason why people don’t speak up is out of loyalty to the victim. They don’t want to rat them out and have them be angry with them. But what should we prefer: Having a friend who hates us for ratting them out or not having that friend at all?

Sometimes people notice the gravity of situations through warning signs but they don’t speak up out of fear they might say the wrong thing and make it worse. This fear is something understandable, especially when the victim is a loved one. For these reasons we must educate ourselves on how to read warning signs and how to act on them. We can all learn the best ways to support someone who is sharing thoughts of suicide.

We must normalize mental health as a matter of public health and not normalize suicide. Suicide is real, but is also preventable. Help is available. Find easy access to mental health and suicide prevention resources by visiting up2sd.org. If you or someone you love is struggling, call the San Diego Access and Crisis Line.

SEE SUICIDES DOWN, Page 10

News from your County Supervisor

By DIANNE JACOB

New libraries: The county is breaking ground this fall on a new library in Lakeside, while progress is being made on a new one for Carlsbad. The Lakeside branch is being built on Woodside Avenue in the heart of the town. Measuring 15,000 square feet, it will be roughly twice as big as the 1960s-era library next to Lindo Lake.

Meanwhile, the county and the La Mesa-Spring Valley School District recently agreed to team up on a new branch facility near Campo Road and the district’s Spring Valley Academy campus. The district has initially agreed to lease the planned site to the county for the construction of a 13,000-square-foot facility.

During my nearly 28 years on the board, I’ve been fortunate to work with the community on the construction of 13 new libraries – in Alpine, Campo, Descanso, Jacumba, Julian, La Mesa, Lemon Grove, Pine Valley, Potrero, Poway, Ramona, Rancho San Diego and Spring Valley. Supporting small business: My colleagues on the Board of Supervisors recently joined me in approving $4.1 million in federal grants to 254 small businesses in my district. The businesses included more than 80 restaurants and about 50 salons, barber shops and other personal grooming businesses. Many neighborhood businesses continue to struggle as we all confront a public health crisis with no immediate end.

I will continue to do all I can to support them.

At the ready: We’re in the thick of peak wildfire season. Making sure you’re prepared for a disaster has never been more important. I can’t say it enough: Put together a go-kit, download the SDEmergency app and sign up for reverse 911 notifications – known as AlertSanDiego.

--Dianne Jacob represents District 2 on the San Diego County Board of Supervisors. For questions or comments, call 619-531-5522 or email dianne.jacob@sdcounty.ca.gov.

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Track your ballot every step of the way by signing up for Where’s My Ballot? at sdvote.com.

Need to vote in person? Early voting has begun at the Registrar’s office. Polling places will be open, Oct. 31 - Nov. 3. Go to your assigned location and wear a face mask.

For more information visit sdvote.com, call (858) 565-5800, or email rovmail@sdcounty.ca.gov.
Facing defeat, Trump declares war on American democracy

By SEAN QUINTAL

Donald Trump, who views relationships as transactional, and for whom domination and humiliation are the true markers of a successful transaction, the only "virtue" that matters is "winning." And if winning is your brand, losing is an existential threat.

Faced with his own catastrophic failures as President, and confronted with the fact that his lies, corruption and incompetence have now been exposed to the American people, he realizes that not even an anti-democratic mechanism like the electoral college is likely to save him. So he has desperately chosen to set fire to the very electoral institutions that have endured here longer than in any democracy on the planet.

The President is staring down a humiliating defeat in four weeks. Since he recognizes he cannot win a fairly contested election, he has set about trying to cast doubt on the electoral process itself, with an eye to invalidating the results, either formally or in the perception of his core group of supporters. The incumbent President has lied about voting fraud since the day he was elected. He has repeatedly said illegal voters cost him a popular vote victory. Trump offers no evidence for this because none exists. He tried to empanel a commission to investigate this, but it prematurely disbanded in disgrace, after it became clear it was nothing more than an exercise in propaganda.

Trump's incessant belching and barking about voting by mail being a hoax, is laughable, since he has voted by mail for years and has already requested his very own mail-in ballot this year. Years' worth of data from elections research proves that being struck by lightening is more statistically likely than voter fraud in the U.S. This is further demonstrated by the fact that Trump and the GOP have failed to prove voter fraud even once in 90-some court cases.

Aside from his cratering political popularity, recent revelations have exposed Trump as a fraud and a tax cheat. He is vulnerable to ongoing civil and criminal investigations in multiple jurisdictions. His lawyers' tortured argument for executive privilege are perhaps his last protection against finally being held accountable for his misdeeds. The law is coming for him. His unhinged recklessness to try to remain in office is understandable, as it offers him his last get-out-of-jail-free card.

