Division of Biological Sciences alumna Kate Rubins (above), who has been fascinated with space since she was a child, is currently on her second mission to the International Space Station. Rubins and Scripps Oceanography alumna Jessica Meir were selected to NASA’s Artemis program to explore the moon.

PHOTO COURTESY OF NASA

SEE PAGE 10

Milestone for Sally Ride Science at UC San Diego

SEE PAGE 10

Katherine Johnston named SD Parks Foundation director

SEE PAGE 19

Yoga outdoors more popular than ever

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City Council approves Campbell's short-term rental proposal

City Councilman Joe LaCava cast the lone dissenting vote.

S

an Diego City Council on Feb. 23 voted 8 to 1 to adopt a new proposed ordinance that would regulate short-term rentals and become effective July 1, 2022. District 1 Councilmember Jennifer Campbell. Supporters of her proposal, however, questioned her statement that a future lottery be held to select whole-home STR operators. They argued instead that operators with the cleanest records be given first priority for whole-home rental licenses.

"I want to thank everyone who was a part of putting together this ordinance and who has fought so hard to implement common-sense ideas to our city," Campbell said. "This ordinance shows San Diegans that our city government can do what we're elected to do — to solve our most confounding problems with workable solutions."

As outlined in a memorandum of understanding between Campbell's office, Unite Here Local 30 union, and Expedia Group representing short-term rental platforms, her new ordinance claims to reduce the volume of whole-home short-term rentals. It also would create a legal definition of STRs along with new rules governing their operation, including 24/7 accountability by operators.

"I remain unwavering that we should be enforcing the City's municipal code that prohibits short-term rentals," said LaCava. "However, the Wild West with rentals still plagues our City. The current situation is no longer tenable."

"Not being able to regulate short-term rentals has been a big public safety concern," said District 7 Councilmember Raul Campillo. "Without regulations, the City cannot hold bad actors accountable."

"It's been a years-long fight," noted District 4 Councilmember Monica Montgomery-Steppe. "I agree we need regulations. My concerns are with the expedited costs and enforcing STR platform accountability."

"I can see the light at the end of the tunnel," said District 6 Councilmember Chris Cate. "This is our fifth public hearing at the council on this issue. Short-term rentals are part of our DNA as a City. It's always been a part of us, and always will."

"We can all agree this issue has been unresolved for far too long," said District 8 Councilmember Vivian Moreno. "We all know short-term rentals are a major component of tourism. Given the demand for short-term rentals, it makes sense to regulate them. This ordinance before us is reasonable, and it's worth giving it a try."

Beach residents, both for and against, reacted to the City Council's decision on short-term rentals.

Andrea Schlageter, chair of Ocean Beach Planning Board, was displeased with the decision.

"All of this language about 'compromise' and how this is a good compromise because no one is happy is disingenuous," she said. "Public policy is not about compromise. Good public policy is about protecting the average person while striving for justice and incentivizing good behavior."

Added Schlageter: "Politics is about compromise and not caring about the opinions of the average persons. Politics is what got us this ordinance. Politics is why no community groups were brought into the understanding between Campbell's office, Unite Here Local 30 union, and Expedia Group representing short-term rental platforms, her new ordinance claims to reduce the volume of whole-home short-term rentals. It also would create a legal definition of STRs along with new rules governing their operation, including 24/7 accountability by operators."

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I n her state of District 2 ad- dress last week, Dr. Jennifer Campbell praised frontline COVID workers and defended her record while handing out beach community neighborhood awards.

This year’s “neighbor of the year” was Tyler Badet, a Point Loma High senior who helped rescue two surfers at Sunset Cliffs. He also credited San Diego Junior Lifeguards for their training.

“I don’t feel I deserve this recognition, the San Diego Lifeguards deserve all the recognition,” said Badet in a video spot. “I connected people to the resources they need that will move them into self-sufficiency.”

