New coding school opens in La Jolla

This Week

Asian-fusion restaurant takes over former Hake space

MERRY CHRISTMAS, LA JOLLA

The annual La Jolla Christmas Parade isn’t the only local tradition Santa will be enjoying this Christmas.

Don Balch / Village News

By Jill Dimmich / La Jolla Village News

The annual La Jolla Christmas Parade and Holiday Festival might have come and gone, but there are some other traditions the city offers for those who want to get into the holiday spirit before it all comes to an end.

According to La Jolla Historian Carol Olten: “Although the Christmas parade has been a steady and popular thing through the years, there also have been times it didn’t happen because of lack of interest or funding. Occasionally it has been accompanied by a street fair at which vendors sell Christmas-y knickknacks although the regular I merchants pretty much nix this for cutting into their holiday business.” And so it did on Dec. 8, to much fanfare.

Often added big hotels like La Valencia put up “fine and fancy Christmas decorations, churches have ceremonious singing and some stores, like Bowers, have creative window displays – although it’s not Fifth Avenue.”

Girard Gourmet still celebrates that phenomenon known as “the Christmas cookie” and St. James By-the-Sea Episcopal Church carillon serenades the village with that other phenomena, “the Christmas Carol.” And, not to be forgotten, La Jolla has the Dr. Seuss history of the Grinch, she noted.

For those unfamiliar with Grinch and Dr. Seuss, Olten said in Seuss biographies, Dr. Seuss is said to have based the Grinch on himself after he looked at his image in a mirror around Christmas. “He labored intensively on this book and wanted kids everywhere and all ages to see it as a statement against the commercialism of Christmas. Whoville, the village in the book where the Whos all rush around with their shopping, is sometimes said to have been modeled on what he observed in La Jolla,” she said.

Don Balch / Village News

Read more online at sdnews.com.

Restaurateur accused of rape denies all charges

Daniel Dorado adamantly denied on Dec. 11 he sexually assaulted any of the eight women who either met him at his former La Jolla restaurant or on online dating services.

Dorado, 61, told the eight-man, four-woman jury that all sexual activity was consensual. He also denied putting any substance into the alcoholic drinks he gave the women. He denied having sex with them while they were unconscious.

“They weren’t sexually assaulted,” said Dorado. They were very aware of where they were and their choices.

“You’re completely insulting,” said Dorado to Deputy District Attorney Jessica Coto under cross examination when asked if he had made faces or stared intently at the women who testified against him.

“I was intently listening. I told the truth from the minute I took the witness stand,” said Dorado. “I’m telling the truth.”

The jury has Friday off and closing arguments are scheduled for Monday, Dec. 16, when the trial goes into its third week. The jury is expected to start deliberations on Monday after hearing instructions from San Diego Superior Court Judge Charles Rogers.

Some of the women testified they met Dorado at Voce Del Mare on La Jolla Boulevard, before the restaurant closed after his arrest on March 28, 2018. One woman met him as a restaurant customer and others met him during job interviews.

La Jollans react to city hearing officer upholding Lime’s operating permit

By Dave Scoen | LA JOLLA VILLAGE NEWS

La Jolla residents had mixed feelings about a San Diego hearing officer’s Dec. 3 decision to deny the city of San Diego’s petition to revoke Lime electric scooter company’s operating permit.

The revocation hearing was scheduled after the city claimed Lime violated geofencing rules set forth in city permit guidelines established in July. The city accused Lime of disobeying geofencing rules that limit scooter speeds to 8 mph in areas like beach boardwalks, Balboa Park and Petco Park.

However, city hearing officer Matthew Freeman determined the city’s accusations were based on speedometer reading on scooters and found that the city never investigated the accuracy of the speedometers.

Freeman’s report also said the city failed to establish that its own speed testing of scooters took place within geofenced zones.

La Jollans weighed in on electric scooters and the hearing officer’s Lime decision.

