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**A plan comes together**

Local residents spearhead update to College Area

By JEFF CLEMETSON | College Area News

The last time the College Area’s community plan was updated was in 1989 — too long ago for College Area Planning Board chair Jose Reynoso and a group of residents who set out to speed up the city’s process of updating community plans by drafting a plan of their own.

The idea to draft a community plan update (CPU) was born two years ago when Reynoso and College View Estates resident Mike Jenkins were working on an ordinance to regulate mini-dorms. That ordinance was eventually ruled unconstitutional.

“We were attempting to address symptoms of a problem, not the problem itself,” Reynoso said. “And the problem itself was an insufficient amount of housing, student housing, immediately adjacent to San Diego State.”

So Reynoso and Jenkins approached the planning board with the idea to ask the city to make a specific plan for the areas around College Avenue and Montezuma Road that would address the growing need for student housing and also reshape the area into a cohesive neighborhood highlighting the college experience.

“Make the area a destination, because our vision was to make the area a college town atmosphere, what you would expect in a typical college town — bookstores, coffee houses, bars, restaurants, you name it. Make it an attraction,” Reynoso said. “You don’t have that anywhere in San Diego and we have the opportunity to do it here.”

Another positive pitch for the plan to build more student housing close to campus — where there is the most

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**Hotel on Montezuma given go ahead**

By DOUG CLEMMISON | College Area News

Construction could start soon on a four-story, 125-room hotel at 6650 Montezuma Road, six long blocks east of San Diego State University.

Not everyone is all that happy about the project, especially the people at the College-Rolando Library.

“The city approved the building permit, and it was filed last week. What still has to be decided by the council is the parking issue, since the library and the hotel will sit right next to each other,” she said. “That process will go before the council’s land use and planning committee the first week in October, and go to

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**Pop goes the ‘Make It Market’**

By JEFF CLEMETSON | College Area News

Coffee and crafts ranging from fair trade Peruvian textile goods to environmentally-conscious renewable straws and more were the highlights of the College Area Business District’s first ever Make It Market.

The event, held Sept. 8 at Ultreya Coffee & Tea, is a new program of the business district where once a month a different member business hosts pop-up market.

“We are trying to organize something for the community to be able to come out and explore some of our local businesses that they may not be aware are here,” said Evelyn Goodrich, College Area Business District program manager. “So we thought the best way to do it was to organize a little pop-up event to highlight those areas and hopefully bring in the community and maybe even some students.

In addition to offering residents an exciting event and its member businesses another way to attract customers, the Make It Market also fills a need for local craft vendors.

“We don’t have a lot of markets going on specifically in this area, there are some going on in La Mesa or around Mission Valley, but here there wasn’t really any-thing great that vendors could come in so we felt we would create something like that,” Goodrich said.

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Hotel
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the full council maybe a week later.”

Kathy McNamara is a board member of the Friends of the
College Rolando Friends of the
Library group.

“We’re not totally happy about
the approval, but it’s better than
what was being talked about be-
fore — a bunch of small apart-
ments on that lot,” she said. “If
there’s a good part of it, the devel-
oper is at least willing to come to
some sort of a deal giving us, or
at least renting us, more parking
and access than we have now.

“We still have some concerns
about where that parking might be. It might depend on where
the developer wants to place the
front of the hotel,” McNamara
continued. “We don’t want to
have to walk all the way across
the whole parking lot to get to the
library — we have many senior citizens who come to the library
regularly.”

Developer Shahin Edalatdju is
planning to build the hotel as a
Hampton Inn, which is a part of
the Hilton hotel empire. But he
apparently plans to run the hotel
himself — or at least keep it in the
family. We are told he currently
has a son who’s studying hotel
administration and hospitality
in college, and will probably run
the hotel himself.

“We’ll see what happens with
the parking issue, but Jeannette
Temple says it shouldn’t be a big
problem.

No one will start shoveling
dirt on the site next week — but
it probably won’t be long before
construction begins.

—Doug Curlee is longtime San
Diego journalist in both print and
television.

Library Book Club gets
new leader
by AUDREY MATULA

It’s quite fitting that our College-
Rolando Library has a book discus-
sion group for enjoyment and yes,
learning — and so much more.

The second Saturday of each
month, at 10 a.m., a group of av-
id readers gather to discuss the
month’s chosen selection of mys-
tery, history or any varied topics,
maybe biographical or entertain-
ment. There is no “membership,”
nor fee, and anyone is welcome.

The group’s new leader, Sue
Grant, has assumed her post af-
ter the previous four-year leader-
ship of Joan Wood, who set up the
master plan of book reservations
and support from the library staff
and still keeps in touch with the
local book selections as she awaits
starting a group in San Marina
where she now lives. She adds that
Grant, her right hand, was also
helpful with details.

To acquaint newcomers to the
book club, Grant said when she
was living in Sacramento, she was
invited to Ernstwhile Book Club, a
group of professional women and
admits they set aside a certain
weeknight for meeting.

“It was ‘food for the soul’ and we
took our book choices seriously,”
she said. It was her job to develop
a spreadsheet on all of the books
that they had to read. Grant still
has that spreadsheet and can use
it for future reading adventures.

As to the joy of reading books
and sharing their ideas about
what they’ve read, Grant ob-
serves that some people keep those
thoughts to themselves and that
it is a “very personal experience.”

She admits she is the opposite and
believes, “we all have a lot of his-
tory and much to offer in the way
of life experience. You mix that in
with a good book discussion and
you are a home free.”

Here are some of the titles
the group has read: “The Kite
Runner” by Khaled Hosseini, “The
Guernsey Library And Potato
Peel Society” by Mary Schaffer,
“Endurance” by Alfred Lancing,
“Boys in the Boat” by Daniel
Brown, and “Girl Waits with Gun”
by Amy Stewart. Currently, the
group is reading “Sapiens” by
Yuval Noah Harari.

“We shy away from nothing,”
Grant said. “Technical reads im-
prove brain plasticity, or so they
say, and this one fits the bill.”

The yearly calendar includes
a wide variety of books — most
need to be published at least two
years ago.

“For me, books are magical,
an escape and a release, a way to
connect with people and ideas oth-
erwise unreachable, and to my de-
light, I have learned that there are
many people [who] feel the same
way that I do about books and they
want to join a club,” she said.

—Audrey Matula is a member
at large of the Friends of the College-
Rolando Library.
It’s a sad fact of today’s violent culture — going back to school also means the possibility of walking with a school shooter. For the last several years, San Diego State University (SDSU) has taken a proactive approach to the threat of active shooters by training students and staff how to be prepared in the event of an incident like the kind that too often make headlines in this country. On Sept. 17, SDSU shared that training to a small group of community members at the College-Rolando Library.

The more we are practicing training in public spaces that we’re all in, the more important it becomes that we all have access to information,” said SDSU Communications Director Rachell Green. Green organized the active shooter response training that was free and open to the public.

SDSU Police Community Resource Officer Mark Peterson conducted the hour-long training. He said that there are several different active shooter training methods but that they all “want you to respond actively in an active shooter event. You want to be taking steps, making the actions that will help us go to the place we call home at the end of the day.”

In an active shooter situation, there are three basic responses: fight, flight and freeze. “Freeze is what we don’t want to do in this situation,” he said. “So this training is helping you get solutions so that you don’t freeze or are less likely to freeze in the event of an attack.”

Nationally, Peterson said, there are three traditional responses to an active shooter: lockdown, secure the environment and hide — usually under a desk — and wait for help to arrive.

“We’re going to give some additional options,” he said. “The first option, if you can run — if you have the opportunity to get out and do so safely, go ahead and take it.”

Before running, it is important to know where the attacker is and know all available exits — including windows, fire escapes and even through ceiling tiles. The decision to feel should be immediately acted on, and Peterson advised to not worry about taking along purses, backpacks, briefcases, etc. as they would slow down an escape. Once out of a room or building, look for a wall or vehicle to shield yourself and keep your hands raised to help law enforcement know that you are not the shooter.

If leaving the building is impossible or dangerous, another option is to hide, although that is not a term Peterson thinks should be used. “It sounds very passive,” he said. “I want this to be an active response. We are actively taking steps to make this attacker think we are not there.”

Some active steps to hide include locking or blocking doorways, overturning desks, turning off lights, silencing cell phones and searching out places in the room where you will be out of sight from the entrance way. Peterson also advised people to not lay down while hiding, but rather stay crouched and ready to move if need be.

“If you can’t run, if you can’t hide, the last option is to fight. You are only fighting when that person comes to your space,” Peterson said. “I think it’s something that is often dealt with in a way that’s really a conceptual idea. We think of it as ‘If you fight, they are the attacker.’ That’s not necessarily what is going on. We’re going to give some additional options.”

