By JEFF CLEMETSON | Mission Times Courier

On Jan. 22, candidates for the District 7 City Council seat sat down at Cubberley Elementary School for a forum hosted by the Serra Mesa Community Council and moderated by the League of Women Voters. The candidates introduced themselves before taking a series of questions from the audience.

Wendy Wheatcroft introduced herself as a teacher, a leader in the gun violence prevention movement and a lifelong San Diego native. “I have been a champion for children and families my entire life and I plan to continue to do that as your council member,” she said.

Raul Campillo said he went to high school in Linda Vista before attending Harvard for his bachelor’s and law degree. He also earned a master’s in Education and taught fifth grade. He is currently a deputy city attorney in San Diego, working as a prosecutor in the criminal division. “I’m bringing to this race the expertise that comes with facing those core issues — issues of homelessness, housing affordability, transportation, access to jobs. Those are things I understand the causes of, the root problems and how City Council can actually affect them,” he said.

Monty McIntyre said he is joining the race to give back to the community and offer “adult supervision” to a broken City Hall. The civil attorney touted his skills as a mediator that has resolved disputes for over 20 years and promised to take a pay cut if elected.

Alvarado realignment plan sees progress

By JEFF CLEMETSON | Mission Times Courier

A long-awaited project to ease traffic congestion and flooding issues in Grantville is making progress.

On Feb. 12, representatives from the city’s planning department and Dokken Engineering presented to the Navajo Community Planners (NCPI) an update to the plan to realign Alvarado Canyon Road.

Mark Tarrell, a project manager for Dokken Engineering, said the project to address traffic issues at the Alvarado Canyon to Mission Gorge Road and Fairmont Avenue intersection (Photo by Jeff Clemetson)
San Carlos student hopes to bring ‘Clarity’ to Mars

By JOYELL NEVINS | Mission Times Courier

More than 28,000 entries. 155 semifinalists. Nine finalists chosen in the National Aeronautics and Space Administration’s (NASA) international contest – and San Carlos’s Nora Benitez is one of those finalists.

Benitez is an eighth grader at St. Therese Academy. Her essay was featured on the online ballot for NASA’s “Name the Rover” competition this past month.

The Mars Rover will be launched from the Kennedy Space Center in July. It is the third robot NASA is sending to the planet Mars, but the first machine that will be designed to seek out “biosignatures,” or indications of ancient life. It will collect and store, or “cache,” samples from rock. A second mission will be sent in the undetermined future to retrieve the Mars samples and bring them back to NASA’s laboratories on Earth.

“Mars 2020 is a pivotal mission in our search for life and could finally answer the age-old question, ‘Are we alone?’” said Thomas Zurbuchen, NASA associate administrator science mission directorate.

But while the mission has a clear goal and timeline, it still doesn’t have a name.

GETTING ‘CLARITY’

Fourteen-year-old Benitez shared that she has taken a liking to space since she was young, garnered from her mom’s interests and her dad taking her to the laboratory. But that casual interest soared after a recent visit to NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California.

“My love and interest grew astronomically after going to the laboratory,” Benitez quipped.

That particular lab is where the car-sized robot was built. During her tour, Benitez saw the Rover in progress in the “clean room.”

One of the tour guides noticed her curiosity and mentioned the contest: NASA was collecting essay entries choosing one-word names for the robot.

“I immediately started creating an essay in my head, going through names,” Benitez said.

She chose “clarity” after learning about the 23 different cameras the rover had, and the fact that it was launching in 2020.

“I figured that the people who designed the cameras would have wanted them, in comparison to a human eye, to have 20/20, or perfect vision,” Benitez explained. “I used 20/20 vision as a spinoff of the year 2020.”

In her essay entry, Benitez noted that “Clarity, when defined, means the quality of being easy to see or view, as with an image or vision. The Mars 2020 Rover, given its twenty-three cameras; nine for engineering, seven for scientific purposes, and seven for entry, landing, and descent, will help the people working on Earth get an amazingly clear view of Mars ... we will be able to visualize Mars with complete clarity.”

Her description was one of more than 28,000 essay submissions from K-12 students nationwide. Thousands of volunteer judges whittled the pool down to 155 semifinalists, and then again to nine choices. Aside from clarity, the other finalists were Endurance, Promise, Tenacity, Perseverance, Vision, Courage, Ingenuity, and Fortitude.

“I was so excited and shocked,” Benitez recalled when she learned hers made the Top 9. “I was jumping up and down! I didn’t think I would make it this far in the contest, but I am really grateful for this amazing opportunity.”

Each name and essay was posted online, where anyone could read and vote on the winner.

772,237 votes were cast from all over the world — you can see a breakdown online of exactly how many votes came from each country in NASA’s public poll participation map. The number of votes per country ranged from one person to 24,664 votes, with the latter number being from Turkey. The United States itself provided more than 500,000 votes.

WHAT’S NEXT

Now, all Benitez can do is wait. NASA’s site explained it would “take into consideration” the poll results and will announce the essay winner in early March.

The winning essay will be published permanently on NASA’s website, and the winning student will be invited to see the spacecraft launch in July from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Florida.

Either way, Benitez still has her sights set on working for those engineers one day.

“I would definitely love to work at NASA as an aerospace engineer or an astronaut,” Benitez declared. “I love learning about space, the galaxies, and the solar system, so working at NASA is my dream job!”

Even though the poll is closed, all nine essays are still available for perusal at go.nasa.gov/37dgUBS. There are also links to a Mars Rover timeline, facts, and where the robot is now.

—Freelance writer Joyell Nevins can be reached at joyellc@gmail.com. You can also follow her blog Small World. Big God at swbyblog.wordpress.com.
New ranger station opens at Mission Trails

After just a little over a year and a half of construction, the red ribbon was cut on the new 3,000-square-foot ranger station for the East Fortuna Slaging Area in Mission trails Regional Park (MTRP).

The addition of the station serves as the conclusion of the East Fortuna Slaging Area developments which began in 2004. The original developments included parking spaces for 47 cars and 15 horse trailers, 1.2 picnic sites and four horse corrals.