America has endured serious threats before and we will again. Trump's menace to our democratic institutions is real and ominous. But fortunately, the American people can stand up to this threat, and can beat it back, as we have so many crises before. Let Trump threaten and complain all he wants. Because, finally, he does not have the power to wrest from us our democratic birthright. We, all of us, can preserve it.

And we do so by the sacred act of voting, our shared, civic sacrament. Our right to vote has been blessed by the lives of those who have died to preserve it, consecrated by the blood of those who have been beaten to expand it, and sanctified by all those who exercised that right before us, and who have entrusted us to protect it. This then, is "the virtue in this republic" about which Lincoln mused in the light of that campfire.

Our shared understanding that we are not just the beneficiaries of our freedom, but also its stewards. That however large or pernicious our differences may seem, we remain bound together by a history both proud and painful, and united in a future that, though harrowing, is also hopeful. This virtue is an inheritance from our freedom, but also for our communities and country. We either head down the path of socialism and lack of respect for law and order, or we avoid it by voting for conservatives who respect our freedoms and the Constitution.

There are several propositions on the ballot for us to consider, but let's focus on just two for
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Suicides down

CONTINUED FROM Page 7

—Jasmine Jauregui is a junior at Monte Vista High School in Spring Valley and a member of the East County Youth Coalition.

care about is experiencing a suicidal or mental health crisis, please call the Access and Crisis Line at 888-724-7240. Trained and experienced counselors are available seven days a week, 24 hours a day to provide support, referrals, and crisis intervention.

You can also call the Access and Crisis Line if you are concerned about someone, just need to talk, have questions about how to offer support, or if you are looking for information about community resources, mental health referrals, and alcohol and drug support services. If emergency medical care is needed, call 9-1-1 or go to the nearest hospital.

If emergency medical care is needed, call 9-1-1 or go to the emergency room of the nearest hospital.

Data privacy

CONTINUED FROM Page 6

reign in the worst instincts of the corporate surveillance, ad tech, and data brokerage industries. Creating a separate agency also ensures that these issues are given the attention they deserve rather than languishing under other departments not staffed with technology experts who understand the nuances of privacy law and technology.

This measure marks an important step in California’s history as a role-model for the rest of the country. We have the chance to set the standard once again and proclaim our rights in this digital age. With time, other states and the federal government may well follow suit. As Gov. Gavin Newsom likes to say, “so goes California, so goes the nation.”

We desperately need better privacy protections online. Our private data is vacuumed up from all corners of the internet, bought and sold with reckless abandon, and used to sell ads. I’m a Web developer, so I understand what can be done with this technology and what’s being done today to abuse it. If you had said to a crowd in the early 1990s that within 30 years they’d be under constant, targeted domestic surveillance by companies looking to sell them skin cream and e-cigarettes, you’d have been laughed out of the room. But that’s exactly the world we live in today.

This November, Californians will be asked to vote on probably the most progressive slate of ballot measures in recent California history. With everything up in the air, it’s OK to feel overwhelmed, but we can’t let ourselves get distracted. We have a chance to further cement our rights, and we should take it.

—Brian Schneider is a local business owner, software developer, writer, and San Diego resident living in Normal Heights.

RWCNC

CONTINUED FROM Page 8

It says the state cannot discriminate or grant preferential treatment based on race, sex, color, ethnicity or national origin in public employment, education or contracting. If this measure passes race-based preferences such as quotas and affirmative action would be allowed and merit-based criteria would be disregarded. This is a step backwards in the fight against racial injustice and inequality under the law. Preferential treatment is the opposite of what we need.

Vote. It is a privilege and a right so please don’t waste it. Your voice will make a difference.

Navajo Canyon members are hopeful that our Nov. 10 meeting can be held in person, but we can’t make any promises at this time. Please get the updates and the latest information on our website RNWNCayonCanyon.org and on Facebook as Republican Women of California Navajo Canyon.

—Pat Boerner writes on behalf of the Republican Women of California –Navajo Canyon.
Small Image and Wildlife in Art shows

Foothills Art Association

These past many months have been a challenge for all of us, including artist members of La Mesa’s Foothills Art Association. We are all now trying to resume life’s activities in a safe and healthy way.