“This may be a moot point as my understanding is that scooter usage is way down,” said Brett Murphy of La Jolla Sports Club and current president of La Jolla Village Merchants Association, speaking for himself. “I don’t have the statistics in front of me, but apparently their novelty has worn off.”

“There is no doubt need for enforceable and enforcing regulations regarding electric scooters,” said La Jolla landlord Lincoln Foster about the hearing officer’s decision. “Personally, I prefer my 1970 Cadillac Sedan DeVille.”

“Lime is pleased with the decision and we appreciate the hearing officer for recognizing our compliance in San Diego,” said Lime in a statement. “As San Diego’s longest-serving operator, we value our partnership with the city and look forward to continuing to serve the community.”

“We respect the decision and look forward to adopting enhanced scooter regulations, which have already been presented to committee, that give the city even more tools to enforce public safety laws and keep our streets and sidewalks safe,” city spokesperson Scott Robinson said. The city approved new regulations governing electric scooters in July and on Aug. 16, it sent a letter to Lime stating, “Lime was found in violation of San Diego Municipal Code 83.0308, geofencing speed and operating restrictions on July 11, July 14 and Aug. 1. The City’s Development Services Department has requested a hearing to initiate the revocation process.”

Lime responded to the city’s new regulations by creating on-street corrals encouraging riders to stay off sidewalks, and by launching a “Don’t drink and ride” detection feature in its app, which alerts riders after 10 p.m. to confirm they are not intoxicated.

Lime claimed 3 million San Diegans have ridden its scooters, while others have ridden its scooters, while arguing people who can’t afford Uber use scooters to get to work, pointing out they are in business to fill that void. Lime employs about 30 full-time staffers in San Diego, as well as some 1,000 gig-economy workers on a weekly basis.

Among other things, SDMC 83.0308 proscribes that shared mobility devices shall not be parked, displayed, offered, or made available for rent: within 40 feet of another shared mobility device; on city sidewalks or other city property on the block adjacent to a location designated by the city for shared mobility devices; in disabled persons parking zones; within 500 feet of a hospital or school; within six feet in any direction of any sign marking a designated bus stop or trolley stop; or within six feet in any direction of any transit shelter, bench, or information kiosk associated with a bus or trolley stop.

“I do not bite women’s breasts. I give women’s breasts attention,” said Dorado. He denied forcing a 57-year-old woman into performing oral sex, saying she was lying about it being forced. “We were enjoying ourselves,” said Dorado.

He said another woman “initiated the sexual contact,” and she had forced his hand to touch her vagina.

Dorado wore business suits each day of his trial and often took notes. He posted $900,000 bond in Sept., 2018.

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LJPB raises concerns on commercializing public parks

By Dave Sound [LA JOLLA VILLAGE NEWS]

La Jolla Parks and Beaches, Inc. (LJPB) in December once again vetted concerns about commercialization of public parks, before postponing a vote on placing a moratorium on new special-use permits at Scripps Park until January.

Groups proposing to host events at Scripps Park are required to seek LJPB approval and obtain a city special-use permit to use all or a portion of the park. LJPB has been reluctant to approve private, for-profit use of Scripps Park, and any use that takes up the entire park excluding the public. LJPB also reached group consensus Dec. 9, agreeing their city advisory group is too small to coordinate and administer large-scale signature events.

LJPB this year successfully sponsored the return of a September community swim and was contemplating hosting the return of a downsized Scripps summer concert series next year. Board members Mary Ellen Morgan and Debbie Beacham are advocating placing a temporary hold on greenlighting any new community events in Scripps Park until the city sorts out its policies and guidelines for public parks.

“The city is redoing their master plan for parks programs and criteria,” said Morgan. “We don’t know what the city’s new parks criteria is going to be. So we’re suggesting allowing ongoing events to continue, but suggesting that we do not entertain any new events until we’ve reviewed the city’s new park guidelines.”