“I am proud to represent District 2 and the entire City as San Diego Council president,” said Campbell. “Twenty-twenty was one of the most trying years in recent memory for our City and country with many tragedies, including loss of loved ones and economic devastation from the pandemic. And it was a clear reminder that we have a long way to go when it comes to racial justice. All of this while the planet experienced the second-highest temperature year on record.”

But Campbell stressed the positive amid the chaos.

“Those of us who could work from home helped to keep others safe,” she said. “We ran errands for those who could not. We supported our heroes — public health professionals, postal workers, and grocery store clerks. We realized we can get through this. And we realized we are all in this together.”

There were a “number of wins for our community and our dis- trict” in 2020, said Campbell. “We (City Council) supported COVID relief for workers, renters, landlords, and small busi- nesses,” she said. “We placed a moratorium on COVID-related evictions and extended sick leave to hourly workers.”

The council member cit- ed progress on combating homelessness.

“The City and council opened up Operation Shelter At Home at our convention center to find permanent housing for our homeless community while protecting them from the pan- demic,” she said. “In just nine months, we helped provide housing and wrap-around services for more than 1,200 homeless people and 45 home- less families.”

Campbell touted her record on short-term rentals.

“In 2020 we saw a true break- through on one of San Diego’s most vexing issues: short-term vacation rentals,” she said. She claimed her newly passed STR ordinance accomplishes two goals: increasing housing availability for San Diegans by capping STR numbers and establishing rules of the road for holding STR owners/users accountable.

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San Diego Unified sets April target for reopening schools

San Diego Unified, the state’s second-largest school district, announced plans to return to in-person instruction the week of April 12, based on a regional agreement to start teacher vaccinations. The reopening plan would apply to all grade levels and take effect as soon as San Diego County drops back into the state’s Red Tier, teachers who wish to be vaccinated have had the opportunity to do so, and proper safety measures continue to be in place on every campus.

“Our plan to reopen classrooms in April is the result of groundbreaking collaboration between our city, our county and our professional educators. From the start of this crisis, we have remained committed to reopening when it was safe and responsible to do so. Full vaccinations for educators are part of that safety plan, and we are very grateful for our regional partners helping us to achieve this goal,” Board President Richard Barrera said.

The City of San Diego has offered to make emergency medical personnel available to help administer vaccines to educators, and the County of San Diego has said teacher vaccinations are scheduled to begin this week.

Barrera thanked the State Legislature for the clear reopening guidance in Senate Bill 86, which was released Thursday, Feb. 19. Those two steps last week have allowed the district to keep its commitment to follow the science in planning for a safe, responsible classroom reopening, Barrera said.

Even as the district prepares for a return to in-person instruction, the district recognizes some parents will not feel safe sending their students back on campus at this time. For those families, online learning will continue to be an option.

“In the past year, our country has lost 500,000 people to this terrible disease, and we know our young people have also felt its effects, through lost loved ones, and also through lost opportunities. We also know this loss has not impacted all communities equally, and our historically disadvantaged students have suffered the most from the COVID-19 crisis. It is up to all of us to give them back their future— not only on the day we reopen classrooms, but on each day afterwards by renewing California’s commitment to equity in education,” Barrera said.

Currently, some 4,000 students are visiting schools for scheduled learning appointments, and many more will soon be returning to more than 500 learning labs, which are scheduled to open in the weeks before the full reopening following spring break. However, these opportunities are largely designed to support students who face severe obstacles to online learning. They include students experiencing homelessness, English language learners and many special education students. Barrera described these efforts as important, but insufficient given the extraordinary level of need.

“San Diegans can be rightfully proud of the heroic efforts our teachers and other workers have put forward over the past year,” Barrera said. “They have served 12 million free meals, distributed more than 80,000 laptops and thousands of WiFi hotspots, hosted forums for thousands of parents in many different languages, and most of all, they have never stopped working to make our school buildings safer. That work will only grow in importance as we prepare to reopen classrooms.”

According to the San Diego County Office of Education, some 88,000 students are now participating in a hybrid learning environment, including some time on campus. That county number would immediately double once San Diego Unified launches its own hybrid program.