While those original developments benefited the Mission Trails community, they worked in very crowded trailers or offices in the visitor center. This new station solves that problem by adding office spaces for the 13 rangers that currently work at Mission Trails.

The new ranger station project totals a $6,638,550 investment — $367,540 from the Mission Trails Regional Park Antenna Fund; $4,071,030 from the city’s Environmental Growth Fund; and a $1.5 million donation from the Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation.

Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation, MTRP Taskforce Chairmen and City Councilman Scott Sherman and MTRP Committee member and Councilmember Jen Campbell officially opened a new 5,000-square-foot state-of-the-art ranger station at MTRP. This important park investment will give rangers improved resources and facilities to better protect the park and engage with park visitors.

In addition to the new ranger station, public artwork by acclaimed local artist Roman de Salvo was unveiled. The artwork, “Fountain Mountain,” consists of a large boulder with trail-like channels carved into its surface. A functioning drinking fountain fixture rises out of the highest point of the boulder, and water flows through the array of tiny trails in serpentine paths down the slopes of the boulder. The artwork is inspired by the many trails at MTRP.

Mission Trails Regional Park has a special place in my heart. As a native San Diegan, Mission Trails was basically my backyard and playground even before it became an official park,” said Councilmember Scott Sherman. “I am glad we have invested in improving public safety for this important regional treasure.”

“Mission Trails Regional Park has been inspiring visitors since before it opened in 1974. To add a piece like ‘Fountain Mountain’ to this new ranger station will help ensure that same inspiration is passed on to future generations,” said Councilmember Campbell.

“Investing in a new facility for rangers and installing art that is beautiful and functional, will undoubtedly have a profound impact and enhance the experience for all our park visitors,” said County Supervisor and MTRP Committee member Kristin Gaspar.

MTRP is a jewel in the San Diego region and is one of the largest urban parks in the country consisting of more than 8,000 acres over 11 square miles. MTRP has more than 60 miles of hiking, mountain biking, and equestrian trails, a rock-climbing area, a stunning 14,000-square-foot Visitor and Interpretive Center, and the Kumeyaay Lake Campground.

Urban Development Secretary Dr. Ben Carson at the recently opened Stella affordable housing complex in Granville to discuss San Diego’s efforts to reduce barriers to construction and spur development of affordable housing.

The meeting, which came at the request of HUD, is part of Secretary Carson’s “Driving Affordable Housing Across America” bus tour. Following a tour of the recently opened Stella affordable housing complex, which is managed by Affirmed Housing, a local developer of affordable housing, Mayor Faulconer and Secretary Carson hosted a roundtable with community leaders about reducing regulatory barriers to affordable housing and innovative ways the city is working to increase the area’s housing supply.

“The City of San Diego continues to implement the most forward-thinking housing reforms in California as we do our part to address the statewide housing crisis,” Mayor Faulconer said. “Projects like Stella are the culmination of those efforts to lower costs and speed up the construction of more affordable housing. We’re excited to share our progress with Secretary Carson and how we plan to take our efforts to the next level this year.”

Projects like the Stella and Bluewater complexes in Granville have been fast-tracked due to the city’s push to update community plans and streamline project reviews for affordable housing. The Granville Amendment was approved in 2015 and since then over 1,000 units have opened with another thousand in various stages of planning and construction.

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27 Ways to Drive Up the Sales Price of Your Home

San Diego - Because your home may well be your largest asset, selling it is probably one of the most important decisions you will make in your life, and once you have made the decision, you’ll want to sell your home for the highest price in the shortest time possible without compromising your sanity. Before you place your home on the market, here’s a way to help you to be as prepared as possible.

To assist homeowners, a new industry report has just been released called “27 Valuable Tips That You Should Know to Get Your Home Sold Fast and for Top Dollar.” It tackles the important issues you need to know to make your home competitive in today’s tough, aggressive marketplace.

Through these 27 tips you will discover how to protect and capitalize on your most important investment, reduce stress, be in control of your situation, and make the best profit possible.

In this report you’ll discover how to avoid financial disappointment or worse, a financial disaster when selling your home. Using a common-sense approach, you will get straight facts about what can make or break the sale of your home.

You owe it to yourself to learn how these important tips will give you the competitive edge to get your home sold fast and for the most amount of money.

To hear a brief recorded message about how to order your FREE copy of this report, call toll-free 1-800-270-1494 and enter 1023. You can call anytime, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Get your free special report NOW.
No one is immune
Del Cerro author’s book details drug abuse in law, medicine, tech

By KENDRA SITTON | Mission Times Courier contribute editor

Mission Times Courier contributing editor Kendra Sitton recently spoke with Elenee Zimmerman about her new book "Smacked: A Story of White-Collar Ambition, Addiction, and Tragedy." Zimmerman tells the story of finding her ex-husband Peter dead on his bathroom floor in Del Mar in 2015 and discovering he was a drug user. He was a senior partner at Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati. The memoir also includes the research she did following his death about the prevalence of substance abuse in competitive industries, including law, technology and medicine. Zimmerman lived in Del Cerro at the time of Peter’s death in 2015.

Zimmerman was in San Diego from Feb. 11-13 to discuss the launch of her book, published by Random House, which is one of the most anticipated books of 2020. The following conversation has been shortened and lightly edited.

Even though he is your ex-husband, his story is still something that’s very personal. Why was it important for you to share it publicly in this way?

It started with the story I wrote for the New York Times about his death. When he died, it was so shocking… he was addicted intravenously to opioids and cocaine. It was such a shock to me when I learned that even though I saw all the signs for a year, I didn’t recognize them because of who he was, his career, his wealth.

When the medical examiner was at his house, I just said to her, “this can’t be.” And she said, “Actually, we see a lot of this now.”

The journalist in me thought there’s a story here, but I can’t explore it right now. As I was going through a probate, I wanted to figure out how this happened and we didn’t see it and couldn’t save him.