Once we approve an event in the park, they feel entitled to be in the park,” noted Morgan, adding events held previously in Scripps would continue under a moratorium. She pointed out it would be inappropriate to approve new events in the park, only to have to rescind such approval later.

The city’s parks master plan update is a three-year comprehensive planning and outreach project to develop a vision and strategies to meet the future recreation needs of city residents.

The park subcommittee’s moratorium suggestion was debated by board and audience members alike. 

“We’ve always approved concerts and public events like the swim meet, and concert’s in the park, historical events,” noted LJPB board member Sally Miller. “What we’re trying to do is avoid having any new events, especially commercial events, starting up which opens the door to more commercialization.

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The city’s parks master plan update is a three-year comprehensive planning and outreach project to develop a vision and strategies to meet the future recreation needs of city residents.

Read more online at sdnews.com.
Ceder School subtracts curriculum and inputs creativity at new La Jolla branch

by Victoria Davis LA JOLLA VILLAGE NEWS

Exclamation points, parentheses, forward slashes, addition and subtraction symbols, with numbers and words mixed in somewhere with it all: The computer screen of a coder may look like an obscure, jumbled mess of commands, but every symbol serves a purpose and La Jolla’s new academic outlet, The Coder School, is teaching kids how to be passionate about that purpose.

“In every field of work, you have to talk to the computers,” said marketing professional Artur Lopes Pedrosa, who co-owns The Coder School in La Jolla with his wife Aline Pampalon. “Right now, we use technology for everything, so whether you want to be an architect or a doctor, you will need to know some type of programming or another. Coding is basic knowledge we’ll all need to know about in the future. Here, we can give kids a leg-up.”

The Coder School brand was first founded in 2014 by computer science and engineer professionals Hansel Lynn and Wayne Teng in Silicon Valley. It’s an after-school learning program, which provides weekly computer programming lessons to children ages 7 to 18 in the comfort of its own colorful facility, with state-of-the-art computer systems. In 2016, the brand began to franchise and currently has 40 schools operating in over 12 U.S. states.

While La Jolla is the second branch in San Diego, The Coder School is La Jolla’s very first coding-focused school. Pampalon and Pedrosa, originally from Sao Paulo in Brazil, first learned about The Coding School Brand from their La Jolla neighbors — also originally from Brazil — who own The Coder School branch in North San Diego on Carmel Mountain Road.

"Both my husband and I are in marketing so we’re always excited about new technologies," said Pampalon. "And we were already thinking about opening up a business ourselves when we moved here. We looked around for other business options, but nothing made our eyes sparkle as much as The Coder School did."

According to Pampalon, providing after-school coding lessons is a concept Brazil has just recently begun to invest in. In a country where learning English is mandatory, some slogans for the schools Pampalon recalls go so far as to advertise, "Coding is the new English."

"In my opinion, this is not just the new English, this is also the new math," said Pedrosa.

But even while The Coder School heavily promotes the necessity of learning to code, there’s no rigid curriculum. In fact, there’s no curriculum at all. Offering entry-level, large-group classes as well as two-on-one coaching lessons, each student’s experience is personalized to fit their interests. If a student as an affinity for soccer, coding coaches will help them create a soccer video game for their project, which they will eventually present at the school’s Coder Fair, a celebration that takes place every three months.

"We want the kids to have fun first and then they will learn as a result from that," said Pampalon. It seems to be working. La Jolla’s coder branch has only been open a month, but local mom Jessica Harris says the school is doing wonders for her 8-year-old son, Luke.

“My son is very into video games and we wanted him to see firsthand how much work goes into making the stuff he enjoys," said Harris. “It really blew his little mind because he’s making that connection for the first time between the technology side and the creative side.”

Students just starting out at The Coder School will first learn tech talk and coding languages like “Scratch,” then dive into web developments, games, robots, data, AI and more. Kids at other Coder School branches — which follow the same teaching style — have created games to help better explain math or solve algebraic problems, and even developed coding programs to find out the current temperature on the NASA space station. A big part of the success, according to Pedrosa, is the coaches’ enthusiasm.