With safeguards and precautionary measures in place in compliance with state and county guidelines and requirements, the Foothills Art Association was able to re-open our gallery at Porter Hall on a limited schedule in the month of October. Our gallery is currently open Tuesday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., and we invite you to stop by to view and enjoy the artwork of our local artists.

Currently at the gallery, you can view the Small Image Show which features artwork that can be no larger than 7-by-7 inches. In addition to the first-place winner “Little Hummer” by Gary Dyak, you will see 64 expressive works by 32 local artists who are members of the Foothills Art Association. The winners of this year’s Small Image Show include: Gary Dyak, Roz Oserin, Carol McClure, Sandra Hayen, and Mike Heffner.

In November, the Foothills Gallery will feature the 2020 Wildlife in Art Show, which is one of the association’s most popular shows. We invite you to visit the gallery to enjoy these wonderful displays of creativity by our local artists.

The Foothills Gallery at Porter Hall is located at 4910 Memorial Drive in La Mesa. For more information, call 619-464-7167.

—Linda Michael writes on behalf of the Foothills Art Association.

Macabre literature celebrated online at San Diego PoeFest

The third annual San Diego PoeFest, will be held this year online, streaming Oct. 23 to Nov. 1. PoeFest is produced by Write Out Loud in partnership with Save Our Heritage Organisation. “PoeFest has quickly become a San Diego favorite Halloween adventure. Everybody loves the wonderfully chilling stories of Poe. And there are so many authors to explore that have followed in his footsteps,” said PoeFest artistic director Veronica Murphy. “Virtual is our only option for storytelling now, so we are embracing the challenge of capturing a phantasmatic theatrical experience on video. We’ve recreated the atmosphere, filming by candlelight in the Historic Adobe Chapel in Old Town.”

Poe’s poetry, as well as other literature inspired by him, will be performed by local actors Brittany Caldwell, Manny Fernandes, Linda Libby, Brian Mackey, Paul Maley, Sandra Ruiz, Rachael VansWormer, and featuring Travis Rhett Wilson as Edgar Allan Poe.

The actors will present six episodes of fully-staged, theatrical performances of short stories of the macabre, including “The Tell-Tale Heart,” “The Yellow Wallpaper” and “La Llorona” and more.

Audience members can choose to see just one video program (or more) – or become a VIP and have access to all six videos, plus an exclusive livestream event for opening night. Access to video performances is restricted to the dates of the festival, but viewers can choose the dates and times to watch – they can binge watch all on Halloween or see a performance every day for a week to keep all the days spooky.

Programs include:
• An Evening with Mr. Poe and “The Masque of the Red Death”
  Featuring Travis Rhett Wilson as Edgar Allan Poe
• Malignant Mothers
  “The Bells” by E.A. Poe
  “To My Mother” by E.A. Poe
  “La Llorona” – a Latin American Folktale (bilingual)
  “Mama Come” by Jane Yolen
• Guilty – Pleasure?
  “The Tell-Tale Heart” by E.A. Poe
  “Sonnet— to Science” by E.A. Poe
• An Evening with Mr. Poe
  Featuring Travis Rhett Wilson as Edgar Allan Poe
  “The Raven” by E.A. Poe
  “Why The Little Frenchman Wears His Hand in a Sling” by E.A. Poe
  “Fairy-Land” by E.A. Poe
  “The Conqueror Worm” by E.A. Poe
  “Boogah Man” & “The Haunted Oak” by Paul Laurence Dunbar
  “The Lips” by Henry S. Whitehead
• The Yellow Wallpaper
  “A Dream Within a Dream” by E.A. Poe
  “The Yellow Wallpaper” by Charlotte Perkins Gilman

Individual programs are $13 each, VIP Festival Pass is $50. VIP Festival Pass includes access to all six programs and exclusive live-streamed Opening Night Event. Tickets may be purchased online at writeoutloud.ticketspice.com/poefest or by calling 619-297-8953.

Travis Rhett Wilson as Edgar Allan Poe (Courtesy Write Out Loud)

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12 Oct. 23 – Nov. 27, 2020
La Mesa Courier sdnews.com
Hitting the ‘Spot’
Surf & Soul offers up authentic Southern flavors

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

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

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

The restaurant is currently a fast, casual takeout. You can order via phone or walk up and order. The restaurant opens at 11 a.m., noon or 1 p.m. depending on the day and closes when they have sold out. Don’t delay in ordering your food; closing can be as early as 4 p.m. on some days. Currently guests wait for their orders outside as they are taking extra precautions during COVID. Sarajevo recommends that the food is eaten directly after pick up so it is hot and fresh. Fans hope that the restaurant will return to a sit-down eatery once the pandemic is over.