I did more and more research, and I realized that there was a substance-abuse problem in law. So, I decided that after probate was done, I would write about it for the Times so that I could start a conversation about it that wasn’t happening. It felt like the only way to make meaning out of something that did not make sense — how could this guy with all this potential and all these resources to get help die right in front of us? I published the story thinking it would just be a way to start a conversation and get an enormous amount of traction. After that, I realized there’s something worth talking about here and maybe there’s a conversation that could expand to an even wider audience or in a deeper way. I decided to write the book to continue the conversation.

I think it’s easy when someone dies of a drug overdose or something related to the opioid crisis to just think, “well, it’s another overdose, that’s another death.” We don’t think about how each death affects a whole web of people and communities connected to that person. This was a way to show how this death impacted my life and my family, and also do some research into white collar, substance use and abuse. I went beyond law to talk about finance and medicine and technology.

I felt like it was a way to serve the greater good and have meaningful out of Peter’s death.

How was writing this a part of your grieving process?

I didn’t realize I needed to grieve. I was so angry at Peter for abandoning us for what felt like a very selfish thing. Through the process of writing it, I got a much fuller understanding of what was going on. I developed a lot of compassion for him. Then trying to understand the things that were going on in his life from his childhood and our marriage that probably played into his predisposition to addiction. Then why he was seeking relief from his depression or anxiety or the chronic work stress.

It really helped that anger to subside and it let me feel more guilty. And I did. I felt really, really sad at a lot of points [while writing]. It was very cathartic and sad, but I think good.

When you extended from law to technology and medicine and other white-collar areas, what research shocked you?

The part of the research that shocked me the most was there were so many professionals that are very well educated and very successful professionally and financially that felt like they had [their drug problem] and they felt like they had very good reasons for what they were doing. So it echoed, I am sure, what went through Peter’s mind because he’d been a chemist before he became a lawyer.

I had a doctor say that he does himself occasionally with fentanyl and he uses opioids occasionally. And I said to him, “how do you ethically justify this to yourself when you’re treating patients?” And he said, “I’m a doctor, like I know how to dose.” It was the same thing with lawyers: “I can take 10 milligrams of [Adderall], and it’s fine. It gets me through writing a brief or this long trial.”

Everybody has their reasons for micro-dosing LSD or using Adderall or Modafinil and cocaine — to help them be more productive at work, stay up longer, do more. What I kept hearing from people was that they felt that we, as human beings, are not engineered to be in front of a computer for 10 to 12 hours and this was the hack. This was the only way that they could continue to do the same thing with people because I expected people to be escaping from depression or anxiety or difficult relationships. I hadn’t fully accepted that they were using it to stay competitive.

It sounds like the very work culture itself is the cause and all these overdoses are the effect of having this very dehumanizing workplace.

There are many reasons why people use and abuse chemicals and different substances but I think that one is part of the problem for sure. It’s a very competitive world we live in. Sometimes big corporate workplaces or law firms and big law can be pretty dehumanizing and you become a double-hours machine, and that’s really tough.

What did your writing and research process look like?

[Research] was a combination of electronic forums, traveling around and interviewing people in rehabs, and then talking to people on the phone.

I tried to write some of the chapters that were more memoir — so what was happening to my family, as Peter was unraveling and we were not understanding what was going on, even though in hindsight it’s so clear. Those, I didn’t need too much research for so I could write a lot of that. But then when I got to the chapters that were more heavily reported, along with some memoir, I had to wait — and then when I had my research, I put everything together.

What are you hoping to achieve?

I’m hoping the book is able to continue a conversation I think started with the New York Times story. I know it’s had an effect in the legal profession. They have much more awareness now of attorney mental health and substance use problems. Everybody seems to know the lawyer that drinks too much, but they don’t think there was much awareness of lawyers that use pills and other substances.

I’m hoping it widens the conversation too, so that we have people in workplaces all across the country, more concerned about their employees’ mental health [and drug use]. I’m hoping other families like mine will recognize signs that one of their own is struggling and can intervene to try to help before it’s too late. It’s a way to really build awareness that the opioid crisis is everywhere so that someone struggling with addiction looks like all of us. I think that’s a really important thing for people to be aware of, especially in the workplace, but families across the country that think they’re immune from this, this story is a way to say you’re not, and it could be happening right in front of you, and you just don’t see it.

— Contributing editor Kendra Sitton can be reached at kendrasi@sdnews.com.
floating at the triple box culvert under Fairmont Avenue is currently in the scoping phase.

“So I think we have to have a preferred alternative during this phase, but rather identify a range of alternatives to be studied,” he said.

Darwin Cruz, a senior engineer at Dokken, presented four alternatives currently being studied.

The first alternative is a “no build” alternative which would maintain the existing road network around Mission Gorge Road, Alvarado Canyon Road and Fairmont Avenue, although he said that this alternative is only being studied to use as a baseline for how the other alternatives would perform at improving traffic and flooding issues.

The other three alternatives would all address flooding by replacing the existing triple-box culvert under Fairmont Avenue with a 15- by 8-foot culvert that would allow more water to flow. All the build out plans also include improvements to sidewalks and bike lanes.

In the “cul-de-sac alternative,” the existing connection between Alvarado Canyon Road and the west-bound I-8 off-ramp would be eliminated by building a cul-de-sac where drivers currently can make an immediate right onto Alvarado Canyon Road. This plan would also include widening Fairmont Avenue from four lanes to six lanes and also widen the Fairmont north segment adjacent to Home Depot.

“One of the key features for this alternative is the new bridge that would be required to cross Alvarado Creek and that would support the realigned street,” Cruz said. He added that one of the challenges for this plan is that the bridge and realigned road would require “right of way” impacts on private properties in the area.

The third build out plan is the “connector road alternative,” which proposes a new roadway connection between Alvarado Canyon Road and Mission Gorge Place in combination with building the cul-de-sac at the end of Alvarado Canyon Road. Cruz said this plan addresses potential impacts to Grantville Station as well as commercial businesses and properties. The plan also widens Fairmont to six lanes, and in addition would also widen Mission Gorge Road up to Mission Gorge Place. This plan would also require “significant” right of way impacts in the area. A bridge would also be built to cross Alvarado Creek.