When it comes to “fighting” an attacker, the main goal is to disrupt their actions. This can be achieved successfully by a variety of methods including throwing objects at him or spraying a fire extinguisher at him to distract his actions and then following through with a move to take him down and restrain him. Once restrained, the best strategy is to hold him down until police arrive.

“Going on the offensive, not all of us are going to be willing to do that. That’s the reality of life,” he said. “But if you are willing to do it, a little bit of coordination ahead of time and a willingness to engage are what you need.”

Other aspects of the training included how to gather information about the situation using your senses, what to share with police and practicing “what if” scenarios to make mental plans in case of an emergency situation. Although there were few community members in attendance at the training, Peterson said it is something that SDSU would likely offer the public again.

“I think it’s something that is beneficial to be offered to the public,” he said. “By even attending this course, it gets you thinking about this stuff and thinking about it is the quickest way that you’re not going to freeze.”

—Reach editor Jeff Clemetson at jeff@sdnews.com

By EVAN YANITIS

At their Sept. 11 meeting, the College Area Community Planning Board (CACPB) peppered developer and former CACPB member Keith Henderson of Zuma West, LLC, with questions and concerns about his proposed five-story, 27-unit “Zuma West” student housing development which incorporates, in addition, two off-site, affordable homes.

Zuma West is anticipated to replace two large duplexes currently located at 6139-6147 Montezuma Road, while the project’s affordable units will be new, single-family rental homes in the College Area neighborhood.

The discussion and several design concessions by the developer, the board — on a close vote of nine to seven — tabled consideration of the project until their October meeting. The delay will give the developer and the board’s project review committee an opportunity to put all agreed-upon changes in writing. After final consideration and recommendations by the CACPB, Henderson will be moving the entire project forward to the city for approval. Anticipated ground-breaking is 2020, with project completion in the fall of 2021.

Zuma West is designed by the prestigious San Diego architectural and design firm of Joseph Wong Designs. The apartment community includes a secured lobby, interior cutouts for view corridors, curb cuts to accommodate deliveries and pick-ups, and an amenity space/open terrace on the fifth floor with views to the north.

The units are a mixture of three bedrooms and four bedrooms, with the majority being four bedrooms. The project does not include parking or garage spaces, which is in compliance with current zoning regulations.

Height steps-back and landscaping on Mary Lane to the rear of the property and green-screening on the exterior stairwell have also been included at the request of the CACPB Project Review Committee. Items under discussion include, among others, open and personal space for tenants, street setbacks, the stairwell height, and a rooftop terrace curfew.

The two off-site, detached homes include garages and yards and will meet the building standards of the surrounding neighborhood. They will be offered for rent to qualifying very-low-income families and will be managed by the San Diego Housing Commission. The rent will be no more than 30% of 50% of the Area Median Income ($86,300) as adjusted for household size. A family of four, for example, could have a combined income of up to $53,500 a year. Covenants on the titles to these homes will require they remain affordable for a period of 55 years.

The project takes advantage of the city’s “affordable housing density bonus” which allows for extra density in a multi-family development in exchange for the addition of affordable housing units, either on site or off site. Zuma West is using the density bonus to move up from the allowable on-site unit number of 22 market rate apartments to 27.

The developer indicates the project’s two affordable homes will be built on Hobart Street, behind and inclusive of 6205 Pembroke Drive. The addresses are yet to be determined by the city.

The CACPB Project Review Committee will be meeting with Henderson on Wednesday, Oct. 2, 6:30 p.m., Faith Presbyterian Church, 5075 Campanile Drive. The project will then move on to the CACPB on Wednesday, Oct. 9, 7 p.m., also at Faith Presbyterian Church.

Planning board close to approving Zuma West project

SDSU shares active shooter response training

By JEFF CLEMETSON | College Times Courier

SDSU Police Officer Mark Peterson discusses active shooter responses at a free training at the College-Rolando Library on Sept. 17. (Photo by Jeff Clemetson)

LEARN MORE ABOUT YOUR MODERATE-TO-SEVERE ATOPIC DERMATITIS AND A POTENTIAL TREATMENT OPTION Attend a FREE educational event!

When: Wednesday, October 2, 2019
Start Time: 6:30 PM
Featuring: Tirsá Quatrullo, DNP, FNP-C & an Atopic Dermatitis Ambassador

Where: The Winery Restaurant
4301 La Jolla Village Drive, Suite 2040
San Diego, CA 92122
Complimentary Valet Parking and light fare provided.

Call 1-844-387-4936, option 5 to register!
Family and friends are welcome!

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SEE ZUMA WEST, Page 5

CALL 1-844-387-4936, OPTION 5 TO REGISTER!
AN IDEA EVOLVES

“You can’t just look at one area that may create traffic changes for example, it affects the entire community,” Reynoso said. “And we were long overdue for a community plan update.

So the idea of creating a new specific plan for the area near campus evolved into drafting a complete CPU for the entire College Area — the area bordered by Interstate 8 to the north, Coldwell Boulevard to the west, El Cajon Boulevard to the south and the city of La Mesa to the east.

Many of San Diego’s communities have recently updated their plans, including Mission Valley, Old Town, North Park and Midway. While some updates like the one in Old Town have gone smoothly, other CPUs in areas such as North Park and Midway have been met with resistance by residents and other stakeholders in their respective areas. Reynoso hopes that by taking a more proactive approach to the plan update process, consensus on the new plan will be reached easier.

“The way it has worked in the past is [the city will] do an existing conditions analysis and then there is a project team within the city that puts together a team that includes community members, particularly from the planning board, and then they present ideas to people, which is why North Park, for example, took six years. Midway took 10 years — because they came in and imposed ideas. There was an uproar, lawsuits, dragged on." To avoid the kind of resistance and infighting that hobbled other CPUs, Reynoso and other residents volunteered to form a steering committee and began organizing meetings to gather input and ideas from locals as to what they wanted out of the future of the College Area to look like. That went on for two years and culminated in a community forum held at the Ugly Dog pub, attended by nearly 100 residents sharing ideas for the new plan.

It reinforced the vision, almost a consensus vision, that the community has for the long-term future of the area,” Reynoso said.

At that meeting, Howard Blackson, a local urban designer who was invited to attend, counseled that there should be enough resources for the planning group to put together an update plan by themselves and present to the city.

“And there are benefits to that,” Reynoso said. “Number one, because of the comments from the visioning, that plan we already know would encompass the growth goals that the city has — climate action plan goals, mobility goals, etc. — those goals are embraced by our community.”

“And if we do it, by definition, that means the community supports it, which means there is less chance of it being challenged when it goes for approvals at the Planning Commission," he continued. “And when it goes for final approval at City Council, there'll likely be any controversy because the council will know this is what the community wants.”

STUDENT HELP

Not long after the meeting at the Ugly Dog, Reynoso and the other planning group members knew it was time to involve more of the area’s stakeholders, like SDSU. So the group officially created an advisory board for the master plan update that included students, developers, planners, environmental groups, residents — anyone they felt should have a say in the direction of the plan.

They contacted SDSU urban planning faculty members and asked them to get involved and invited them to a meeting. Among those who attended was professor Bruce Appleyard, who not only committed to the master plan idea, he also offered to have one of his classes in spring 2019 take on the project to develop a CPU using the visions for the area that the community had compiled at the Ugly Dog.

Appleyard’s students were broken up into different teams to tackle housing, mobility, existing conditions and other parts of the plan. To get updates from the class, the College Area Community Council (CACC) hired two interns — Daniel Shirazi and Richard Xie, who are still part of the project’s Steering Committee today.

The city’s goal was to have its Planning Department take over working on the plan by end of summer or fall of this year, which is perfect timing because the draft plan created by the CACC Steering Committee is already ready for review.

Reynoso said that a typical CPU process takes the city about three years to complete.

“We’re looking to reduce that. We are optimistic that it can be done in 18 months," he added. "The current conditions report, most of it is done already, outreach has been done, ideas gathered already, the data is already there, it may need to be fine-tuned, but we’ve probably saved the city about a year.” Community members will get to see what is in the draft plan when it is presented for a vote of approval by the College Area Planning Board at its Nov. 13 meeting. The plan will then be sent to the city for review, as well as review by the public.

“We’re trying to make this as transparent as possible,” Reynoso said. “All the comments that we get at that visions session at Ugly Dog are up at our website. All the minutes from the Steering Committee meetings are there. I go to every community meeting to keep them updated on what we are doing and get more people involved.”

For more information, visit collegearea.org.

—Reach editor Jeff Clemetson at jeff@sdnews.com.
City, school district break ground on joint-use park

On Aug. 12, Harriet Tubman students and staff joined city of San Diego and San Diego Unified leaders to celebrate the groundbreaking for their new 37,000-square-foot grass playfield and park.