“Many of our coaches aren’t computer science majors, many are self-taught coders, but because of that, they have a unique passion for coding and they know how to engage the kids and get them excited about it too,” said Pedrosa, whose 6-year-old son Leo will be starting at the school next year. “Giving these coaches the opportunity to give to kids what they never had, that’s the coolest part of all.”

For more information about The Coder School, visit thecoderschool.com.

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Most homeowners are looking for ways to upgrade their home décor quickly and dramatically. One of the most overlooked pieces of home décor are the window treatments, which can alter your interior design more than you may realize. Take a look at these tips to see how you can update your home without compromising your style.

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Sometimes, privacy can be an afterthought until you look out your window and see someone else looking in at you. Having control of who is seeing into your home is something that you need to account for. Before you say your windows are private enough, think about them at night. Once the sun goes down, and it starts to get dark, any light on in your home makes it easier to see in. With light filtering options you can determine the level of light entering or leaving your windows, allowing you to be able to see out without unwanted eyes peering in. Because of the variety of fabrics available, drapery is a stylish way to keep your home to your eyes only.

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VALERIE IN STYLE

Though a “store clos- ing” banner is still draped across the front of the building, owners of Valerie in Bird Rock said advertis- ing their closing sale may have been premature, as they are still in lease neg- otiations with their land- lord.

Located at 5628 La Jol- la Blvd., Suite B, Valerie is a retail store offering a variety of European-style women's apparel and ac- cessories including cus- tom-made jewelry.

Owned by former Miss Ukraine Tanya Tkachen- ko, the women’s apparel shop sells bathing suits, rompers, dresses, shoes and accessories for beach or resort lifestyles.

A jewelry designer, Tk- achenko’s long-term goal is to break into fashion design.

MANDARIN HOUSE

The 42-year-old Man- darin House restaurant at 6765 La Jolla Blvd., closed since a summer kitchen fire, will not reopen for the holidays as planned.

“The electrical fire was very unfortunate, they [owners] hoped to reopen for Christmas, but permit- ting and remodeling work is taking time and they’re now expecting to reopen in early 2020,” said Ste- ve Strauss, a partner with Cooley LLP law firm.

Strauss, a general part- ner of Mandarin Partners, which owns the property, noted, “Our family has owned the property forever. It was my grandfather’s grocery store in the ‘30s. My grandfather owned it, my dad owned it and now me.”

Strauss said Nelson Law is the restaurant’s owner and operator. “His father was the original tenant, John Law,” he said. The cause of the non-in- jury summer blaze at Man- darin House was deter- mined by fire investigators to be grease buildup in the kitchen vent. The fire was confined to the kitchen and no one was inside the restaurant when it started.

Mandarin House has been operating on La Jolla Boulevard for more than four decades. Law’s late father, Tat “John” Law, and his partner, Wai “Bill” Man, worked their way up from dishwashers and de- livery boys to head chefs in Hong Kong before relocating to the United States. They opened the La Jolla restaurant in 1977.

Dual-concept sushi restaurant opens on Prospect Street

A dual-concept restaurant, Haru- ama and Blue Ocean Sushi, recently replaced the Prospect Street space previ- ously inhabited by The Hake. Perched atop La Jolla Cove offering stunning ocean views, the two new restaurants split 5,783 square feet of retail space.

“Both restaurants are a fresh, fun, modern take on Asian cuisine,” said Hiba Khalid, marketing manager for parent company Love Boat Group. “It’s not tradi- tional. It’s more Asian fusion.”

The two restaurants were created by local restaurateurs Jenny and James Pyo, who own and operate Love Boat Sushi, Pokewan, Blue Ocean Robata and Sushi Bar (Carlsbad), as well as two other Haru- mana locations in Little Italy and Carlsbad.