In answering questions by the NCPI board, the Dokken team said the proposed plans won’t impact existing plans to build housing at the Grantville Trolley Station and would also adhere to the Alvarado Creek Revitalization Study which addresses flooding near the trolley station and is seen as an important step in opening the Grantville area up to major housing developments.

“We have two issues, which are traffic and drainage, so the more it’s coordinated I think it is going to be better for the entire area,” said NCPI board member John LaRaia. “And you understand the focus of this is the state has pushed it’s coordinated I think it is going to be better for the entire area.”

Tarrall said that Dokken and the city is on track to complete the scoping phase and have a completed study report for all the alternatives by this summer.

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

News Briefs

“San Diego exemplifies the progress that can be made with communication and the realization of common goals across all levels of government,” Secretary Carson said. “As we continue to shred excessive regulatory barriers, like we did here today, we will increase the affordable housing stock for residents of San Diego and the surrounding areas.”

The Grantville event was also a platform for Mayor Faulconer to discuss his Complete Communities initiative designed to take the four pillars of a neighborhood — infrastructure, parks, transportation and homes — and combine them into one comprehensive vision to deliver everything a neighborhood needs to be complete. The plan will go before Council this spring.

NAVAJO PLANNERS ELECTION IN MARCH

The Navajo Community Planners, Inc. (NCPI) will hold its annual elections at its March 11 meeting.

Business Spotlight

Since 1979 Regency Travel has dedicated itself to meeting all of your travel needs, before, during, and after your trip. We have an unbeatable combination of firsthand experience, education, and ongoing training which we use to find the best vacation to match your exact needs. Our team will save you both time and money, and often get extra perks not available from online bookings. Whether it is ocean or river cruises, destination weddings or multi-generations trips we will provide five-star service. We appreciate you have the choice of many different travel agencies, but at Regency Travel our exceptional customer service ensures your travel needs are always met.

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Mission Valley’s Newest Resort Hotel!
Primary election analysis at next Dem meeting

There are also very important congressional outcomes to examine, including our two local races, the 53rd Congressional District and the oh-so-contentious 50th in East County. Who will end up being Ammar Campa-Najjar’s November opponent? We also have many local races of interest: the county supervisorial contests; the countywide measures A and B, which deal with building in the backcountry; the

Republican work to build enthusiasm as election nears

By PAT BOENER

In President Trump’s recent State of the Union address, he articulated many of the accomplishments of his administration which have improved the quality of life for every American. Record low unemployment, passage of the UAMCA trade deal, increased wages, reduction of taxes for the middle class, the killing of Islamic State group leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and 187 confirmed federal judicial appointments are some of the highlights of Trump’s first term. We couldn’t be prouder of our president.

Now that the impeachment hoax is over, it is time to turn our focus on the March primary and November’s general election. Mail ballots have been delivered and early voting has begun. This is the time to do your research and make decisions that will reflect your conservative values. We must stop the march toward socialism.

Of course, we all want quality medical treatment available to everyone, but turning it over to the federal government and abolishing all private insurance companies would be a disaster. Based on data from countries that use single payer, there would not be enough doctors, hospital beds or money to provide free health care for all. Think about this when you listen to the presidential candidates that are trying to sell the idea of single payer to the American voters. Trump would never support the idea of government-controlled health care.

You are welcome and encouraged to attend the Monday, March 9, meeting of the Republican Women of California San Diego County. After a short business meeting, Gene Ho, personal photographer to Donald Trump during the 2016 presidential election, will be the speaker and share his anecdotes and insights. Lunch is included in the cost of $35. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Legacy Resort Hotel and Spa, 875 Hotel Circle South, San Diego. RSVP by Tuesday March 3 to nelamar@cox.net.

Please join Republican Women of California–Navajo Canyon at the La Mesa Briggantine, on Tuesday, March 10. Tia Quick, from the San Diego District Attorney’s Office, will be our featured speaker with the very interesting topic of “When Money Talks. Criminals Walk... How Politics Impacts Criminal Reform.”

Check-in begins at 10:30 a.m. for the 11 a.m. meeting. A full-course lunch is served for a cost of $25. Reservations are absolutely required as space is limited. Table and chair reservations are accepted, but no credit cards. Please RSVP to RSVPwrcnc@gmail.com or call Marjie at 619-990-2791 for questions or to confirm your reservation.

For more information on our activities, please visit our website at rwcNavajoCanyon.org and check out our Facebook at Republican Women of California–Navajo Canyon.

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

POLITICS

Let’s rebuild America

CA $3 BULLETIN

By REP. SUSAN DAVIS

As Southern Californians, we spend an inordinate amount of time in our cars and on the road. Bad, congested roads can mean delays and auto repairs. And repairs mean money — a lot of it.

San Diego has been known for having some worst roads in America, but we have made some improvements. In 2015, we ranked 50th in the country in poor road conditions. It wasn’t until 2018 that San Diego dropped out of the top 20 in cities with bad roads.

This progress is certainly good news. The $760 billion infrastructure proposal recently unveiled by House Democrats, called Moving Forward, provides a chance for regions like ours to build on those improvements and ensures a transportation system that is green, affordable, reliable, efficient, and provides access to jobs.

As it addresses our nation’s most urgent infrastructure needs, this bold proposal will create 10 million good-paying jobs, take important steps to address climate change, improve safety, and spur economic activity.

Equally important, this focused infrastructure proposal gives communities a greater say in how these funds are used to rebuild their neighborhoods.

Current laws play a large role in determining how federal transportation funds are used. Under the new plan, cities will get a seat at the table, allowing them to direct the dollars where there is the greatest need in their communities.

Let’s take a look at this ambitious proposal and what it can mean for San Diego.

Modern highway and safety investments will see a 21% increase that prioritizes fixing roads and bridges through long-term and sustainable funding.

We must support the American Road and Transportation Builders Association, San Diego has 200 bridges that need replacement, rehabil-

Let’s rebuild America

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

OPINIONS/LETTERS: Mission Times Courier encourages letters to the editor and guest editorsials. Please email submissions to jeff@sdnews.com and include your phone number and address for verification. We reserve the right to edit letters for brevity and accuracy. Letters and guest editorials do not necessarily reflect the views of the publisher or staff.