The Harriet Tubman Village K-8 Charter School joint-use field project involves construction of a natural grass playfield with a walking and running path, as well as security fencing. Amenities include new picnic tables and benches, a new drinking fountain, a new play structure with shade, and existing basketball courts.

City of San Diego Council President Georgette Gomez and San Diego Unified Board Trustee Dr. Mike McQuary joined San Diego Unified Chief Facilities and Planning Officer Lee Dulgeroff, Tubman Charter CEO Ryan Woodard, and longtime advocate Terry Shirley for the ceremony.

As part of the Play All Day Park partnership with the city of San Diego, the joint-use field will be accessible to the community as a local park after school hours and during school breaks.

The Play All Day Parks Program is a new initiative put forth by the city of San Diego Mayor’s Office and the superintendent of the San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD) in 2016 to break ground on more than 45 new joint-use park sites in the next 5-10 years.

In addition to the joint-use park at Harriet Tubman, parks are also planned for nearby Carver Elementary and Rolando Park Elementary schools.

According to the Trust for Public Land, 23% of the population in San Diego currently lives further than a 10-minute walk to a park or recreational facility. One of the biggest challenges San Diego faces in building new parks is the limited amount of available land. Partnering SDUSD to share schoolyards with residents makes more available park space possible.

The new Play All Day park facilities will be opened on existing school sites and constructed with both city and bond funding from Propositions S and Z. The city will commit to operate and maintain the new park facilities. Construction on the park at Harriet Tubman is expected to be completed in early 2020. While under construction, school officials said there may be occasional construction noise and traffic control.

For more information about the Play All Day Park Program, visit bit.ly/2ZfpHnE.

For more coverage on the joint use park, see “Tubman finally gets its park” on page 10 and “Mesa Colony Community Group news” on page 14.
Guest Editorial

Time to act on short-term rentals

By MARI W. ELIOTT

Short-term rentals in San Diego should be regulated in a clear and objective manner that respects the rights of all property owners, protects our quality of life, and preserves our historic character.

Instead of a regulatory framework, however, San Diego has opted to rely on existing laws that address noise, trash, parking, and other problems created by visitors who rent properties through online services like Airbnb. This is frustrating to those of us who believe that short-term rental property owners and neighborhood residents deserve clear rules that they can live with.

While the politics of short-term rentals (STRs) are complicated, the law is clear. The municipal code, which houses our city’s laws, does not specifically regulate or prohibit STRs in single-family residential zones. Under what is known as a “permissive" zoning ordinance, the city of San Diego has created zones that define how land within the city may be used. If it is not listed, it is not permitted, which is the case with STRs. At a minimum, our policy makers must define STRs so that citizens understand how the land can be used, and so that law enforcement can enforce the law. In March 2017, I issued the first of several memos summarizing the legal and potential solutions, including the enactment of an ordinance that reflects “the quiet enjoyment of our homes.” A compromise that allows for participation in the innovation economy as well as the quiet enjoyment of our homes.

Following the memo’s release, the Mayor’s Office said that it would not change enforcement practices until the City Council took action to regulate short-term rental properties. In August 2018, after hours of public testimony, the City Council enacted a one-year moratorium to regulate STRs. The ordinance had been introduced by the Planning Department and amended by the City Council. Attorneys in my office advised on the law and drafted municipal code amendments to meet the policy makers’ goals. The STR industry did not like the ordinance. Although they threatened to sue, they instead chose to bankroll a petition drive to suspend the ordinance and force a public vote on it. In such cases, the council has a choice: it can repeal its ordinance outright or place it on the ballot. By an 8-1 vote, the council repealed its ordinance, even though it had been years in the making.

Under the law, the Mayor and City Council had two alternatives. When the City Council repeals an ordinance suspended by a referendum, as was the case here, the Council could introduce a substantially similar ordinance one year after the date of repeal. The one-year anniversary of the repeal is November 13, 2019. The council could also immediately introduce a new STR ordinance that does not substantially mirror the repealed ordinance. Unfortunately, no action has occurred since the repeal. The Mayor and City Council are the only ones with authority to bring this long conversation to a meaningful and productive end by finally putting in place rules that are objective and clear, and again they will have the full support of my office in doing so.

The Mayor and City Council have a golden opportunity to bring this long conversation to a meaningful and productive end by finally putting in place rules that are objective and clear, and again they will have the full support of my office in doing so. The city’s future depends on meaningful and productive action.

News briefs

ASSISTED LIVING FACILITY SHUT DOWN

The owner of an assisted living residence on Ewing Street is facing 22 misdemeanor charges related to substandard conditions of the facility. Charges include one count of willful cruelty to an elder and three counts of unlawful maintenance of a public nuisance. Mark Rogers, 59, operated the facility that housed 11 residents — all elderly or disabled adults — until the city shut it down. He was arraigned on Sept. 10. The city had been investigating the home since November 2018 and had found conditions that included piles of trash, beds with rat feces, toxic gas leaking from a water heater and a home that smelled of urine, according to prosecutors. Rogers is also accused of using the resi-

STUDENT HOUSING COMMUNITY FORUM

College Area residents are invited to attend a community forum regarding TOPAX — a proposed mixed-use student
Time for the Senate to act on gun violence prevention

By REP. SUSAN DAVIS

The list of cities and the number of families impacted by gun violence grows just about every day. El Paso and Dayton were recently added. This was after Gilroy and Poway right here in California.

Despite this, bipartisan bills to address this problem passed the House of Representatives are languishing in the Senate.

Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has proudly referred to himself as the “Angel of Mercy” committed to letting bills that come out of the House to simply die.

It’s time for Leader McConnell to instead be the “Angel of Mercy” and allow these bills a debate and vote in the Senate.

The background checks legislation the Senate has ignored for years would close gun buying loopholes for. The Bureau of Justice Statistics reports that background checks have stopped more than 3 million illegal gun sales since 1994.

Personal background checks have overwhelming support among the American people.

A Quinnipiac Poll showed this support at 97% of the American people, 97% of gun owners, and 97% of Republicans. If Leader McConnell won’t listen to the House, he should listen to the American people.

Passage of HR 8 was truly historic as it was the first major House vote on gun violence prevention legislation in 25 years. The Enhanced Background Check Act (HR 1112) will close the “Charleston Loophole” that allowed an armed white supremacist — with a drug arrest — to purchase a gun. This was used to kill nine people at Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina in 2015.

Under current law, a gun seller must wait three business days to complete a background check. While most of these checks can happen quickly, lack of information can cause delays. If a delay lasts more than three days, the gun sale is allowed to move forward.

HR 1112 expands the time for the FBI to complete a background check to 10 days, with an extension of 10 more days if necessary. If authorities had more time, they would have likely discovered the past drug arrest we noted.

Many of my House colleagues and I urged the Senate to return early from our summer recess to take up this 115-Congress. We were — unsurprisingly — rejected by the Senate majority leader.

However, the House Judiciary Committee has returned early to consider three bills to address gun violence. This series of legislation will ban high-capacity magazines, prohibit people convicted of a misdemeanor hate crimes from buying a gun, and help states that enact red flag laws to allow law enforcement to seize guns from those people considered to be a threat to themselves or others.

The House should also look at reinstating the nationwide assault weapons ban.

The mass shooting in Gilroy is an example of why we need a national ban. While California has an assault weapons ban, our neighboring state Nevada does not. The Gilroy shooter purchased an AK-47 in Nevada and used it to kill three people at the Gilroy Garlic Festival.

The people of California — or any of the other five states and the District of Columbia with similar bans — should not have their lives put at risk because of another state’s lax gun laws.

Once again, this is a gun safety proposal with bipartisan support. Nearly 70% of Americans are in favor such a ban, including 55% of Republicans.

As the rest of Congress comes back into session this month, the Senate has the real opportunity to put the safety of the American people before politics and enact common-sense gun safety measures.

The House did its job. It’s time the Senate joined us.

—Congresswoman Davis represents central San Diego, as well as La Mesa, Lemon Grove, Spring Valley and parts of El Cajon and Chula Vista.

OBITUARY: SALLY A. DEMCHAK

Sally Ann Demchak peacefully passed away at her home in La Mesa, CA on April 2, 2019. Sally was born on March 14, 1928 in Rochester, New York to parents Samuel and Josephine Lombardo, now deceased. Sally was the oldest of three daughters. Maryann Oliver and Patricia Miner, both deceased. Sally was a long time resident of La Mesa, CA where she lived with her husband, retired USAF Major Paul J. Demchak and four children. She is survived by her husband, Paul, and their four children: Barry, John, Robin and Karen Gilbert. She is also survived by her four grandchildren and one great grandson. Sally and Paul enjoyed traveling the world during and after Paul retired from the U.S. Air Force. For many years, Sally was a substitute teacher and worked with the local elementary schools, transcripts and books. Sally worked with college students, university students and staff members to produce their graduation theses. Sally and Paul walked the hills of La Mesa, with many of their friends, for an early morning workout. Throughout the years, Sally was so strong to tournament bowling, golf and many bridge groups. Sally was a Parishioner of St. Martin’s Roman Catholic Church of La Mesa, CA.