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

If you want to eat at Surf & Soul Saturday and Sunday. and Tuesday and soul is on Friday, because surf is on Monday, because surf is on Monday. Next, you have to pick the right day, because surf is on Monday and Tuesday and soul is on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

If you visit on a surf day you can expect to see golden fried catfish, crispy fried shrimp and cheese grits, popcorn shrimp, a blackened shrimp and crab roll and crispy fries smothered in smoked turkey gravy and topped with white cheddar cheese, red pepper ranch, scallions and spicy tomato relish. Prices are moderate ranging between $8 and $15. cookie crunch banana pudding or butter pound cake. With the amount of attention they are getting from residents it will be fun to watch them grow. Their philosophy: Treat everyone like gold, including our employees and serve great food.

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

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

AUTUM GINGER PIE

INGREDIENTS:

Crust:
• 2 cups finely ground ginger-
• 1 package South and Spoon
• Pinch of cinnamon

Filling:
• 1 package South and Spoon
• 2 egg yolks
• 1 3/4 cups milk (Almond milk can be substituted.)

What’s Cooking with Julie

La Mesa has two young natives who have started a pudding company called South & Spoon Pudding Co. Maria Manning and Lauren Benson Button have successfully produced a delicious product that is certified gluten free, Kosher and has no preservatives or additives.

Here is a recipe I came up with that showcases their Salted Brown Sugar Pudding Mix. It is also available in vanilla, chocolate and lemon.

INGREDIENTS:
• 1/4 cup crystallized ginger, chopped
• Whipped cream for topping

DIRECTIONS:
Mix crust ingredients and press into a pie plate. Bake at 375 degrees for 10 minutes. Over medium heat, cook pudding as per box instructions and add the chopped ginger. Pour into cooled crust and refrigerate. Serve with whipped cream and a dusting of cinnamon. Enjoy chilled!

South & Spoon puddings are available at Valley Farms Market, Iona Meats, Kiel’s Market in San Carlos, Cardiff Seaside Market and Boneys in Coronado.

Moses White, age 10, holds a ginger pie. (Photo by Julie White)

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Moses White, age 10, holds a ginger pie. (Photo by Julie White)
Helix Charter High celebrates end of first quarter

By JENNIFER OSBORN

Helix students have completed the first quarter of the 2020-21 school year! Freshmen experienced their first high school finals week, and returning students became more accustomed to finals via Chromebook.

To celebrate being one finals week closer to graduation, the Grade Level Team for the class of 2021 hosted a “Drive-Through Donut” event. Seniors were invited to drive through the school parking lot, where they were greeted by Helix staff members who handed them, you guessed it, a donut!

Signs provided by Yard Marquee welcomed the students and offered words of encouragement, including “Donut Stop Believing!” This was an opportunity for staff and students to see each other in person, even if just for a moment.

HELIX RANKED NO. 1
Niche.com has named Helix the No. 1 Charter High School in the San Diego Area. Niche is a ranking and review site that evaluates K-12 schools all over the country, using various data sets and different ranking criteria. Besides the top ranking as a San Diego area charter school, Helix was ranked the fifth-best charter high school in California, 29th in the nation, and placed 13th in Niche’s “Standout High Schools” in California.

LEGENDARY COACH RETIRING
After 50 years in the Helix basketball program as a player and coach, John Singer is retiring. He has spent the last 39 years at the helm of one of the most successful programs in the CIF San Diego Section. Under his leadership, his teams won 19 League Championships, four boys CIF Championships, and one girls CIF Championship.

Singer compiled 741 wins with his boys teams and another 200 coaching the girls. In 2017, his team won the CIF Championship, SoCal Regional, and was the State Runner-Up. He leaves as the second most winningest basketball coach in CIF San Diego Section history.

Helix thanks Coach Singer for his service to the student-athletes and wishes him well in retirement.

A MESSAGEx FROM HELIX HIGH SCHOOL FOUNDATION PRESIDENT PAT ALBANESE

Now, more than any other time, the Helix High School Foundation urgently invites you to contribute to our students and their future at Helix as they navigate this “new normal” of physical distancing. In spite of these new parameters, the resilience and perseverance of Helix students continues to be amazing as they acquit themselves to distance learning and the loss of many familiar day-to-day experiences they would otherwise be having at their school site, surrounded by teachers and friends. As you make your donation, please keep in mind how very much appreciated your support is, especially this 2020-2021 school year.