Board Vice President Dr. Sharon Whitehurst-Payne called on state lawmakers to move quickly to pass SB86 and then to move forward with additional funding for an equity-based recovery.
Lanna Thai

Lanna offers light, fresh, and healthy Thai food with homemade recipes passed through generations. Our menu provides an extensive selection of the most popular Thai dishes from different regions of Thailand. We prepare to order cuisine, made from the finest spices and freshest ingredients (no MSG added). We also make use of local produce whenever possible. Thai food uses many herbs and spices to bring out the flavors of each dish. Let us cook your meal just the way you like it. Please specify the level of spiciness to your liking from 1 to 10. Gluten-free soy sauce is available upon request. Please give us a call 858-274-8424 for Takeout or Delivery within 4 miles.

Yogurt On The Rocks

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Steak N Fries

Originally from North Philadelphia, Angela and Angel decided to bring a taste of home to San Diego. After establishing a career in business for more than 16 years Angel believed he and his family were ready to build Steak N Fries. The family business opened on October 18th, 2017 in Pacific Beach. Steak N Fries specializes in fresh ribeye cheesesteaks. The ribeye is sliced in house daily, along with the cheeses and veggies. You can customize any menu item to your liking and all food items are made to order. Steak N Fries is open 7 days a week, Sunday to Thursday from 11am to 10pm and Friday and Saturday from 11am to midnight. Stop in to 1039 Garnet Ave to build your own cheesesteak!

Living Room Coffeehouse

The Living Room has truly lived up to its name in La Jolla. The café has drawn young and old alike to sip tea, coffee and deluxe smoothies in a homey ambiance furnished with antique, ornate couches and wooden tables. Patrons find the communal atmosphere inspiring and relaxing; you’ll find groups of friends smoking the hookah on the upstairs patio and others poring over books in the back. Scrumptious desserts are available, along with wine, beer, cocktails and hookah tobacco. Enjoy the views from the second floor ocean view room and don’t miss happy hour every day from 12-6 p.m. offering bottled & draft beer, wine, mimosas and well drinks Monday—all day! Try our daily lunch special. Open late every day ’til 2 AM every day.
Seaside Pizza Co. has debuted in Pacific Beach putting a fresh take on take and bake in the local pizzeria industry. “Matt (Bucklin) and I grew up on take-and-bake pizza,” said Seaside co-owner Evan Walker. “We were fishing buddies and we talked about how there was no take-and-bake pizza in the area. But the issue just kept coming up. Finally, we just said, ‘Let’s just do it ourselves.’ We couldn’t find it anywhere.”

The timing also seems exactly right that Seaside’s business model is presently take-out only. “You can pick one of our specialty pizzas, or you can create your own,” said Bucklin of their product offerings. “We’re making every single take-and-bake pizza individually from scratch. Then you take it home and cook it on your own.”

“It’s the same process we go through to make a hot pizza for normal delivery or take-out,” noted Walker. “We just wrap it up so you can take it home and bake it whenever it’s convenient.”

Walker noted a refrigerated take-and-bake pie is typically good for 24 to 48 hours. He added they sell cookie dough ready to go as well, which makes a nice complement. “When your oven’s nice and hot with pizza, you can always put in a big tray of fresh, hot cookies;” he pointed out.

Noting he and Bucklin were “a little hesitant to start a new business with the pandemic going on,” Walker added they’re glad they did. “Things are working well and now we’re rockin’ and rollin’,” he concluded.

The business duo opened Seaside on Feb. 12. They took over the retail space, formerly Surf City Pizza & Gelato at 4263 Mission Blvd., in November 2020 and completely remodeled the interior adding outdoor dining too.

Walker talked about a couple of their specialty pies. One, called Cyclops, has shishito peppers from Cyclops Farms in Oceanside. “We’re sourcing almost all our food from California, or within 100 miles of here,” he said.

Another crowd-pleasing pizza is sweet and spicy featuring jalapeno peppers, pepperoni, and pineapple. “The pineapple’s sweet enough to cut that spice so you can really enjoy it. It’s kind of a unique flavor,” Walker added.