Senior housing: I was so grateful and pleased to take part in a recent ribbon-cutting in Ramona for the new Schumle Family Senior Residence, a housing complex that serves one of our most vulnerable populations. Thanks to the non-profit Senior Living, Ramona leaders and others for teaming up with the county on this project.

Some critical reminders — be sure to sign up for reverse 9-1-1 alerts, put together a family emergency preparedness plan and remember to sign up for the Colina del Sol Residential Emergency Preparedness Plan.

If you haven’t, please sign up for the San Diego County’s Know Your Hazards map to learn about the risks where you live.

Details on all these and more can be found at readysan diego.org.

POLITICS

Bringing people together on local projects

District Nine Notes

By GEORGETTE GÓMEZ

I am committed to creating local government that is inclusive, equitable, transparent, and accountable. In practice, we should ensure that the voices of residents are included in issues that matter to the community. This includes engagement on the following projects:

COVID-19 Measures

The community was heard in the community-generated effort to secure the community measures to boost campus safety come the next big wildfire. The School Protection and Evacuation Plan gives us a clear picture what to expect.

This is Wildfire Country and we all need to be prepared as possible — at home, at work and at school. The plan is another big step in those efforts.

—Dianne Jacob is chair of the San Diego County Board of Supervisors and represents District 2. For more District 2 news, visit diannejacob.com or follow her on Facebook and Twitter. For assistance with a county issue, call 619-531-5522 or email dianne.jacob@sdcounty.ca.gov.

News from your County Supervisor

By DIANNE JACOB

Ready for wildfire?: Many of the biggest and deadliest wildfires in San Diego County history have happened this time of year. When disaster strikes again, will you be ready? Some critical reminders — be sure to sign up for reverse 9-1-1 alerts, put together a family emergency preparedness plan and remember to sign up for the Colina del Sol Residential Emergency Preparedness Plan.

Keep our kids safe:

The San Diego County Office of Education, working with county emergency preparedness officials, recently rolled out addi- tion tools to help boost campus safety come the next big wildfire.

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MAKE 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 you make your final choice. Make the Right Choice. For more information, visit 1-866-246-4033 or go to the website. NOW HIRING CARE GIVERS! CALL NOW!

Right Choice Senior Living

Full Service Assisted Living

Our vision is to provide our seniors a life of dignity, purpose and independence. We are saving families thousands of dollars per month.

www.rightchoiceseniorliving.com

COLLEGE-ROLANDO UPDATE

This year, I have been working with community residents to ensure that concerns about access to parking for the College-Rolando Library are addressed as an adjacent property is being redeveloped. It has been a priority that the community has heard that the parking lot is transparent and accountable. I look forward to an agreement that works for both residents using the library and visitors using the hotel.

—Council President Georgette Gómez represents the 9th Council District of the city of San Diego, which includes the communities of Alvarado Estates, City Heights, College Area, College View Estates, El Cerrito, Kensington, Mountain View, Mt. Hope, Rolando, Southcrest, and Talmadge. She is the chair of the Metropolitan Transit System, chairs the city of San Diego’s Rules Committee, and sits on the SANDAG board of directors and Executive Committee.

Dianne’s Corner

Senior housing: I was so grateful and pleased to take part in a recent ribbon-cutting in Ramona for the new Schumle Family Senior Residence, a housing complex that serves one of our most vulnerable populations.

Thanks to the non-profit Senior Living, Ramona leaders and others for teaming up with the county on this project. Some critical reminders — be sure to sign up for reverse 9-1-1 alerts, put together a family emergency preparedness plan and remember to sign up for the Colina del Sol Residential Emergency Preparedness Plan.

Seniors are the fastest-growing segment of our population — and many face huge challenges. Medical, Social. Financial. We must do all we can to help them and their families.

Keeping our kids safe:

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Dani Lloyd is one of the vendors who participated in the Make it Market. Her business, Thatcher House, makes and sells handmade baby mobiles and she recently moved to the College Area from Alaska.

“This is a great way to get out and meet people here in our little local community,” she said, adding that she hopes to vend at as many Make It Markets as she can. “It’s nice to get out in our own neighborhood rather than going to North Park or somewhere else.”

La Mesa resident LeChonne Wright of Le-Le Essentials makes handmade jewelry with a mix of gemstones and porous lava rocks that soak up essential oils. The Make It Market was her first time vending in College Area.

“Now I look for patterns of do I do well in that area, that space or that arena. So that’s kind of what I’m looking for today, see what the traffic is like, see how well received healing jewelry stones are in this area,” she said.

To attract vendors to the market, Goodrich said they put the word out through places like San Diego Made and other vendor lists. Finding vendors for the first market was made easier because Ultreya Coffee had hosted several pop up markets on its own before the business district approached them to host its first Make It Market.

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Contenido de la imagen: 

1. “Shop Local”
2. ENHANCERY Jewelers
   - “One City, One Team”
   - San Diego State
   - Now featuring Officially Licensed San Diego State Jewelry
   - 4424 Camino del Rio North Ste. 17
   - 619.282.3900 www.enhancery.com
   - (Located in the Chili’s Center)
3. FRESH OUTLET
   - Dangar Market
   - Great brand-name products at extremely low prices
   - You’ll find brand-name groceries
   - Organic farm fresh produce
   - up to 40-70% off conventional retail prices.
   - Hours 8am to 10pm daily
   - 4360 54th Street
   - San Diego, CA 92115
   - Military Discount
4. Protect your world
   - Auto • Home • Life • Retirement
   - Call me today to discuss your options.
   - Some people think Allstate only protects your car. Truth is, Allstate can also protect your home or apartment, your boat, motorcycle - even your retirement and your life. And the more of your world you put in Good Hands®, the more you can save.
   - Yvette Marin
   - 619-660-1061
   - 5548 El Cajon Blvd
   - San Diego, CA 92115
   - yvettemarin@allstate.com
   - Allstate
5. San Diego’s Finest Woman Owned Collision Center
6. Dr. Patrycja Zapasnik-Stewart
   - DENTAL PRACTICE
   - In-house insurances now available.
   - Dr. Patrycja Stewart DDS
   - 6244 El Cajon Blvd, Suite 6, San Diego, CA 92115
   - Tel: 619.583.2191 | dptstewart@thetoothdoc.net
7. WINE WORKS
   - JOIN US!
   - Live Music
   - 3:00-5:30 The Exiles
   - 6:30-9:30 The Sock Monkeys
   - Come Hungry & enjoy Thumbs-Up BBQ
   - FUN... RAFFLES...SPECIALS
   - 8167 Center St.
   - La Mesa
   - 619-741-0700
   - 3rd Saturday, October 12th
8. Dr. Patrycja Zapasnik-Stewart DDS
   - DENTAL PRACTICE
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9. Grocery Outlet
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NEW BARBECUE
On Sept. 6, Korean barbeque restaurant KBBQ held its official grand opening at 6535 El Cajon Blvd.
The restaurant features dishes such as teriyaki chicken, pork spare ribs and kalbi bowls. KBBQ is open Mondays through Fridays, 11 a.m.-9 p.m., and Saturdays and Sundays, noon-8 p.m. KBBQ also offers delivery for a fee.

A GRAND REOPENING
The Best Western hotel located at 6474 El Cajon Blvd. has just completed renovating its lobby and exterior area and will hold a grand reopening celebration on Oct. 3, 1-2:30 p.m. The public is invited to come see the new look, learn about the hotel’s journey through the renovations and also hear more about plans to renovate the hotel’s 61 guest rooms and 28 suites.

AFRICAN EXPRESS
On Sept. 6, Flavors of East Africa — a regular hot food vendor at local farmers markets throughout San Diego — held a grand opening for its second restaurant location on the SDSU campus, 5157 College Ave. The new location is called Flavors of East Africa Express and will serve the restaurant’s farmers market options with a menu. The grand opening featured music, free food samples and a drawing competition. Visit flavorsofeastafrica.com.

BOBA SHOP OPENS
College Area now has its own boba shop. On Aug. 24, Ice Box held a grand opening at its new location — 5649 College Ave. This is the second location for the family-owned Ice Box, having opened a location in National City in 2016. Ice Box specializes in boba — a toppings-filled shaved drink with flavors such as passion fruit, mango, double fudge mocha, honeydew, Thai tea and more. The restaurant also serves up French fries with interesting toppings like spicy mayo poke, lobster, kimchi carnitas and more. Ice Box is open Sunday through Thursday, noon-10 p.m. and Fridays and Saturdays, noon-11 p.m. Visit Visit flavorsofeastafrica.com.