“Restauranting is really their passion, and they just want to bring fine quality, and fine dining, to La Jolla,” said Khalid of the Pyos. “They pride themselves on having high-quality fish and a beautiful presentation.”

Harumama is in the front of the Pros- pect Street space, and Blue Ocean Sushi is appropriately located oceanfront to- ward the back of the restaurant. Haru- ama offers playful twists on Asian fare with inspiration from Chinese, Japanese and Korean cuisines. Seating 58 peo- ple, Harumama offers cult favorite and Insta-worthy steamed buns shaped into cartoon-y pandas, chickens and season- al figures in flavors like chicken, pork, mushroom and purple sweet potato.

“Character buns have been a huge hit on Instagram,” noted Khalid.

Similar to its sister eateries in Little It- aly and Carlsbad, Harumama La Jolla of- fers a contemporary turn on traditional ramen, noodles, buns and more.

Blue Ocean Sushi offers an expansive menu featuring items highlighting fresh ocean flavors. The new La Jolla resto- rant serves a wide variety of sushi and sashimi. Items unique to La Jolla Blue Ocean Sushi include scallops with black rice risotto, ribeye steak, port wine crispy duck breast and campfire pineapple with bee, shrimp, quail egg, pineapple and vegetables wok-seared in pineapple sauce. Blue Ocean Sushi La Jolla seats approximately 90.

Of Blue Ocean’s branding, Khalid said, “It is completely different now; very fun and whimsical. Blue Ocean is very high- end, beautiful, emphasizing the ocean view. There’s also an upbeat structure inside to provide some fun lighting.”

Khalid noted there is no outdoor seat- ing while adding, “There is a glassed-in area where guests can watch the chefs as they make the sushi rolls by hand.”

Lunch specials are served noon to 3 p.m. daily along with happy hour from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. Social media is at @harumamasd and @blueoceanrobata.
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Misadventures of growing older: Will I ever learn to act my age?

By Natasha Josefowitz, Ph.D.

I was eating breakfast when she ran up to me excitedly saying, “I’m here.” I had no idea who she was. My bewildered expression must have shown. She exclaimed, “It’s me.” Well, that didn’t help, so I fished for clues. “How have you been?” I asked trying to figure out who she was, all to no avail. She finally left, telling me that she would see me later. As I sat in front of my unfinished bowl of oatmeal, I wondered: Who was that?

As we get older, we not only have problems with face recognition, but also misunderstanding what someone says. Mishearing is a common problem in our age group (80-100). It can produce hilarity as well as misleading information. To wit: What time is that meeting? Where is it? Did you say today, or is it next week? Oh, it was last week; I guess I missed it. It was canceled.

When I complain that half the time when leaving my apartment, I have to return because I forgot to take something, there is a chorus of “me, too.” We are not alone in our so-called age-related misadventures. It is reassuring that it is common and not the beginning of Alzheimer’s diseas.

Another age-related problem is having a so-called age-defying outlook. Our ages are ego-dystonic. It means our ages do not correspond to our self-perception of ourselves. “Oh, I’m still young.” The other day I stopped a resident and said to him in a forceful voice, “Please stop sending me all those emails.” He looked at me, mumbled, and replied, “I have never sent you an email.” Oops! Not remembering a common word is another one of these senior moments that stops us in our tracks in the middle of a conversation. We then seek help from tablemates: You know that thing in the wall you plug electric cords into? Outlet! That’s it. Thanks.

When I complain that half the time when leaving my apartment, I have to return because I forgot to take something, there is a chorus of “me, too.” We are not alone in our so-called age-related misadventures. It is reassuring that it is common and not the beginning of Alzheimer’s disease, which we all dread. The good news is that as long as we are worried about our impending dementia, it is not happening. When we keep repeating the same question, get confused about times and dates, and deny that there is a problem, these may be early signs of dementia that are not visible to us. So, as long as we worry, we are OK.