Cafe Milano
Owner/chef Pasquale Cianni brought northern Italian cuisine to La Jolla 20 years ago and has been successfully pleasing both local residents and out-of-towners — even out-of-the-country guests — with his homemade pappardelle pasta, veal ossobuco, lobster ravioli and many other authentic Italian dishes. Cafe Milano is an exciting and incredible experience for the whole family at affordable prices. Join us for a truly memorable dining experience. Patio Dining Available, plus take-out and delivery. Open Tuesday through Sunday. Closed Monday.

Hennessey’s
Hennessey’s Tavern is pleased to once again offer you IRISH HOSPITALITY. Serving lunch and dinner daily (breakfast will be added in the coming months), with a full service bar! Enjoy our welcoming outdoor space for Southern California al-fresco dining, while being entertained by local artists. Take advantage of our Happy Hour specials, Monday through Friday from 4:00 – 7:00pm. Featuring $5 select drinks and $6 select appetizers. A community favorite too is our Two Timin’ Tuesday deal! Get one of our world-famous burgers FREE, with the purchase of another (dine-in conditions apply). Our staff is friendly, safe and is looking forward to making your dining experience second to none! Join us today.
Family Health Centers of San Diego is the #1 enrollment entity for Covered California in San Diego County.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

For free enrollment help, call (619) 515-2363 or visit fhcsd.org/covered-california.
Tourmaline Birth and Wellness Collective offers options for women

by Dave Schwan

Expectant mothers worried about the pandemic and new hospital rules preventing partners from attending their own child’s birth have other alternatives.

One is a new nonprofit called Thrive Wellness Collective, which is associated with the new Tourmaline Birth and Wellness Collective at 4545 Fanuel St.

The Tourmaline women’s and children’s community/birth center, which opened in PB in April 2020, is partially supported by its Thrive nonprofit. The collective’s goal is to create a community for families and offer holistic care for everyone seeking it.

Many women are now seeking alternatives to hospital birth. And Tourmaline offers a safe, clean option for moms and their families with two birthing suites, and midwives on site.

The birthing team consists of numerous specialists including an acupuncturist, naturopathic doctor, pelvic floor therapist, psychologist, midwife, reiki therapist, chiropractor, massage therapist, lactation consultant, and more.

Also offered at the collective are support groups including prenatal yoga, first aid for infants, and prenatal cooking. Besides its other services, Tourmaline provides a space where clients can come for well-person visits to get a PAP, birth control counseling, preconception counseling, pregnancy testing, and ATOD testing. Additionally, Tourmaline makes its organic herbal tinctures and teas in-house, available for sale onsite.

With a simple application, clients can also apply for any services offered at the center. These come at a lower rate, and in some instances at no cost, for those qualifying.

“It is a very specific model of care that we have created,” said Thrive spokesperson and co-founder Allison Tartari. “In a hospital, you have a baby, they send you home, and they don’t see you again for six weeks. That’s one of the reasons why we have post-partum depression in America because there’s no post-partum care. At Thrive we try to mimic the care models in other countries that are working.”

What makes Thrive such an alternative for soon-to-be mothers is not only the thorough and longer-term care for women than what a hospital provides.

“Our goal is to provide post-partum care,” she said. “In a hospital, you have a baby, they send you home, and they don’t see you again for six weeks. That’s one of the reasons why we have post-partum depression in America because there’s no post-partum care. At Thrive we try to mimic the care models in other countries that are working.”

We offer free visits for women with their partners to listen to their baby’s heartbeat,” she said. “We make appointments for free prenatal visits. We also have free post-partum support groups and a free breastfeeding support group.”