SUBMISSIONS/NEWS TIPS: Send press releas-

eds, tips, photos or story ideas to jeff@sdnews.com. For breaking news and investigative story ideas contact the editor by phone or email.

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**Politics**

**Practice your right to vote**

**District 7 Dispatch**

By Scott Sherman

As a proud son of a 101st Airborne Army veteran, I know first-hand the sacrifices military men and women make to protect our God-given rights. Many have sacrificed their lives in battle so that we may have a say in how our government should be run.

To honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice, San Diegans have an opportunity to thank and support our 15,000+ military members voting in the upcoming primary election on Tuesday, March 3.

If you are a permanent absentee mail voter, your ballot must be postmarked on or before election day and it must be received no later than the Friday after election day. Absentee voters can also drop off their ballots at a series of locations around the city or at the Registrar of Voters office anytime Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. A list of locations can be found on the Registrar of Voters website at sdivote.com.

For day-of voters, please also visit sdivote.com to locate your polling station.

In order for our form of government to work, a government that is elected by its citizens can only be effective if we take part in the process.

With a government that affects many parts of our lives — from schools, to health care, to homeland security, voting is a sacred and vital right that we must take seriously.

By voting on March 3, you can make yourself heard on how our government should operate. I hope you will join me in taking part in this special right that many heroes have died protecting.

—San Diego City Council member Scott Sherman represents the District 7 neighborhoods of Linda Vista, Mission Valley, Granville, Allied Gardens, Del Cerro and San Carlos.

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**News from your County Supervisor**

**Dianne’s Corner**

By Dianne Jacob

Tackling homelessness: The Board of Supervisors recently joined me in approving a wide range of short- and long-term measures aimed at addressing homelessness in our unincorporated communities.

These steps include moving to expand a new homeless outreach team, offering more motel/hotel room vouchers and seeking land for permanent, supportive housing and emergency shelters that would offer health services.

Recent encampments at Lamar Park in Spring Valley, Lakeside and in other outlying communities have underscored the need to address chronic homelessness in these areas.

Many of these without homes have serious and chronic needs, and are stuck in a cycle of homelessness, addiction, medical emergencies and incarceration.

Helping them break free of that cycle is tough. It requires more than quick fixes. What we need is a comprehensive approach that offers a continuum of care.

The recent board vote opens the door to doing exactly that.

Our great outdoors: Park and recreation opportunities in East County just keep getting better and better.

Thanks in part to funds provided by the county, Santee recently expanded Mast Park to include more parking and improved bathrooms and playgrounds. Congratulations to Mayor John Minto and all the folks in Santee.

Meanwhile, park improvements are also underway in Linda Lake in Lakeside, Estrella Park in Casa de Oro and in other unincorporated communities.

Stay in touch: Have questions, suggestions or feedback about your county government? Call me at 619-531-5522 or email me at dianne.jacob@sdcounty.ca.gov.

We want to hear about improvements underway in your unincorporated community! Come by one of my revitalization meetings.

For locations and dates of these important meetings, go to www.diannejacob.com.

—Dianne Jacob is chair of the San Diego County Board of Supervisors and represents District 2.

**San Diego City Council race in District 7**

San Diego City Council race in District 7, which affects many of our club members; the mayor’s race in San Diego with club favorites Barbara Bry and Todd Gloria who are going toe to toe; and San Diego city attorney, which pits incumbent Mara Elliott against Cory Briggs, among others. There are a host of state Assembly races, offering more motel/hotel room vouchers and seeking land for permanent, supportive housing and emergency shelters that would offer health services.

Recent encampments at Lamar Park in Spring Valley, Lakeside and in other outlying communities have underscored the need to address chronic homelessness in these areas.

Many of these without homes have serious and chronic needs, and are stuck in a cycle of homelessness, addiction, medical emergencies and incarceration.

Helping them break free of that cycle is tough. It requires more than quick fixes. What we need is a comprehensive approach that offers a continuum of care. The recent board vote opens the door to doing exactly that.

Our great outdoors: Park and recreation opportunities in East County just keep getting better and better.

Thanks in part to funds provided by the county, Santee recently expanded Mast Park to include more parking and improved bathrooms and playgrounds. Congratulations to Mayor John Minto and all the folks in Santee.

Meanwhile, park improvements are also underway in Linda Lake in Lakeside, Estrella Park in Casa de Oro and in other unincorporated communities.

Stay in touch: Have questions, suggestions or feedback about your county government? Call me at 619-531-5522 or email me at dianne.jacob@sdcounty.ca.gov.

We want to hear about improvements underway in your unincorporated community! Come by one of my revitalization meetings.

For locations and dates of these important meetings, go to www.diannejacob.com.

—Dianne Jacob is chair of the San Diego County Board of Supervisors and represents District 2.

**Tackling homelessness**

The Board of Supervisors recently joined me in approving a wide range of short- and long-term measures aimed at addressing homelessness in our unincorporated communities.

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District 2 County Supervisor candidate forum

By JEFF CLEMETSON | Mission Times Courier

On Jan. 29, the Grossmont-Mount Helix Improvement Association (GMIAs) held a forum for candidates running for the District 2 County Board of Supervisors seat. The forum, held at Murdock Elementary School in La Mesa, was moderated by the League of Women Voters.

“The role of county supervisor is critical to our unincorporated region,” GMA President Kathleen Hedberg said, adding that with no city council, unincorporated areas like parts of La Mesa and Spring Valley are governed by the Board of Supervisors, “which may have a very tremendous impact on our area.”

In his introduction, District 2 candidate and current Poway Mayor Steve Vaus touted that his city is consistently the safest in the county and his “conservative fiscal approach to everything we do.”

“I think it’s a great blueprint for the rest of District 2,” he said and added that he is endorsed by current District 2 Supervisor Dianne Jacob, who is leaving the seat after 28 years due to new term limit rules.

Kenya Taylor is a licensed marriage and family therapist running for the seat. She said her professional experience gives her the experience to monitor the county’s health and mental health in East County.