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Music, dance programs at Hardy Elementary

By TINA GERSTLER

For schools, especially elementary schools, to achieve their goals of educating our children and to lay the foundation for the rigors they will face at higher-grade schools and eventually, life, they need to go beyond writing, reading and arithmetic in order to actively engage the kids and make them willing and eager participants. Working with staff, the Hardy PTA funds several programs that not only prepare kids for their current, daily routines but incorporate their curriculum into fun activities that tie their creativity into what could be mundane, rote tasks. Some examples of the programs are:

Tune Your Engine is a series of breathing and movement exercises designed for elementary school age children. The exercises are designed to help children focus their mind and ramp up energy to get ready for the day and are based on Pilates, yoga, guided breathing concepts, isometric muscle movement and imaginary play. They are designed to warm up the areas of the body needed to do school work: hands, fingers, ease of the body needed to do their current, daily routines.

Animal Traits and How They Move is a 4-5 week creative movement workshop for first graders that uses visual aids, pictures and graphics to show different animals as they swim, crawl, jump, run and fly. Students watch short videos of animals moving, then stand and learn a clap and stomp rhythm to get bodies moving, then improvise movements based on their observations of the coyote howling, the eagle soaring, elephants batting and other animal movements they watched.

Intro to Folk Dance gives second graders an opportunity to learn a traditional American folk dance. They learn a dance from the Appalachian/Ozark Mountain region that uses simple dance steps to create patterns in both a circle and snake formation. This circle dance gives them an understanding of rhythm and movement in a fun and athletic way. They jump, run, clap, turn and count — all engaging the parts of their brain that they use when learning math. The classes learn geography of the region and history about the people from Appalachia and the Ozarks, determined by the teachers. The Intro to Folk Dance unit can be used for physical education credit, social studies, STEAM learning and geography.

Storytelling Through Movement is a 4-5 week program for third graders that explores individual and group movement as a form of emotional expression and storytelling. Many cultures use movement both gestural and physical to share their history. This unit focuses on cultural dance from Hawaii (hula dance) and haka warrior chants from New Zealand. The students learn the language of movement from this region. The unit culminates in a shared performance and celebration featuring foods from the area.

International Folk Dance for fourth graders spends one week on the Middle Eastern dance “Hora,” two weeks on South African dance “Pata Pata,” two weeks on Latin American dance “Cha Cha,” and three weeks on American square dance. Children first learn basic square dance movements and calls. They are taught a line dance with partners and connect it to the Walk Through California program that occurs around the same time. During the last week of instruction, students practice all dances and the unit culminates in several showings at open house. Performances take place in the auditorium.

3rd & 4th Grade Dance-Off is the culmination dance party for the fall program. Each class learns the same rhythms and patterns from folk dance phrases taught during Tune Your Engine. Students compete in their own grade level. The winners of that contest compete for a prize. Judges for the competition are the school’s teachers and principal.

—Tina Gerstler is a Hardy Elementary PTA board member.
Drexel Academy kicks off new year with new principal

As of July 1, Mrs. Kelly Bonde has taken over as the new principal of St. Katharine Drexel Academy (SKDA).

“I am honored, excited and humbled to be in the position of principal at SKDA for the 2019-2020 school year,” Bonde said in a statement. “We are cultivating an innovative Next Generation Catholic Leadership Academy that I am extremely proud of and I look forward to collaborating with each member of this community to enhance and spread the good news about what we are doing at SKDA. We have built the foundation of this wonderful school together and I look forward to leading this community as we support our students in their formation to be Christ-like leaders who will set the world on fire.”

Drexel Academy welcomed students for the first day of classes on Aug. 26. The school is excited to welcome new students into our Next Generation Catholic elementary school. We held our first community event as well, which was a picnic at Allied Gardens Rec Center.

SEE DREXEL ACADEMY, Page 16

Back-to-school time at Helix

Helix Highlights

Helix is back in the swing of things for the 2019-20 school year. Classes began on Wednesday, Aug. 7, and parents and guardians were invited to attend Back-to-School Night on Aug. 22, followed by Parent Shadow Day on Aug. 28.

Both events offered families the opportunity to better understand their child's education by meeting their teachers, and spending a day on campus experiencing a day in the classrooms. Helix offers these events twice annually — once in the fall term, then again in the spring.

ALL CLASS PICNIC

The Helix High School Foundation and Alumni Association will host the All Class Picnic on Sunday, Oct. 11. The event will feature special guests, performances by the on-campus programs, music from alumni members’ bands, a car show, a campus tour, and representatives from graduating classes from the ‘50s to the 2000s.

HOMECOMING

This year’s Homecoming game will be on Friday, Oct. 4. Kickoff for the game is 7 p.m., as the Highlanders take on the El Capitan Vaqueros.

PERFORMING ARTS CALENDAR

• Oct. 3: Orchestra Concert; Helix Mainstage Theater, 7 p.m. Ticket information available at helixinstrumental.org.


HCCH SCOTTIES APP

Sports fans can follow all of Helix’s teams by downloading the HCCH Scotties app. The app is free in your app store, and provides information on schedules, scores, standings and more for your favorite Highlander sports.

EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION TOUR

If you are interested in finding out more about Helix Charter High School, please attend one of our Excellence in Education tours, held twice monthly. Dates for this year are in the works and will be available on our website, helixcharter.net.


Club Day kicks off the new school year

PIHHS celebrated a great opening which included Club Day to help promote inclusiveness, fun, education, culture, and good health through our ASB Leadership teams.

We have over 80 clubs on campus and the best way to add new members is by advertising them at lunch in a fun and creative way. Tables were set up around the quad spilling into the pathways with special posters and charts to explain the club’s purpose. A full list of over 80 different clubs is on our website with days and times when they meet.

One of my favorite clubs is the Circle of Friends because they promote making friends and community building activities for students who can struggle with making friends. Academic League, Mock Trial, Model United Nations, Art History, and Architecture and Engineering clubs are available for students who are interested in academic endeavors. Helping the Homeless, Hear Our Voice, Red Cross, and Key Club are all examples of clubs for students who want to participate in community service. We also have clubs that celebrate culture, religion, and hobbies for students who want to share common interests or learn about others.

The list is long and everyone is invited to participate in as many clubs as they have time for. Special thanks to the club advisors who provide leadership opportunities for our students and a place for them to meet.

—Elizabeth Gillingham is principal of Patrick Henry High School.

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute celebrates 15th year

By NEIL GLADSON

Fall inevitably brings to mind thoughts of heading back to school. The thrill of learning doesn’t have to come to an end just because you’re age 50 or better.

That’s the philosophy of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at San Diego State University. This fall marks its 15th year of offering university-quality classes to expand the horizons of adult learners.

“Our beginnings in 2004 were humble — we had 16 members and seven courses,” said Osher Institute Director Ajime Davis.

“Today, our membership is 750 strong and we offer more than 125 courses a year.”

Some of the classes on tap for fall include a nostalgic look back at the Beatles’ famous 1965 North American tour; an insightful discussion of the current U.S.-Mexico border issues; and a three-part series on financially preparing for retirement.

“There are so many amazing courses to choose from,” said Osher student Joyce Seidman, a retired naval officer. “As I go through the catalog, I circle all the courses I want to attend, courses that excite me, challenge me, amuse me — you get the idea!”

At the Osher Institute, students are also members. The cost is $50 per person for new and renewing members per term. The membership comes with special benefits including SDSU Love Library privileges, free Microsoft Office 365, and free admission to regular season Aztec athletic events. Members can also take advantage of the student rate on Amazon Prime.

Another bonus for students is that there are no tests, homework, or grades. The focus is purely on the learning experience.

Instructor Glenn C. Smith, a professor at California Western School of Law, encourages community members to look them up.

“Don’t worry about educational background or prerequisites, just jump in!” he said.

“Take something you don’t know much about or think you’ naturally like. You’ll surprise yourself and grow in the process.”

The full course catalog can be viewed online at neversstoplearning.net/usher.
The top-selling soujouk flatbread

Restaurant Review

By FRANK SABATINI JR.

It wasn’t long ago that San Diego’s eminent Lebanese restaurant was just an obscure blip on the culinary scene. After opening in 2010, Alforon attracted faint trickles of curious neighborhood residents and students from nearby SDSU. With its non-flashy facade barely blinking from a small strip plaza, the place was easy to miss — and it still is despite expanding into an adjoining storefront since then.

Word eventually began spreading about the restaurant’s unique Old World cuisine as well as the owners’ charming front-line style of hospitality. Local food critics picked up on the buzz, and soon after, so did Guy Fieri of the Food Network’s “Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives.”