Making the Right Choice Senior Living

Established in early 2008, Jean Brooks (UCSD Graduate) and Todd Brooks (Air Force Veteran, US Air Force Academy Graduate) had the desire to develop Assisted Living Care Homes and Services for seniors that are cut above the rest at fair & competitive rates. Right Choice Senior Living has Residential Care Homes located in highly desirable neighborhoods close to UCSD, La Jolla, Pacific Beach, Clairemont (Mount Street Area) medical facilities and the beach. Come see us today before making your final choice. Make the Right Choice Today. For more info call (619) 246-2003 or go to the website. NOW HIRING CAREGIVERS! CALL NOW!

Possible Solutions When an Individual with Health Problems Is Having Difficulty Handling His or Her Financial Affairs

By: Dick McIntyre and Chris von der Lieth, Attorneys at Law

When an individual’s health is declining, and that individual is having difficulty handling his or her own financial affairs, here are a few ways to enable a third party to step in and help that person:

1. One option is for the individual to grant a power of attorney to a selected third party “agent” to handle his or her financial affairs. The document can grant powers in general or only a limited power. It should also be a “durable” power of attorney, which means that it will remain in effect even if and after the individual granting the power has become incompetent (if that were to occur).

2. A second option is where the individual has created a revocable living trust, funded the trust with assets, and is serving as its trustee (in effect, the trust’s manager). When he or she begins to “slip,” he or she can resign such trusteeship and turn over all trustee duties to the successor trustee who had been appointed under the trust instrument. This successor Trustee would then immediately be able to take over handling the financial affairs of the trust.

The above statements are not to be taken as legal advice for the reader’s particular situation. Richard F. McIntyre practices law in the area of estate planning and administration, having served the San Diego county community as a lawyer for over 30 years. Chris von der Lieth practices law in the area of elder law and estate planning, having worked with Dick for over 7 years. Affordable rates. Highest quality services. Remote calls available.

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Jessica Meir and Kate Rubins selected to NASA’s Artemis program
UC San Diego alumnae aim to be first women to land on the moon by 2024

By BRITTANY HOOK and MARIO AGUILERA

A
fter America’s first wom-
an in space retired from NASA, she had plenty of opportunities to capitalize on her celebrity, but she preferred to keep a low profile.

Then in 2001, while teaching physics at UC San Diego, Dr. Sally Ride decided the time was right to use her famous name for a cause she cared about — narrowing the gender gap in science and engineering. She would do it by cofounding a company called Sally Ride Science.

“Mexican-American women are Updating long-dated human spaceflight — essential research to help NASA prepare for the Artemis program. Now, she’s looking forward to expanding that work as a member of the Artemis Team.

The Space Station is around 250 miles from Earth, while the moon sits 250 miles above the Earth. In Leinen’s words, “It felt worthwhile.”

It felt that this was something that was really worth using my name and using the visibility that is for girls.

I felt that this was something that was really worth using my name and using the visibility that is for girls.

"When we started seeing the re-
action of girls and their parents to our programs, it started feeding back on us and we drew our energy and encouragement from them,” Ride said.

Over the years, Sally Ride Science created acclaimed STEM programs that reached students and educators across the country, and now the world with a switch to remote learning because of the pandemic.

Ride died of pancreatic cancer in 2012, and Sally Ride Science found a new home at UC San Diego in 2015. Extension’s Dr. Edward Abeyta, associate dean for Education and Community Outreach, oversees Sally Ride Science programs, and her life partner Tam O’Shaughnessy, who works as executive director, serves as executive administrator.

“We’re honored that UC San Diego continues to blaze trails in Sally Ride’s name,” Abeyta said.

“Her name is in the history books, but we’re proud that she is also helping inspire the next generation of physicists, biologists, engineers and astronauts through Sally Ride Science programs offered at UC San Diego and globally online.”
UC San Diego students’ lobby for fishing line recycling bins at Black’s Beach

By DAVE SCHWAB

Environmentally conscious UC San Diego students have come up with a project to protect the environment. UCSD Triton Lobby Corps is proposing a policy plan to install special fishing line recycling bins at the entrances around Black’s Beach. The corps is a campus-based entity of students who recruit and engage students and advocate on legislation and issues involving higher education.