Former state Senator Joel Anderson also expressed disappointment with the county—specifically its homeless problem, roads.

“All these problems have grown and grown, yet 51 years ago, we sent a man to the moon with a slide rule. Today, we have high-speed computers and we can’t find any political courage to get things done correctly,” he said. Anderson touted his record of working with Democrats in the state Senate while retaining a conservative voting record.

The audience-generated questions mostly dealt with housing and development and issues of dealing with homelessness and mental health in East County.

Joel Anderson

All the candidates said they would protect rural and open spaces in District 2, while promoting new housing developments.

Vaus pointed to Poway’s recent construction of housing in its downtown area. “At the same time that we approved those 200 homes, we’ve expanded our open space by 342 acres,” he added. Vaus also said that building affordable units doesn’t have to diminish a city’s character and that low-income housing in Poway hasn’t caused higher crime.

Answering a question about campaign contributions from developers, Vaus stated that owning a home is a piece of the American dream. “That’s only possible thanks to builders,” he said, adding that he doesn’t have a litmus test for who can contribute to his campaign and that no one can buy his vote for a campaign contribution.

Anderson also said he takes contributions from developers but his voting record shows he has voted for and against their interests.

“I remember one time somebody else asked this and I said, ‘Well if you think I can be bought, then why haven’t you donated to me?’” he said.

Anderson said low-income, high-density projects “make zero sense” in backcountry. In Sacramento, he said, he worked on bill to lower cost and streamline approval process to build density projects within a half mile of public transportation.

“SB 35 provided high-density, low-income [housing] near trolley stations,” he said. “[Housing] takes planning and sticking to the plan, but the plan keeps changing [and that is] the problem.”

Taylor, who said she does not take campaign contributions from developers, said she supports a “housing first” approach for lack of affordable housing.

“But it is important for us to remember that everyone doesn’t make less than $30,000 a year or less than $10,000 a year,” she added. “We need to make sure we have a plan for the middle class.”

She said she is against development sprawling into the backcountry because “we need to make sure we’re not the next Paradise, California.”

She suggested that city council, unincorporated areas like parts of La Mesa and Spring Valley should be a solution to adding housing in East County without taking away open space.

Taylor said housing problems stem from mandates coming from Sacramento that “make no sense for those of us that live in the backcountry.”

He said he feared the state will remake all neighborhoods to be more dense and decry affordable housing as “a way for people to look to government to solve the problem.”

“I don’t think every taxpayer wants to be paying every nickel and extra dollars to accommodate all the wishes and pleasures of people that need affordable housing,” she said. He suggested less regulations to lower cost of housing.

All the candidates supported developing around Gillespie Field to spur economic activity in the region.

Brian Sesko (Photos by Jeff Clemetson)

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HOMELESSNESS AND MENTAL HEALTH

While all the candidates acknowledged a growing homelessness problem in East County, they differed on solutions.

“One thing that we can do quickly is give the sheriff the tools so he can start arresting these people, getting them into housing to get them off our streets, to get them out of our parks,” Sesko said. He suggested public housing can be done easily by building military-like housing with lots and storage.

Taylor said her experience as a therapist has taught her that “everyone who is homeless doesn’t have mental health issues,” and stressed that economic issues are a primary factor that impacts mental health and wellness.

She said she would work to expand programs like vouchers for hotels and motels for the recently homeless and added that “housing in jail should not be tolerated. I disagree with that. People deserve dignity and respect.”

Vaus and said people have a right to clean and safe streets and parks, but at the same time, there is a “moral obligation” to help people who are struggling. The county increasing short-term housing vouchers and the homeless assistance HART program are “big steps in right direction but we need a lot more big steps,” he said.
Anderson touted a bill he helped work on in the Senate to bring state funding to address homelessness in San Diego County. “It was a pilot program and the county chose not to use that money,” he said. “We need that mental health money to triage the homeless.”

Anderson acknowledged that not all homeless are mentally ill, “but we’ve all seen people talking to themselves. We know that’s a big portion.” He said it is important to not “warehouse these people, but address their issues.”

He said there are only 100 beds for mental health patients in a county of 3.5 million people and that he would expand beds by working with Supervisor Nathan Fletcher to fix problem. A question on ambulance response times in East County brought a mix of responses. Sesko and Vaus said the county should find funding for more ambulances. Anderson said that more ambulances are only part of the solution.

“We can get more money for ambulances, but if we don’t preserve our roads, we’re wasting our time. They go hand in hand,” he said.

Taylor said the county needs to invest in programs that bring health care to the backcountry. “People shouldn’t have to just go to the hospital by ambulance,” she said. “We should have opportunities where we’re invested in apprenticeship programs, so when people are interested in going into EMT or other helping professions, we have resources that are there to protect the back country and use prevention and early intervention.”

**JOBS AND TRANSPORTATION**

Other questions issues raised at the forum included jobs and the state Route 94/125 interchange. On jobs, Anderson pointed to the 70 acres around Gillespie Field as “ripe for good jobs.” Vaus also said infill areas are a good place to look for economic development opportunities.

Taylor said she would push to bring apprenticeship programs back to schools, ease regulations for entrepreneurs and promote jobs for veterans. Sesko said the problem with jobs is lack of work ethic among workers, that he and his friends can’t find people to “actually show up and work.”

“I use GoStaff when I need somebody to come out and help,” he said. “I love those guys because they come out and they’re willing to work for minimum wage.”

The night’s biggest back and forth came following a question about the 94/125 interchange. Vaus blamed the delayed project on the state. Taylor said she would push to bring apprenticeship programs back to schools, ease regulations for entrepreneurs and promote jobs for veterans.

Anderson countered that it is SANDAG’s fault for taking $120 million in bond money for roads and using it for the trolley system. Sesko blamed SANDAG’s bloated overhead. “One of the ways we can fund some of these roads is do a little investigation as to how come so many people are getting so much money at the top of the food chain out there,” he said.

Taylor stressed urgency to fix the “nightmare” roads in District 2. “It’s important regarding the discussion about transportation to include the East County now – not later, now,” she said.