Twice. The first time Fieri came knocking was in 2013. “I said ‘no’ to doing the show because we were still too small,” said George Salameh, a native of Lebanon who owns and operates the restaurant with his delightfully outgoing wife, “Sam.”

It wasn’t until this past year that the Food Network contacted Salameh again. This time, he was ready. And the cameras got rolling in July.

The segment (season 30, episode seven) already aired a couple weeks ago — and the cameras got rolling outSIDE seven) already aired a couple weeks ago — and the cameras got rolling. Salameh again. This time, he was ready. And the cameras got rolling.

For example, I most recently fell madly in love with soujouk flatbread, as did Fieri, who said, “I could eat 100 of these.”

The flatbread is one of many hot, puffy discs baked in the al foron (oven) from unleached “hard” flour with assorted meat toppings and stunning combinations of spices. The recipes are handed down from Salameh’s father and grandmother, although they supposedly date back centuries.

The soujouk features finely ground beef with Lebanese white cheese. The meat is accented with sumac, fenugreek and hints of red chilies. Though simple, every bite is novel and comforting.

In other visits I tried the “zaatar supreme,” which enriches the palate with an exotic blend of earthy spices imported from Lebanon. They include wild thyme, sumac and fresh mint. Dollops of soft Kefir cheese add the right touch of creaminess.

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Ham Loaf Recipe

So now your family on the East Coast is coming to visit. And that means cooking up something special — a food that lasts a couple days as leftovers.

Here is a flavorful ham loaf recipe, one I’ve had for years. My Iowa friend was such a great cook and I passed along her idea for “good eatin’.”

Ingredients

• 1 egg
• 1 can tomato soup
• 1/4 cup milk
• 1 onion, chopped onion
• 1 cup crackers, ground fine
• 1/2 teaspoon celery seed and pepper

Directions

Beat eggs, add meat, milk, half can of soup, seasonings and crackers. Mix well with hands, form into loaf, pour remaining soup over top. Bake slowly 1.5 to 2 hours.

See Alforon, Page 13
Alforon’s expanded dining room still feels as cozy and intimate as the day it opened. It offers a rustic, almost Medieval-style charm that sets the stage for meals with historic Middle Eastern roots.

Undoubtedly, the restaurant is a true gem, just no longer a secret anymore — from North County and South Bay, and all the way from Los Angeles,” said Salameh in preparation for even more fanfare once the Food Network starts randomly re-airing his episode down the road.

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

Pistachio-rich ‘aaysh essaray’ for dessert

There are also six different types of “kibbie,” which are blends of various meats, bulgur wheat, onions and spices shaped into balls that I trust live up to their many raves. For dessert, look no further than the “aaysh essaray.” You won’t find it anywhere else because it’s an original creation by Salameh. Served in large squares, the base is an eggless custard carpeted with crushed pistachios and kissed by nutmeg, cinnamon and a modicum of rosewater.

For dessert, look no further than the “aaysh essaray.” You won’t find it anywhere else because it’s an original creation by Salameh. Served in large squares, the base is an eggless custard carpeted with crushed pistachios and kissed by nutmeg, cinnamon and a modicum of rosewater.
For the last couple of years, the College Area Community Council and Planning Board have been working on a new member-centric newspaper to provide the community with updates on what is happening in the community. The paper was direct-mailed to 3,000 homes. This was less than we wanted in order to reach every household in the area, but our goal was to get that increased such that we did reach every home in the area. That did not happen and, in fact, the circulation was reduced to 2,000 homes with the possibility that that may decrease further or disappear altogether.

We approached the San Diego Community Newspaper Publishing Group to discuss the possibility of extending the territory of one of their other papers (Mission Times Courier, La Mesa Courier) to include the College Area. Fortuitously, the publisher felt that we are a unique community and the fact that we are currently undertaking a community-generated community plan update to create and implement the vision that the community has for itself, warranted a paper dedicated to the community.

That is the College Times Courier, which you are currently reading. Given the level of community participation that we are looking for during the compilation of the community plan, and the ten-fold circulation goal over the previous paper proposed by the publisher, we felt that it will work well as a vehicle for disseminating community news, updates, events, etc. It will also aid our outreach efforts for the plan update.

Our thanks to the San Diego Community Newspaper Publishing Group for their confidence in and support of our community and look forward to a very long relationship. Welcome to our neighborhood.

Please stay tuned for updates on the progress of our plan update and please get involved. We are all a part of this community and at the same time we can do things to what you want to see here and how it is developed over the next 20-30 years is vital. If not for you, for your kids or grandkids.

—Jose Reynoso is president of the College Area Community Council and chair of the College Area Planning Board.

Alvarado Community Association news

Welcome to the Alvarado Community Association news update in College Times Courier. This column will contain updates from our association about the future of our community, but we thought we’d start with a bit about our past by sharing this news article from July 18, 1952 that appeared in the Evening Tribune:

“In 1948, a group of 71 San Diego Unified School District small community of fine homes on country-like estates within the city. They included college professors, doctors, dentists, businessmen, and other professional people – most of them friends or acquaintances. In 1952, the Alvarado Community Association was formed and the first titles were granted for the Alvarado subdivision, which sprawls over 217 rolling acres just west of the college area.

“They were all the prospects of a home site of 2 acres or more, of a private air-strip to park the planes of those who owned them School of Science and Winables to keep horses that ride. There had never been another residential development like it in California and was a true co-operative enterprise.

“It is said that several times it was on the brink of failure as many problems faced the association. The property had to be subdivided, part of it was sold at $10,000 on Sept. 28. This tradition has been enjoyed by College View Estates residents for more than 25 years. For the last year, College View Estates has been undergoing major infrastructure improvement and improvement. For many months, workers were trenching our streets in order to place the electricity and communication cables underground. Currently, everyone has been connected to the underground power source. The telephone poles were shortened after the power was connected underground.

The communication companies continue to pull their cables. AT&T and Cox trucks are roaming the neighborhood. When they are finished, the telephone poles will be removed entirely. In addition, new streetlights have been installed including mid-block lighting.

A few days ago, trenching began to replace outdated sewer and water pipes. A worker reported the process would take six to eight months. The final touch will be resurfacing of the streets. We look forward to celebrating the completion of this much needed infrastructure update and the return of relatively quiet to our neighborhood.

As the city works to replace and improve our infrastructure, it might be tempting to cast a stroll around your own property and see what needs replacing, improving, repainting, etc. We live in such a wonderful community, but it takes an effort by every one of us to maintain it. As you drive or walk by a neighbor’s street, take a moment to ask might be, “Would I be interested in living next door to this house if I was buying a new home?”

—Susan Claret Crisafulli is a board member of the Alvarado Community Association.

News from Mesa Colony Community Group

By SAUL AMERING

On Aug. 12, Mesa Colony participated in an event that was decades in coming! After more than 40 years, the community was present for the ground breaking of a joint-use park. The park is to take on the site of the Harriet Tubman Village Charter School.

The effort to get a park in the area was started in the 1970s by long-time resident Mark Brynning and it has been consistently pursued by Troy Murphree, another resident of the area. Terry Shurley, past chair of the community group, was also instrumental, as was the support from the College Area Community Council. It took many years of meetings, patience, reminders, and a good deal of nudging until it finally happened.

Support for the project was given by Marti Emerald when she was the area’s council member, and further pursued by Councilwoman Kristin Gore when she was elected to represent District 9. Staff from the San Diego Unified School District, specifically Lee Dulgeroff of the Chief Facilities Planning and Construction Office, and the current CEO and Principal of Tubman Charter School Dr. Ryan Woodard.

Tubman Charter is a K-8 school, previously known as Muir Elementary. The new park will consist of a grass playing field, a running track, trees, picnic tables, water fountain, and a shaded play structure, and exist basketball courts. The park will be finished, at the same time, at the end of the school year, and during school breaks.

—Saul Ameling writes on behalf of the Mesa Colony Community Group.

College View news

By PATRICK HANSON

In August, what had been a cul-de-sac celebration until last year became the College View Estates Ice Cream Social. Approximately 130 children and adults enjoyed delicious self-constructed ice cream sundaes. Ingredients for the tasty creation were supplied by those participating. Needless to say, a good time was had by all. Preparations are currently under way for the ice cream social on Sept. 28. This tradition has been enjoyed by College View Estates residents for more than 25 years.

For the last year, College View Estates has been undergoing major infrastructure improvement and improvement. For many months, workers were trenching our streets in order to place the electricity and communication cables underground. Currently, everyone has been connected to the underground power source. The telephone poles were shortened after the power was connected underground.

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—Patrick Hanson is president of the College View Estates Association.