“Especially since COVID, I’ve noticed a lot more recreational fishers going down to Black’s Beach,” said Michael Tesis, Triton Lobby Corps manager of environmental policy. “Walking along the shoreline I’ve found things, like a dead seagull wrapped up in fishing lines, more and more washing up onshore.”

So Tesis and other students took action.

“We started an online petition that’s going pretty well,” he noted. “In less than 24 hours we gained more than 300 signatures of students, tourists, and San Diego residents. In four days, we received 1,177 signatures—and still counting. I was surprised to find out that a lot of tourists, who enjoy the beach, took a stake in supporting our grassroots movement.”

Black’s Beach is a two-mile stretch of coastline in La Jolla enjoyed by residents, students, and tourists alike. It is also home to a diverse ecosystem of animals and plants. An abundant reef system near the shoreline makes it a popular fishing spot.

While surrounding beaches near La Jolla limit fishing activities, Black’s offers unrestricted access. The City does not account for this and provides no methods of disposal or recycling appropriate for fishing waste. This leads to hazardous materials, such as fishing lines often being left behind.

Fishing line poses the greatest threat to the entirety of the beach’s environment for four reasons: it’s ugly; it kills wildlife, birds, fish, and seals are at great risk of entanglement leading to amputated limbs, strangulation, and ultimately death; it gets in waterways; and it becomes part of the food chain. Fishing line consumed by San Diego sea life retains chemical properties that remain in the food chain as microplastics, and pose future health risks for all consumers, including humans.

READ MORE ONLINE AT sdnews.com
point of pride for all of us at UC San Diego, and it serves as an inspiration for countless people interested in STEM—the opportunities are truly out of this world.”

Rubins celebrated her 42nd birthday in October by blasting off to the International Space Station on her second mission there. As she orbits Earth, Rubins is conducting a series of experiments probing the effects of microgravity on the human cardiovascular system. She’s studying how heart muscle tissue changes in microgravity conditions, which is important for understanding heart disease, developing new drugs and paving the way toward developing cell replacement therapies in future space missions.

During her first mission to the Space Station in 2016, Rubins reaped the benefits of her undergraduate program at Scripps Institution of Oceanography, UC San Diego to become the first person to sequence DNA in space. “Studying microbiology on station is very similar to the earth, except for you’re floating, maybe doing the same experiment but you’re conducting it on the ceiling because that’s a convenient place to work,” said Rubins, in a NASA video introducing the Artemis team. “Kate Rubins provides a shining example of what can be achieved when one combines a UC San Diego education with a focus on excellence and a drive to excel,” said Division of Biological Sciences Dean Kit Pogliano. “I am thrilled that one of our Biological Sciences graduates, who has been pushing the frontiers of biology in space, is now part of this history-making Artemis team that will be remembered and celebrated for putting the first woman on the moon. I hope to see a Triton on the moon in 2024!”

Rubins has explored viruses and infectious diseases during her scientific career. While a UC San Diego undergraduate, she studied HIV-1 integration in the Infectious Diseases Laboratory at the Salk Institute for Biological Studies. Later, she led a lab of researchers investigating viral diseases that impact Central and West Africa, spending time researching virus systems in the rain forests of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

“What happens to the human body, and even viruses, is an issue in space,” she said. “I get really excited about these things and something about viruses, about biology—I’m totally fascinated by it. I want to get up and go work on this every day.”

Rubins believes the excitement surrounding the introduction of the Artemis program is rooted in the advancement of science, but also the extraordinary opportunity to inspire. “The moon is an incredible destination. We have been there, but we were there for such a brief period of time,” she said. “Apollo united the world...when we are having dark times, to think of the fact that we might have people on the planet able to look up and know that there’s humans on the moon, and that we’ve done this as a joint international collaboration. I can’t even describe what kinds of benefits that might be.”

An education at UC San Diego, whether undergraduate or graduate, likely played a part in helping Meir and Rubins on their path to NASA, and perhaps to the moon, said Meir. “Many people say that an undergraduate education is about learning how to learn. Kate Rubins had her undergraduate years at UC San Diego and I’m sure that’s true for her,” said Meir. “And then for me at graduate school at Scripps, then we are kind of fine tuning and learning how to really apply those critical thinking skills that use the scientific method. That is something that benefits me so profoundly from my years at Scripps, providing that foundation from which everything else was really this jumping point.”