All four candidates will be on the ballot for the March 3 primary. The top two candidates with the most votes will compete for the seat in the November election.

—Reach editor Jeff Clemetson at jeff@sdnews.com.
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“I’m doing this for public service, to give back at the end of my career,” he said.

Local businessman Noli Zosa said he is running because he loves serving the community as demonstrated by the 17 different boards and commissions with the city he serves, such as the District 7 Parks and Recreation board and serving as chair of the Linda Vista Planning Group. He also touted his bipartisan support from people like Father Joe, Mayor Faulconer, and civil rights leader Dr. Willie Blair. “And one person who used to be sitting at this table, with the rest of the Democratic candidates, Sharon Larios — who was also a candidate but dropped out to support me, who doesn’t agree with me politically, but she knows I serve the community.”

The first question for the candidates was on what the role should be for community planning groups (CPGs) in the city. Wheatcroft said she has attended meetings of the Navajo Planners and Mission Valley and Linda Vista planning groups. She said CPGs “should serve as an interface between the community and the city”.

Campillo said CPGs should be the first resource for City Council because they know their neighborhoods best. He added that local community plans should be updated more regularly to reflect changes in traffic and development.

McIntyre said he’s fighting for more local control — especially when it comes to new rules for development coming from the state, such as SB 50 that could allow developers to build out multi-unit housing in single-family neighborhoods.

“I’m against Sacramento telling us what to do,” he said. “We need to continue to be able to make our own decisions in San Diego. We want to listen to our community planning groups.”

Zosa said as chair of the Linda Vista Planning Group that he pushed for businesses and developers to become partners with the communities they come to.

“Because if we are going to absorb the impact of any new development or businesses that come into our communities, they owe us those dollars and those commitments to improve our communities, to invest in those community assets,” he said.

The candidates were asked about their experience in serving the homeless. Campillo shared he served at shelters and kitchens as a high school student and that as a city prosecutor, he pushes for diversion and therapy for every eligible homeless person arrested for drugs or illegal lodging because “prison doesn’t help.”

McIntyre said he has helped at shelters through his involvement in his Methodist church. During his campaign, he said, he has been learning about issues of homelessness by attending shelters Downtown and conducting interviews with housing experts like San Diego Housing Commission CEO Rick Gentry.

Zosa said he has first-hand experience serving homeless through volunteering at Father Joe’s Villages and from taking in a friend who was homeless off and on for some years.

“Each one has a story — they’re not data,” he said. “They each have a soul that needs to be listened to.”

As a teacher, Wheatcroft said she has helped organize students to help homeless and give to food banks.

“Additionally when I taught in Escondido, I had many students who were homeless, who often didn’t qualify for homeless services because they were living with family members or were couch surfing or things like that,” she said, adding that she would address the homelessness issue “head on with compassion.”

A question on the contentious issue of regulating short-term vacation rentals (STVRs) in the city brought a mix of solutions from the candidates. McIntyre said he believes the city should enforce things like noise complaints, but not stop property owners from renting their single-family homes, although he added that he was concerned about the trend to rent out apartment units as STVRs. Overall, he said, the city needs to clarify the rules.

“We have three different city attorneys and they’ve come up with three different opinions about whether short-term rentals are legal or not,” he said. “I think we need to make things more clear and make sure what we have.”

Zosa said the homeowners association he is president of doesn’t allow STVRs, that he isn’t a “big fan” of them and that they do take away housing supply in the city — although he said beach communities are a “different story” than District 7 neighborhoods.

“No one wants to live next to an Airbnb where there are people throwing parties and just keeping people up late at night,” he said.

Zosa said he has met with SDYR advocates from ShareSD to discuss “reasonable regulations.”

Wheatcroft said her recently released housing plan addresses the issue of STVRs.

“Step one in that is bringing vacant units to market,” she said. “We have almost 16,000 units being used as short-term vacation rentals and those are much-needed housing, so the city needs to be enforcing the laws they currently have or clarifying them in order to do so.”

Her plan also proposes a vacancy tax on investor-owned properties, which will penalize property managers of high rises that sit “half empty” in the city.

Campillo said the right approach to STVRs is to study successful policies in other cities and offer up some ideas for regulations.

One key to solving this problem is an enforcement mechanism for noise and nuisance issues, he said. His plan would be a permit system where property owners apply and then are responsible for those who rent their homes. The plan would include a strike system with graduating fines — $1,000 for first, $5,000 for second, and the third is $10,000 and the permit pulled.

The issue of funding bike lanes also brought a mix of responses.

Zosa said that as a member of the Mobility Board, he voted against spending $279 million on 70 miles of bike lanes.

“That is $5.5 million per mile … to put in bike lanes. It takes just over a million dollars to repave an entire street. That’s where the money should be going to,” he said.

Wheatcroft said she supports bike lanes to help implement Vision Zero, a worldwide plan to create safer sidewalks and bike lanes and added that the city needs to balance budget concerns with the need for safety.

Campillo said he supports bike lanes to help homeless and give to food banks.

Zosa said climate change is happening but meeting the climate action plan causes “concern to the cost to our everyday lives.” He said SDG&E bills are high because 45% of our energy is now expensive renewables. He said he is also concerned about taking away natural gas from the grid for people who like to cook on gas stoves.

Wheatcroft pointed to the “little steps we all can take” like getting out of cars once or twice a week or composting as ways to meet climate action goals.

Campillo said he would address issues like increased severity of flooding and fires by using San Diego River Conservancy Board water bond money to invest in water retaining canyons and rip- ered areas.

McIntyre said the city can’t help with climate issues unless the broken City Hall is fixed.

“One glaring defect in our climate action plan is that it address- es nothing with rising oceans and with all the coastline we have in San Diego, I can’t believe that,” he said.
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A fanciful pit stop in Greece

Restaurant Review

By FRANK SABATINI JR.

Tucked into a confluence of strip plazas along east Friars Road is the kind of Greek kitchen we don’t see too much of anymore. Troy’s Greek Restaurant is something of a temple to the days when finding a bowl of lemon-y avgolemono soup and other Hellenic fare was a lot easier than it is today. Much like Chinese restaurants have begun verging on extinction, these American-style Mediterranean havens have also become far and few between over the past 20 years.