News from El Cerrito Community Council

By EVA YAKUTIS

The El Cerrito Community Council (ECCC) is a neighborhood organization that meets monthly on the third Thursday of the month. 7 p.m., at Blessed Sacrament Church Parish Hall, El Cajon Boulevard at El Cerrito Drive. If you live within the organization’s boundaries (see below), you are familiar with the monthly newsletter delivered by volunteers to every doorstep in the neighborhood.

The mission of the El Cerrito Community Council is to:

• Provide a forum to share information and discuss issues of interest to the community
• Facilitate communications with the city and other agencies

Estates news

• Hold community events and activities that benefit the neighborhood
• Get to know neighbors and have fun!

Membership boundaries span residences on both sides of El Cajon Boulevard and are bordered by 54th and Colwood streets to the west, University Avenue to the south, College Avenue to the east, and Baja Canyon (south of Baja Drive) to the north.

For more information, visit elcerritocommunitycouncil.org. Hope to see you at our next meeting on Thursday, Oct. 17.

—Eva Yakutis is a board member of the El Cerrito Community Council.
GI Film Fest explores returning from war

KENDRA SITTON | COLLEGE TIMES COURIER

The fifth iteration of the GI Film Festival San Diego, which is taking place from Sept. 24–29, does not have a stated theme outside the festival’s purpose: showcasing films created by, for and about military service members and veterans. Still, the selected feature films, documentaries and shorts have a connected through-line.

"A lot of the films, and specifically ‘Homemade’ and ‘Take Me Home Huey’, have to do with healing from war," said Lisa Marcolongo, a member of the Advisory Committee for the GI Film Festival San Diego. "We’re still at war and our active duty and our veterans and their families are still healing from war.”

"Homemade" is a documentary film following a combat veteran and his family for six years as he struggles to reintegrate to civilian life. Its world premiere is at the Museum of Photographic Arts on Sept. 25. “Take Me Home Huey” opens the film fest on Sept. 24 with its portrayal of a San Diego-based artist’s project to restore a Huey helicopter from the Vietnam War and then reunite it with its former crew.

“‘Homemade’ is about Afghanistan. ‘Take Me Home Huey’ is about Vietnam. These are two different generations. These are two different conflicts and wars. They’re all healing and finding ways to do that, whether it’s through sculpture and art forms, whether it’s through physical activity and things like that,” Marcolongo explained. “It’s something that resonates with multiple generations and we need to be there to help and support them.

San Diego has a great collaborative and coalition of service providers and community members that are here just to support them during that journey.’

She sees the divide between civilian and military life as one of the barriers making it difficult for veterans to return to their communities. Marcolongo believes the film fest is an important place for veterans to meet people in the San Diego area willing to support them since bases are largely inaccessible to civilians.

“I understand that there are security protocols and safety is number one, but at the same time, that kind of cut us off from creating more links and connections between the military and the community. That’s just one more reason why the GI Film Festival is so important. It’s not just about watching those films that you’re going to see in that theater; you’re going to be able to meet active duty and veterans at the same time you’re viewing some of those stories and journeys that they wanted to highlight,” she said.

Marcolongo is passionate about supporting veterans because of her husband’s struggle with post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) when he returned from combat in 2007. She needed the help and support of San Diegans as the family learned to manage his condition.

“Our family is thrifty because of those resources that reached out to us and helped us,” she said.

Of the films she viewed while making selections for this year’s festival, Marcolongo particularly resonated with “Homemade,” as it showed another family dealing with invisible wounds from war. “For the filmmakers, giving viewers a relatable perspective on screen was an intentional choice. We really wanted [the film] to feel like you were on the inside and that you were a part of Adam and Victoria and their family’s life,” said director Danielle Bernstein.

The film itself is grounded in empathy, with the directors behind the cameras describing their subjects as close friends. Each time they visited Adam Sorenson as he navigated life after war, they worried first about making sure the family was going to make it as Sorenson battled addiction and health issues, and second about filming.

“We’re a couple and we were documenting a couple. I really became friends with Victoria throughout the film,” Bernstein said. She believes since her and co-director Jason Maris did the project together, they were able to connect in a different way than if Maris executed the filming alone. What resulted was an intimate portrayal of the struggles to readjust to civilian life after a traumatic brain injury.

The Marine Corps is currently in discussions with them to use the film as a possible training tool. Bernstein believes civilian culture can learn something from the military as well and needs to better help people find purpose in their lives.

“I’m a huge advocate for how do we make transition more streamlined and more positive and easier to integrate to civilian culture, and also how do civilians start to look at ourselves and how we participate in a culture that doesn’t give us daily feeling of purpose and meaning,” she said.

According to Maris, doctors who have attended private screenings of the film also learned how to better understand their patients.

“Doctors who work with military said, ‘Wow, this is incredibly insightful because it is all the people that we’ve treated, but it’s what happened before they walk through our door.’ [They have] never even gotten to see that part of the story. [They have] just [seen them] after they’d come for treatment,” Maris explained.

Maris said, “It’s been very effective in igniting the kind of dialogue that we want to have around these issues.

To continue that discussion, they will be a part of a panel, alongside stars Adam and Victoria, after the screening of “Homemade” at the festival.

The local artist featured in the 2017 Emmy-award winning documentary “Take Me Home Huey” will also be speaking at the event. His mixed-media transformation of the Huey was the original premise of the film, but it became about helping Vietnam veterans...
Gl Film Fest

CONTINUED FROM Page 15

who visited the 47-foot-long sculpture heal.

According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, it is estimated that approximately 7.3 million Americans who served during the Vietnam War from 1964 and 1975 are alive today. However, many Vietnam War-era veterans do not share their stories or experiences, and are affected by PTSD.

In this case, the art became a catalyst for conversation. It kick-started conversation and allowed these veterans to open up and talk like I’ve ever heard before,” Maloney said.

Maloney decided to embark on the project after he turned another helicopter into a sculpture. He wanted to do the same with a Huey to thank veterans

Drexel Academy

CONTINUED FROM Page 11

Center on Saturday, Sept. 7. It was a great time!

SKDA also has a new mural on 56th Street painted by one of the school’s board members, some teachers and some parents. Drive by and check it out!

The first month of school was all about team building and forming a new school culture to ensure all students are happy, safe, and supported.

Drexel Academy proudly partners with the Minston Valley YMCA for physical education and has joined the Central City and South Bay Parochial Schools League to compete against other Catholic schools in sports. This fall, the Flyers will be participat-

ing in flag football and softball!

St. Katharine Drexel Academy is a proud partner of the Ideal Institute at Loyola Marymount University. During the next few years, Drexel teachers are training to earn school-wide certification as a Blended Learning Next Generation Science & Technology Catholic School. At Drexel, NGSS (Next Generation Science Standards) form the foundation of our project-based, integrated curriculum. With the assistance of online resources, teachers personalize instruction and assessment to meet each student’s learning needs and promote student achievement.

All are welcome! If you would like to schedule a tour, please reach out through the main office at 760-582-3862 or email mainoffice@sk-

da.sd.us.

Learn how we empower great hearts and minds to change the world. Follow @drexelsd or find us on Facebook at St. Katharine Drexel Academy!

ALVARADO RECOGNIZED

Alvarado Hospital has been recognized by Becker’s Hospital Review, for the second consecutive year, as one of the “100 Great Community Hospitals” for 2019.

Alvarado currently holds a five-star rating from CMS for quality healthcare, has been a recipient of the Healthgrades Patient Safety Excellence Award for the past five consecutive years, and was awarded an A Grade for Hospital Patient Safety by The Leapfrog Group earlier this year.

MTS TO HOLD FREE RIDE DAY

The San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) and North County Transit District (NCTD) announced that the agencies will hold the region’s second “Free Ride Day” on Wednesday, Oct. 2. Fixed and paratransit services will be free for everyone to use.

Free Ride Day is being held in conjunction with California Clean Air Day also on Oct. 2, and SANDAG iCommute efforts to promote Rideshare Week, Sept. 30–Oct. 4, to educate people about the sustainable transport choices available in the San Diego region.

“Last year, MTS recorded a 17% increase in passenger trips on Free Ride Day. It was a great success to get that many San Diego residents to shake up their routine and choose transit,” said Mona Rios, MTS Board Vice Chair and Councilmember for National City. “Economic growth is absolutely critical for this region as we all strive to meet our climate action goals. We need to do everything we can to get people to use alternative modes of transportation.”

SANDAG Vice Chair and Encinitas Mayor Katherine Blakespear encouraged all single riders to consider giving carpool, vanpool, or transit a try during Rideshare Week.

“Making the change even one day a week will take cars off the road and increase sustainability and quality of life in the San Diego region,” she said.

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SEES NEWS BRIEFS, Page 19

Puzzles

SUDOKU

Fill in the blank cells using numbers 1 to 9. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and 3x3 block. Use logic and process elimination to solve the puzzle.