This past year, the Helix High School Foundation was able to make a tremendous difference in the lives of students by distributing $42,000 in scholarships to 30 diverse and deserving graduating Helix seniors. The Helix High School Foundation has a legacy of 14 years providing Scotties with financial support. In total, we have funded $771,450 in scholarships benefiting 530 students in their post-high school education. The need this year is greater than ever.

The Helix High School Foundation is a 501c-3 nonprofit whose mission is to raise funds to help students pursue educational opportunities and to support special projects that align with Helix’s educational goals.

Tax deductible donations may be made online at helixhighschoolfoundation.com or by check made out to the Helix Foundation (7323 University Ave, La Mesa, CA 91942). You may also wish to join other alumni who have included us in their estate or trust planning. If you choose this option, we are available to assist you with that process. Thank you in advance for considering the importance of your gift, this year especially, to the Helix High School Foundation.

This month, Grossmont High School is thrilled about the completion of its new Event Center building which includes a 475 seat auditorium, dance studio, costume and technical theatre classroom, and new “black box” theater. The Event Center will also include scene shop classrooms, a green room, dressing rooms, restrooms, and other support spaces. The project emphasizes multi-functionality, with indoor and outdoor learning and gathering spaces. The Event Center will provide a new modern venue for school, district, and community performances, meetings, and events.

Performing Arts Department chair Amity Eckert shares, “We are thrilled! I see us working interdepartmentally to create meaningful and collaborative performances. Students will also now be able to expand their knowledge of technical theatre, particularly with regard to technology so they will have real world experience in a state of the art theatre space.”

Since 1920, Grossmont High School has valued performing arts as an essential part of a student’s education. In April 1921, for two nights, the senior class play “All of a Sudden Peggy” was performed by a cast of 11 students. Interestingly, one performance was given in Lakeside and one in La Mesa. In its second year, in the spring of 1922, two plays were performed, one by juniors and one by seniors. Also, that year, 17 Foothillers enrolled in orchestra and 18 students enrolled in Boys and Girls Glee Club.

Unbelievably, there was a real auditorium and stage in the 1922 original school building, the north wing of the original school. The theater entrance was through the iconic double doors at the front of the school. Located at the end of the hallway, the theater’s stage had an apron with dressing rooms in the back, as well as devices to raise and lower the scenery. There was also a balcony with a projection room for lights.

In 1936, as part of the WPA funded construction on campus, the north wing of the school was demolished and rebuilt as a two-story classroom building with classrooms for English and business, later called the “Old Gym.” The new auditorium gymnasium (now called the Old Gym) was completed in 1937. However, over the next eight decades, it was increasingly obvious that it was more of a gym than a theater, yet large productions such as the annual Christmas Pageant and musicals took place there, collaborative projects within the Performing Arts Department.

In 1979, drama classes moved to the second floor of the new north wing at the end of the hall, where the space quickly became known as the “Little Theater” with more intimate performances being held there. In 1941, the music building, attached to the back of the Old Gym, was finished. Sometime in the 1940s, the drama department moved into the new building, and the Little Theater continued its role as a home for classes, rehearsals, and performances from “Diary of Anne Frank,” “Hamlet,” “Go Ask Alice” to “Evenings of One Act Plays.” For decades, above the door hung a sign welcoming students to the “Little Theater.” The sign will be displayed as wall art in the new theater as a reminder of the incredible memories created inside the Little Theater.

Principal Dan Barnes reflects, “I am very proud of our Performing Arts department, one that dates back to our beginning in 1920 and that continues to be a very successful program full of talented people. This beautiful and modern venue will showcase our talented performing arts students. The Events Center provides a state-of-the-art facility which will bring together our dance, choral, digital music, and drama programs in a central location designed to promote student collaboration and interaction among all our performing arts programs.”

BECOME PART OF OUR HISTORIC CAMPUS

In honor of our historic “100 Years of Excellence Celebration,” the GHS Educational Foundation is sponsoring a scholarship fundraising program. Donors to the $500 dollars for 100 Years program will have the names, their families’, or their businesses’ names engraved on 2-by-4-inch gray tiles, which will be displayed on a wall near the front of the school.

In June 2020, the Foundation awarded $6,500 in senior scholar- ship funds; our goal is to dramatically increase that amount in the future.