The accomplished astronaut forged a path from STEM to the stars after completing a graduate program at Scripps Oceanography, where her research focused on the diving physiology of marine mammals, including penguins. As part of her Ph.D. research, Meir conducted fieldwork in Antarctica, where she lived in isolation with a small team, including her Scripps advisors Paul Ponganis and Jerry Kooyman. She credits this work with helping her prepare for the extreme environment found in space.

“There are so many parallels to the way that we do things at NASA in terms of learning those valuable teamwork skills: leadership, fellowship, communication and taking care of the team,” said Meir. “Especially in a harsh environment like Antarctic and space, there are so many parallels and all of that training, all of my Scripps mentors were really invaluable to that process.”

She said one of the most exciting components of the Artemis program, aside from exploration and science, is public interest in science and inspiring the next generation of explorers. “If you look back at the Apollo program, there was this huge stimulation and growth of all the STEM fields where we had such a broad participation,” said Meir. “That has had benefits which lasted really until this day and will continue to, and I know that will be true when we continue back to the moon with the Artemis mission.”

Meir and Rubins are two of three UC San Diego alumni who have gone on to become NASA astronauts. Ahumma Megan McArthur, who holds a Ph.D. in oceanography from Scripps, traveled to space in 2019 and helped operate the Robotic Arm Telescope. This spring, McArthur will pilot a SpaceX Crew-2 mission to the International Space Station, where she will spend six months conducting a range of scientific experiments.

While it’s yet to be determined who will be the first woman on the moon, Meir and Rubins’ selection to the Artemis program is a remarkable achievement that showcases the possibilities for women in STEM. The astronauts plan to share updates about their involvement in the Artemis program on social media, as a way to stay engaged with fans and the public.

“One of the most important things throughout all of my career has been an astoundingly supportive community on the Space Station mission and with these future missions as well is to be able to share it with all of you,” said Meir. “Especially that this is a mission for us at NASA and for us as astronauts; it’s really for the entire planet, so I hope that you can continue to follow along and be part of the adventure.”

You can find the astronauts on Twitter at @ASTRO_fejesica and @ASTRO_Kate6.
Outdoor yoga classes now more popular than ever

By DAVE SCHWAB

Whether on grass, sand, water, or a hard surface, yoga outdoors is one of the best ways to practice and enjoy the discipline. Especially now in the midst of the pandemic. And particularly in San Diego, where the weather permits year-round outside activity. Just ask the yogis and their pupils.

“I just love outdoors and nature,” said longtime yoga and meditation instructor Corie Bordieri-Seibert, who teaches weekdays at Kate Sessions Park. “I much prefer to be outside than inside.”

“You’re in a less perhaps intimidating space because you can leave and you can come, whereas when you’re in a studio with a closed door, you’re stuck there.”

noted Susan Harris, who teaches weekly meet-up morning yoga classes at Mission Beach.

Heather Gjerde, who teaches outdoors on a paved surface Fridays and Saturdays at Paradise Point Resort & Spa, pointed out there are advantages – and disadvantages – to practicing yoga outside rather than indoors.

“Obviously, some things are a little harder outside,” she said. “Outside I prefer not to do a lot of things on knees. The beauty of a studio is sensory deprivation. But for people now looking for yoga, outdoors has given them their chance.”

Yoga is a group of physical, mental, and spiritual practices or disciplines that originated in ancient India as far back as 3,000 years BCE. Outside India, it has developed into a posture-based physical fitness, stress-relief, and relaxation technique.

Yoga has eight “limbs,” or facets. They are union, integration; external disciplines; internal disciplines; posture; breath control; withdrawal of senses; concentration; and meditative absorption.

Why do yoga outside?