Another age-related problem is the new physical frailty. Our ages are ego-dystonic. It means our ages do not fit our bodies, our images of ourselves are much younger than the number on our medical charts. This creates a problem of overestimating our physical capacities. Falling is a frequent occurrence in our age group along with falling asleep during meetings or performances. I always ask whoever is sitting next to me to poke me when they see me nodding off. I have often ended my talks on aging with the admonition: “Keep one hand on the banister.” I should say both hands. During intermission at a San Diego Symphony performance, I got cookies to give to our bus driver and our program coordinator in charge of our bus. At the end of the concert, as we were climbing back into the bus, we had to navigate the steep steps. I usually haul myself up using the two handrails. However, I had a cocktail napkin in my left hand holding the cookies, so as I tried to climb the steps using only one hand, I lost my grip, slid down and ripped the skin off my shin. Blood was dripping down my leg and all over the floor of the bus, even pooling in my shoe. Our program coordinator got the first-aid kit, cleaned the wound, bandaged my leg, and we were on our way.

When we arrived at my retirement community, there was a wheelchair waiting for me with an RN ready to take me to our clinic and take care of my now skinned leg. The wound right over the shinbone will take a long time to heal, but I’m in good hands.

Moral of the story: Keep both hands on the handrail when climbing up steep steps! I recently turned 93 and even though my mind doesn’t comprehend my age, my body certainly does. Will I ever learn to act my age?

Natalja Josefowitz is the author of more than 20 books. She currently resides at White Sands Retirement Community in La Jolla. Copyright 2019, Natasha Josefowitz. All rights reserved.

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The amazing auctioneer Clint Bell got the live auction going. Everyone’s favorite auction item was to have the privilege to be the first guest out at the valet service after the event ended. Guests were trying to outbid each other and Bell finally gave the auction item to two lucky winners. Additional recognition went to honorary chair Evelyn Barandiaran and conservation ambassador Joan Embrey and Duane Pillsbury.

After the luncheon, the high-pace fashion show, presented by TV personality Leonard Simpson, began. There was a mixture of men’s and women’s collections starting with the Missions Hills boutique Chateau Bel Age. They presented high-end pieces with bohemian glamour. Bel Age specializes in hand-made and limited-edition garments to help you make your own signature style. Each piece is a unique find of its own. Odin Threads creates wearable art strictly made for creative gangsters. Each coat has artwork hand-drawn by artists that is fully reversible with fashion. The models came down the catwalk and turned the garments inside out to show the versatility.

Zelegio Custom Clothiers is a bespoke tailor shop located in downtown San Diego and La Jolla. They came down the runway showing off their custom-made suits. They are constructed in all fabrics and weights that are styled to your taste in lapels, pockets, trousers, and vests. The finale collection presented was the designs of Karian Forsyth. These luxury resortwear are both stylish and sexy and gave a dramatic conclusion to the afternoon. Forsyth gives trunk shows around the U.S. and the Caribbean and currently is in boutiques in St. Barts.

The Arc of San Diego is a non-profit that serves 2,000 children and adults with disabilities such as autism, cerebral palsy, and Down syndrome. They provide services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities so they can achieve their life goals. For more information with this organization, visit: arc-sd.com.

UPCOMING EVENTS
Sunday, Jan. 12, 2020 — Bridal Bazaar at the San Diego Convention Center with two fashion shows at noon and 2:30 p.m. For more information, call 760-334-5500.

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Bishop’s boys basketball: Young but cohesive

Wilt Chamberlain. Kobe Bryant. Nick Levine? In a long line of Philly basketball greats, the Bishop’s basketball coach brings that fire, has that love for the roundball game that the others exemplified and exuded.

The sixth-year Knights mentor, older and wiser, seeks to write a new story in the 2019-10 season, building around a base of two key returners from last year’s squad that went 20-11, 4-6 in a strong Coastal Conference that Levine calls “the toughest league over the past league,” featuring perennial CIF power Foothills Christian and elite program Santa Fe Christian. He retains the 215 area code of Philadelphia for his cell number.