Visit the GHS Educational Foundation website at foothill- foundation.com, and on the “Tile Projects” page, you may order your tile using the gold donation button. Or write a check payable to GHS Educational Foundation and mail to GHS Educational Foundation, P.O. Box 10414, La Mesa, CA 91944. On the check memo, please indicate “scholarship fund” and include the text of your tile with your check (up to 20 characters, 30 characters each).

To learn more about GHS, past and present, visit the GHS Museum website at foothiller-museum.com. Due to the coronavirus and our continuing move into our larger museum space, the GHS Museum is currently closed, but we are checking our emails at ghsmuseum@ghsd.net and our phone messages at 619-668-6140.

—Connie and Lynn Bare write on behalf of the GHS Museum.

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Technology tips to help stay connected during wildfire season

Preparing 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, running 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 like Cox, that they’ll 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 things 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 have 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 855-324-7700 or visiting a Cox Solutions Store.

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

Download Cox apps before a wildfire or PSPS occurs.

- 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 Everywhere app - Your home phone 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, calling features and messaging services. For information about these consumer disaster protections, visit cox.com/CaliforniaAssist.

For more helpful information and tips, visit cox.com/CaliforniaAssist.

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The 1929 cast of "Riding Down the Sky" in the 1922 GUHS Auditorium

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The new Event Center at Grossmont High (Courtesy photo)
There's nothing more important to us than keeping you safe during wildfire season. But we need your help. Download our emergency checklists from our site, then make and practice your family's preparedness plan. Next, be sure we have your current contact info so we can keep you updated. That way in the event of high fire risk weather conditions, you'll be both ready and well-informed.

For more information on emergency preparation and wildfire safety, visit sdge.com/wildfirekit.

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Mission Trails Foundation offers new online programs

By JENNIFER MORRISSEY

The Mission Trails Regional Park (MTRP) Foundation is pleased to introduce OnTopic, a new series of online programs on topics related to Mission Trails. Our inaugural programs will be presented by MTRP volunteers and will impart knowledge that we can use as we explore the park and other natural areas. These online events are free of charge, but registration is required.

‘AMAZING WORLD OF BATS, NATURE’S TINY FIGHTER JETS’
6 p.m., Thursday, Oct. 29
Presented by Don Endicott

‘For Which We Stand: How Our Government Works & Why It Matters’ expands the different parts of our government, how it came to be, and how changes in it are made. These topics are entertainingly covered with infographics, charts, caricatures, and maps. This is a well-written and accessible introduction for children who are starting to ask thoughtful questions.

Many young picture book readers are familiar with Jonathan London’s character Froggy. His newest title in this character’s journey of learning is “Froggy For President.” Froggy has decided to run for class president, but so has Friggilina. They both have very different platforms, but Froggy has confidence in his presidential tie. This series entry, like all of the Froggy books, is sure to bring lots of giggles from your little one.

To put any of these on request give us a call at 619-469-2151 or visit sdcl.org.

—Denise Smith is a librarian at the La Mesa Branch of the San Diego County Library.

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**BIRDS AND MAMMALS ON THE TRAIL AT MTRP**

4pm - 6pm, Thursday, Nov. 19

Presented by Wendy Estery

Mission Trails Regional Park is home to all kinds of birds and animals, and this presentation includes examples that are often seen on the trail. Viewers will learn where and when they were seen, interesting about them, and the birds’ call home.

Wendy Estery is a long-time volunteer at MTRP and an avid photographer whose stunning images of birds and wildlife have been used in publications and exhibits. She is on the training team for the Trail Guides and is the MTRP Nest Box Coordinator, monitoring nest boxes during nesting season. Wendy is also the author of “Coloring Southern California Birds” by Sunbelt Publications.

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**Jenny Morrissey is executive director of the Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation.**

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**News briefs**
AS YOUR CITY COUNCIL MEMBER, MY TOP FOUR PRIORITIES:

#1
Protect La Mesa by Supporting the La Mesa Police Department

#2
Regulatory Relief for La Mesa Business and Property Owners

#3
Shrink La Mesa’s Homeless Population – Not Enable and Grow It.

#4
Keep La Mesa’s Parks, Streets and On/Off Ramps Litter Free

LauraLothian
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For More Info:

#1
Union Bank, Spring Street, La Mesa, May 30th, 2023

#2
Treat COVID-19 Like a Manageable Virus - Not the Bubonic Plague.

#3
No Stand Down Orders or Mob Appeasement Ever.

#4
Spring St. at 125 Cleaned in 30 Minutes!

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THANK YOU VERY MUCH!!

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