“For me, nature helps me meditate,” answered Angel Franquez, a surf instructor and a student of Gjerde’s. “Yoga, naturally, helps me ground more, open up more. It helps me relax as I’m trying to do certain poses because they’re a little more challenging.”

“The three yogis all teach the discipline a bit differently outdoors. Outside you have limited time frames,” explained Gjerde. “You can’t teach after 5:30 p.m. this time of year. No one wants to do dark yoga outside when it’s cold. Outdoors we want to spread out to socially distance and simplify.”

I like to vary the routine, focus on strength one time, balance the next, breathing or stretching other times.”

“When you’re outside you’re working with the elements,” pointed out Harris. “You’re learning how to partner with the elements and silence your mind from the distractions (sounds, passersby, etc.). It’s a little more inviting to go inward and just be in your own space.”

“I like to be more heart- and mind-centered with yoga,” said Bordieri-Seibert, noting participants have to wear hats and sunscreen protection outdoors. “At first I was a boot-camp teacher. But my classes have mellowed. Yoga should be accessible to everyone. There is no room in my classes for egos. This is not a competition. A gift of health and well-being to yourself.”

There are newer and more innovative ways to do yoga outdoors these days, like on a stand-up paddleboard.

“The STPs are extra big and wider than a surfboard and have anchors in the sand so they aren’t moving,” noted Gjerde, who teaches that style on weekends. “You have to adapt your (teaching) style on a board. Everything is low, on your hands and knees, and lower to the water.”

Bordieri-Seibert employs crystal quartz singing bowls in her yoga classes.

“I like to add little tidbits of the philosophy,” she said. “These bowls are the superhighway to your mind.”

Afterwards, Barnett said folks hang around and chat informally or go out and grab a cup of coffee somewhere nearby.

Barnett takes pictures with his iPhone of attendees every run, especially the first timers. “I send club members a link with all the pictures I took,” he added. “They love the picture.”

The appeal of running, Barnett noted there are many reasons, ticking off a few. “To my mind the appeal is being active, being outside, taking advantage of where we live during the pandemic, not having to be isolated and being part of a group through running and athletics. It’s a form of social interaction that’s centered around something that’s more healthy.”

Barnett is proud of the organization he’s created.

“It’s wonderful to see a community actually building around our mutual love for running,” he concluded.

For more information, visit pbrunclub.com or @pbrunclub on Instagram. The club’s newsletter is on the website.
 In a different type of space, she said, adding it’s helped broaden her teaching skills. “I have to practice using my voice (talking over the background ocean). It helps you become a different kind of teacher according to right now you can’t just think... people who have similar values, and are coming together looking for that community.”

For more information visit yogainharmony@gmail.com, heather@vintarita.com, meetup.com/Yoga-On-Mission-Beach, farhebar.com/paradise-sandes/sandiego/items/1060262-flow.html, or pgybogs@gmail. com, meetup.com/outdoor-yoga-sd, and birdrockyoga.com.
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San Diego Parks Foundation names Katherine Johnston first executive director

Michel Anderson, chairman of the San Diego Parks Foundation board of directors, recently announced Katherine Johnston has been hired as the nonprofit’s first executive director. “I’m honored to have the opportunity to serve as the San Diego Park Foundation’s first executive director,” said Johnston, who resides in Bird Rock.

With the continued support of our partners and the City of San Diego, my hope is that together we can build a park system that ensures every San Diegan has access to a high-quality park with meaningful recreation opportunities. Our role is particularly important for neighborhood parks that have been undererved or overlooked in the past.”

Johnston currently serves as the chair of the City of San Diego’s Parks and Recreation Committee and Balboa Park Committee. Most recently, she served as vice president of Presidio PAG Inc., where she managed a portfolio of nonprofit and corporate clients. Prior to her work at Presidio, Johnston served as a senior policy and communications advisor to former Mayor Kevin Faulconer. In this role, she managed the development and legislative approvals of the City’s annual $1.3 billion budget, oversaw the administration’s economic development and workforce development initiatives, and spearheaded major capital and environmental projects.
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