Zach White, a 5-foot-8-inch guard the coach deems “one of the best point guards in the county,” and Dash Tsai, 6-foot and a 3-point specialist, are the two senior team captains that will help embody that inner fire and family connection Levine seeks to nurture in his team.

White averaged 17 points a game last year, leading the Knights in scoring. “This summer he took full ownership [of his role],” his coach says. “He has a ton of experience. He’s extremely competitive.”

R.J. Faltinsky: “He, along with many of the guys, grew up together in the program. I think that helps with the connection. R.J. is probably our fastest guy. He runs like a jet. He should be one of our best rebounders.”

James Roesser: “He is skilled, a good passer, he can handle the ball.”

Owen Hill: “He’s a gym rat. Owen is one of the most coachable kids we’ve ever had. He’s 6 feet, 2 inches, so he’ll have to grind [up front].”

Nick Clotfelter: “Really long. We’re excited about his future.”

Nick Clotfelter, a 6-foot-3-inch senior; and R.J. Faltinsky, a 6-foot-3-inch senior.

Also in the early rotation: James Roesser, a 6-foot senior point guard; Nick Clotfelter, a 6-foot-4-inch sophomore; and Dax Kay, a 6-foot-1-inch junior guard. Still occupied with the Knights’ outstanding football team at the time of this writing were 5-foot-11-inch Clarence Freeman IV and 6-foot-1-inch Austin Schroeder.

The coach’s comments on each player:

Kellen Hobson: “He is a team player we’re going to need to handle the ball. He’s good against pressure. He’s physical. He’ll probably guard a tough opponent. He also creates pressure.”

Owen Hill: “He’s a gym rat. Owen is one of the most coachable kids we’ve ever had. He’s 6 feet, 2 inches, so he’ll have to grind [up front].”

Ryan Nagle: “He played year-round last year. He’s being recruited by Division 3 schools. He has expanded his skill set. Now it’s just a matter of applying them. He fell in love with basketball.”

R.J. Faltinsky: “He, along with many of the guys, grew up together in the program. I think that helps with the connection. R.J. is probably our fastest guy. He runs like a jet. He should be one of our best rebounders.”

R.J. Faltinsky: “He, along with many of the guys, grew up together in the program. I think that helps with the connection. R.J. is probably our fastest guy. He runs like a jet. He should be one of our best rebounders.”

James Roesser: “He is skilled, a good shooter, has a good handle on the ball. Another guy who will alleviate pressure.”

R.J. Faltinsky: “Really long. We’re excited about his future.”

Dash Tsai: “He has one speed, which is really fast, one level, which is the top level. Another guy who can handle the ball.”

The coach’s comments on each player follow.

Coach Victor Zendejas talks to the La Jolla High boys soccer team.

Victor Zendejas, long-time soccer coach who has been the assistant for the La Jolla High boys team the last five years, told the players before the season, “I want to have fun this year.” Zendejas, who has coached pros — including his son Adrian, now a goalie for Sporting Kansas City in MLS — broke that down later.

“I want the players to come with a good attitude,” explained the amiable, personable mentor. “To have fun means to be competitive. You have to come to the training field with a good attitude.”

Victor Zendejas talks to the La Jolla High boys soccer team.

Marcus Gonzalez, the Vikings’ head coach, and his colleague have plenty of talented players. This is where the mental part separates the sheep from the goats.

A core of key players have returned from last year’s third-place team in the Eastern League, behind University City and Hoover. 7-8-5 overall. They seek to get back to the level that the 2015-16 team reached, a CIF title (in Division 4).