Drexel Academy

CONTINUED FROM Page 11

housing project to be located on two adjoining parcels located at 5824 and 5838 Montezuma Road, just west of College Avenue. The existing improvements on these parcels include the McDonald’s restaurant and the adjacent Ace’s Shopping Center.

The forum will take place during the regularly scheduled College Area Community Council Project Review Committee meeting on Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2–7 p.m. at Faith Presbyterian Church, 5070 Campanile Drive.

Developers Pierce Education Properties, L.P. and their architects will make a short presentation and then solicit community input. The developers will not be seeking actions of any proposed project by the Project Review Committee at this meeting, but rather desire to engage the community in a conversation about the future of these parcels.

Refreshments will be served.

Review Committee at this meeting will not be seeking action of any proposed project by the Project Review Committee at this meet-

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Drexel Academy

CONTINUED FROM Page 11

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Friday, Sept. 29

‘Hamlet’ Through Oct. 6
Hamlet by William Shakespeare is considered one of the best-known plays in world literature. “Hamlet” is a philosophical study of life and death, laced with some of the most recognized of Shakespeare’s soliloquies including, “To be or not to be...” Friday through Sundays at 8 p.m., Saturday through Sundays at 2 p.m. at the La Jolla Playhouse, 4343 MacAlister Drive. Tickets range $15–30, available at bit.ly/20dGQ4q.

Saturday, Sept. 21

Community Garden Work Party
The College Area Community Garden (CAGC) has three upcoming events that will provide opportunities for new volunteers. On Saturdays Sept. 21, Oct. 19 and Nov. 16 from 9 a.m.–1 p.m. the garden is holding work parties. People interested in becoming a volunteer and learning about gardening from the experts at CAGC, should register in advance by emailing Carolyn at communications.cagc@gmail.com.

Friday, Sept. 27

‘Finding Our Way’ Playwright Project presents a live performance about the impact of addiction, written by a group of playwrights at Richard J Donovan Correctional Facility. “Finding Our Way” is originally written as a companion piece to “Other People’s Kids” by Mabelle Reynoso, written as a commission to Playwrights Project from the U.S. Attorney’s Office and Social Advocates for Youth San Diego in responses to the influx of arrests for methamphetamine-related crimes in San Diego. 7:30 p.m. at Mooxie Theatre, 6663 El Cajon Blvd. Suite N. Tickets are $25 general; $20 students, seniors and military; $15 for groups of 10 or more available at bit.ly/2Qk28IF.

Saturday, Sept. 29

‘Greta Van Fleet’ Rock band Greta Van Fleet — often described as a modern Led Zeppelin — bring their “March of the Peaceful Army” tour to the Cal Coast Credit Union Open Air Theatre, 5500 Campanile Drive. Shannon at the Drive and The Clams open. Doors at 6 p.m. Tickets range $31 and up, available at bit.ly/2NGIOGm.

Wednesday, Sept. 5

Make It Market
College Area Business District presents a craft market at Black Market Brewing, 4800 Art St. 3-7 p.m. Free to attend.

Peter Frampton ’70s guitarist hero Peter Frampton brings his farewell tour to the Cal Coast Credit Union Open Air Theatre, 5500 Campanile Drive. Jason Bonham’s Led Zeppelin opens. Tickets range $31 and up, available at bit.ly/2z2R2mY.

Brinaya Skye & The Dark Clouds Live music show with indie-rockers Brinaya Skye & The Dark Clouds, Donna Larsen & The Messengers and T. 10 p.m.–1 a.m. at the Go Lounge, 7123 El Cajon Blvd.

Friday, Oct. 11

‘The Sound of Music’ Through Oct. 19
The Highland Players, Helix Charter High School’s Drama Department, presents the classic musical. “The Sound of Music.” Oct. 11–19 at the Helix MainStage Theater, 6200 Lowell St. Evening performances start at 7 p.m., with 2 p.m. performances also scheduled on Thursday, Oct. 17. There will be 2 p.m. matinees on Oct. 12 and 19. Tickets are $10 for non-students, $8 for students with ASB cards, available at bit.ly/2k2HwOE.

Saturday, Oct. 12

College-Rolando Library Bookclub
The College-Rolando Library Bookclub will discuss “It’s a Fair Trade Event” by Kate Quinn. 6600 Montezuma Road. 9:30 a.m.

San Diego, 7:30 p.m. at Mooxie Theatre, 6663 El Cajon Blvd. Suite N. For tickets and information, visit moxietheatre.com.

Tuesday, Oct. 15

Family Read & Play
Kroc Center Family Read & Play Days are monthly events for children ages 5 and under geared toward getting kids excited about reading. Each event includes storyline featuring our book of the month, playtime with the imagination playground, and a free book for every child to add to their home library. 10:30–11:30 a.m. in the Kroc Center Room, 6845 University Ave.

Wednesday, Oct. 16

The Who
British rockers The Who, featuring original members Roger Daltrey and Pete Townshend, bring their “Moving On!” tour to Viejas Arena, 5500 Canyon Crest Drive. Former Oasis frontman Liam Gallagher opens. Doors are at 6:30 p.m. Ticket range $36 to over $300, available at bit.ly/2L9h5oE.

Friday, Sept. 29

‘Im Hussein in Double Trouble’ An African scammer promises Im Hussein and her husband Abu Hussein $1.5 million, with strings attached. The two fall for the swindle and deplete their savings account to con an African man. Confusion reigns when an African man arrives with a shock claim. Then the authorities can man arrives with a shock. Confusion reigns when an African man arrives with a shock claim. Then the authorities.

Tuesday, Sept. 17

Seniors Lunch
Lunch for seniors with fun themes, held on the third Thursday of the month. October’s theme is “Halloween.” 12:30 p.m. at the Salvation Army Kroc Center, 6685 El Cajon Blvd. For more information, visit bit.ly/2NzrkWm.
Lung Cancer: Asbestos exposure in industrial, construction, manufacturing jobs, or the military may be the cause. Family in the home may be exposed. Call 1-866-795-3864 or email cancer@breakingnews.com. $30 billion is set aside for asbestos victims. Volatile stocks may not reflect a rise in the stock price.

Best time to buy San Diego real estate?

By SARAH WARD

I was working with a graphic designer the other day who said, “I want to buy a property in San Diego but I am waiting for a crash in prices.” I have heard this exact same phrase from many potential buyers over the last 10 years. But I am not sure that is the best strategy.

The downturn of 2007 was a perfect storm of a recession hitting after many years of easy money mortgages. It was the federal government actually that decided in the late 1990s that everybody, regardless of credit, deserves to own a property. While this was a noble goal, it was a recipe for an economic disaster. This government objective was the catalyst of the real estate bubble over the long-term. The vast number of mortgages issued over the last 10 years were granted to credit-worthy home owners. Thus we are unlikely to see a severe drop in home prices anytime soon. Also factor in the high demand for San Diego real estate from the thousands of tech workers pouring into this county as well as thousands of international buyers that arrive here annually. Also keep in mind that San Diego is landlocked, bordered by Camp Pendleton, the Pacific Ocean, Mexico to the south, and the Anza-Borrego desert to the east. The supply of buildable land is fixed and the demand for local housing continues to increase. Another interesting issue is that compared to coastal Los Angeles, San Jose, and San Francisco, San Diego home prices are still significantly discounted! There is no doubt in my mind that San Diego home prices will continue to trend up over the long-term based on very strong demand and a lack of meaningful new construction. Thus when is the best time to buy San Diego real estate? I would say right now! Mortgage rates are back to all-time lows. It will just take a small leap of faith by a buyer to jump into this market.

Last I recently ran into an old buyer of mine who purchased a Santee property five years ago in the mid-300s. She told me it is now worth close to $500,000 and buying that property was one of the best decisions her family made. If you are a buyer, call me for a free, no obligation meet-up to look at what you could afford and various location options. In the long-term, I strongly believe it will be one of the best decisions you will ever make.

Precise house descriptions by Sarah Ward

The U.S. Federal Reserve lowered the benchmark interest rate for the first time in a decade, resulting in mortgage rates dropping and approaching historically low levels not seen since 2016. Although consumer confidence in housing is increasing, lack of affordable inventory continues to distress first-time homebuyers and limit increases in new sales. For the 12-month period through August 2019, single-family home prices increased 2.4% to $645,000. Condominium-townhomes also increased 2% to $425,000. Market-wide, inventory levels were down 17%. There continues to be a serious housing shortage in San Diego and with the lack of new construction, that scenario is expected to only worsen. Prices over the long-term are highly likely to increase.

92115 OVERVIEW

The number of closed sales year-to-date has stayed steady at 259 closed sales from 255 last year at this time. The College Area median family median home price increased 4.3% year-over-year to an even $600,000. Going forward, I would expect a flat median home price over the short-term and, as I said above, a steadily increasing home price over the long-term.

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