Zendejas says he is looking for leadership from Noah Brown, a senior midfielder; Jose Marmolejo, a senior left midfielder; Calvin Hyytinen, a junior center forward/striker; Devin Bale, a junior defender; Kenny Fierros, a senior defender; Spence Carswell, a striker; Brayyan Rivas, a sophomore striker; Ilias Benbatoul, a senior; and Edgar Bermudez, a junior center back, among others.

Newbies include Gabe Cuneros, a sophomore candidate to start in goal; and Leo Friedman, a sophomore midfielder.

Zendejas’ comments on each player follow.

Noah Brown: “His strength is his awareness of the ball. He has a quick, quick brain. A quick mind. When he loses the ball, he quickly gets it back. He has a great shot and can head the ball.”

Jose Marmolejo: “A very skilled player, very quick with the ball.”

Calvin Hyytinen: “I’ve known Calvin since [he was] 6 years old. He’ll be the other captain [with Brown]. He’s a goal-scoring machine.”

Devin Bale: “He’s a field goal kicker for the football team. He has matured over the years. He’s a great kid.”

Kenny Fierros: “We’re looking to him to be another leader in the back of our defense. I’m looking for Kenny not to come out during the game, which is hard for a defender.”

Spence Carswell: “He’s coming off a very, very bad injury. We’re probably going to start him off on the JV to rehab. He’s a very exciting player to watch.”

Brayan Rivas: “A short player, a very exciting player to watch. His skills: He has a good shot, good technical skills. He will fight for the ball.”

Ilias Benbatoul: “He’ll play in the back of the defense, the sweeper. We’re looking for leadership in this, his final year in high school. He loves soccer, so we’re looking for a good season.”

Edgar Bermudez: “He has a lot of skill. He gives you 110%. We’re looking for a lot of impact from him. We’re even looking for him to be a starter for the team.”

Leo Friedman: “He has trained very hard. He played club for us. He’ll probably be a starting midfielder.”
Local realtors collect over $7,000 in toys for military families at La Jolla fundraiser

At a $25 million home in La Jolla, the San Diego real estate community held a fundraiser benefiting military families Dec. 4 to celebrate the holiday season and the spirit of giving back.

More than 150 realtors and their guests from across San Diego County collected toys and gift cards for families Dec. 4 to celebrate the holiday season at a La Jolla fundraiser benefiting military members.

More than $7,000 in toys were collected for the event, plus nearly $5,000 was raised in monetary donations. All donations are being distributed to Operation Homefront by the Greater San Diego Association of Realtors, the city’s (SDAR) is to strengthen our community,” said 2020 SDAR President Carla Farley. “As realtors and community ambassadors, we believe in supporting others, especially during the holidays. This is why we are proud to partner with Operation Homefront again this year with our Holiday House Charity Drive to directly help military families in our community.”

The Holiday House location was 6089 La Jolla Scenic Drive South, a Zen-inspired architectural home on over 3.5 acres in one of San Diego’s most prestigious enclaves. On the market for $2.5 million, it features Japanese gardens, breathtaking city views, a chef’s kitchen, fitness center, yoga studio and an exceptional master suite. Resort-caliber amenities include two pools, a loggia with a bar and grill, grassy baseball field, tennis and basketball courts.

Major sponsors of Holiday House include Homebridge, Finance of America Mortgage, and Ethan Allen, with additional support from PBC Mortgage, Hawthorn & Albatross, Homes.com, State Farm Insurance, and IRAR Trust Company. For more information about Operation Homefront, visit operationhomefront.org.

Twas The Week Before Christmas

Twas the week before Christmas, And all round the town, Not a buyer was buying, But a shiny Rolls Royce and a driver should appear,

And to all a good night!

And a true Buyer he was; Buy this one and that one he called out with glee

But a shiny Rolls Royce and a driver with cheer!

Gave the luster of mid-day,

Lined in a row,

Sunbeams off Mercedes,

I sprang from my chair,

When out in the street,

To draw up a lease.

Had just settled down,

Not one could be found.

Not a buyer was buying...

Twas the week before Christmas...
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