Last time I visited was in 2009. Nothing has changed except the prices, which are naturally a couple notches higher. The blue-and-white color scheme still pervades throughout the expansive dining room. So do picturesque murals, plaster-cast corbels, and sturdy rattan chairs. Tables remain dressed in white linens, and carpeting joyfully absorbs the din when it’s busy.

The cuisine is unadventurous by today’s standards, but it’s well-constructed and comforting, especially when basking in the brief, fiery glow of saganaki.

As a starter, saganaki is a table-side ritual in which Greek kasseri cheese is doused in brandy tableside until crispy on the outside and melty on the inside. It’s kind of eating fondue from a cast-iron plate.

Troy’s does a fine job at saga- naki, and also shows expertise at grilling up juicy chickens bathed in lemon, oregano and olive oil — that celebrated “Greek-style.” I tasted no herbs or lemon, although the natural, soothing flavor of the pork didn’t disappoint.

My companion reveled in a combo plate abundantly loaded with moist gyros meat. The beef-lamb shavings were complemented by a mildly seasoned chicken skewer, jumbo carrot slices, rice, and pita bread. The “frosting” to these combo meals and other entrees is tzatziki sauce — that celebrated admixture of strained yogurt, cucumber and dill. In a perfect world, everything on the menu is cooked through the seared curd. It’s kind of like eating fondue from a cast-iron plate.

As a starter, saganaki is a table-side ritual in which Greek kasseri cheese is set aflame tableside until crispy on the outside and melty on the inside. It’s kind of eating fondue from a cast-iron plate. Troy’s does a fine job at saganaki, and also shows expertise at grilling up juicy chickens bathed in lemon, oregano and olive oil — the holy trinity in Greek cooking. On this recent visit, I expected service to be professional. Staffers are clad in white shirts and black slacks. In the case of our waiter, Victor, he readily answered my food questions regarding ingredient portion sizes, and the Greek wine options, which we passed up on this early-afternoon meal. He also informed us of the restaurant’s Greek buffet, held from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. every Sunday for $15. It features about 22 dishes tailored to carnivores and vegetarians alike.

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.
**News from San Carlos Library**

**Happenings at the Allied Gardens/Benjamin Library**

**By KATHRYN JOHNSON**

**Book sale:** The Friends of the Allied Gardens/Benjamin Library will be hosting their first book sale of the year on Saturday, Feb. 22, from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Be sure to stop in and stock up on gently used books at amazing prices. All proceeds support library programs and initiatives.

**The Power of Whole Food:** On Tuesday, Feb. 25, at 6 p.m., join us for a science-based, cutting-edge educational program that will teach attendees to harness the power of a whole food, plant-based lifestyle. Participants will learn about the power of whole foods to slow the aging process, improve mental clarity and mood, boost energy levels, and prevent, protect against or reverse heart disease, diabetes and cancer. We will learn simple tools and solutions — including snack and meal prep ideas — to embark on this journey. Everyone will walk away with resources to take home.

**Tax preparation:** On Mondays from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Fridays from 12:30 to 5 p.m. through April 10, volunteers from AARP will be on-site to assist with tax preparation for people 60 and better or those with low to moderate incomes. There are no appointments for this service as it is provided on a first-come, first-served basis.

**Vegan Adventures:** Are you a long-time vegan looking for new recipes or someone new to veganism and not sure where to start? All are welcome to this free, live cooking demonstration and sampling. March’s theme will be energy bars and granola. Held on Tuesday, March 10, at 6 p.m.

**Slime and non-Newtonian fluids:** On Saturday, March 14, from noon-3 p.m., middle school kids can learn about slippery, goozy, oozie slime. Did you know you could use slime to model phenomena in the cosmic world like glaciers, mudslides and quaking bogs? Prepare for slimy fun as we investigate the interplay between visual, friction, viscosity and the bag’s materials — all ther-dog's provided courtesy of Love on a Leash, a foundation for pet-provided therapy.

**Challenge Island:** Challenge Island encourages creativity, critical thinking, and social skills while instilling a love of science and engineering. On March 11, from 4:30-7:30 p.m., kids will learn about the classic book, “Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland.” They will then learn about the game croquet and build a flamingo croquet course inspired by the book. Ages 8-12. Registration required. Call 619-527-1430 to sign up.

**Slime and non-Newtonian fluids:** On Saturday, March 14, from noon-3 p.m., middle school kids can learn about slippery, goozy, oozie slime. Did you know you could use slime to model phenomena in the cosmic world like glaciers, mudslides and quaking bogs? Prepare for slimy fun as we investigate the interplay between visual, friction, viscosity and the bag’s materials — all ther-dog’s provided courtesy of Love on a Leash, a foundation for pet-provided therapy.

**Spring into STEAM:** On Tuesday, March 10, at 3 p.m., join us for “DIY Rainforest Terrariums” to learn the importance of this diverse biome, and create your very own miniature rainforest. We’ll go wild with this hands-on workshop that’s fun, educational and not to be missed. Free workshop geared for ages 9-12. Registration is required at sandiego.gov/steam.

**Save the date:** We will be hosting an informational program for people curious about building an accessory dwelling unit (aka granny flat) on their property on Saturday, April 11, at 10 a.m.

All San Diego public libraries will be closed on President’s Day, Monday, Feb. 17.

**YOUTH PROGRAMS**

**Free Play for Babies to 3-year-olds:** Join us on Fridays from 10 to 10:45 a.m. Little ones will have the opportunity to play in an unstructured setting while making noise, interacting with books and toys and meeting new friends. Older siblings are welcome.

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**News Briefs**

**CONTINUED FROM Page 5**

Not seeking reelection are David Hardy of Allied Gardens, Doug Livingston of Del Cerro and Dan Smith of Grantville. Returning or new candidates running are shoe-ins because they are running unopposed for the empty seats. And due to bylaw rules, anyone considering a run...
Del Cerro Action Council news

By JAY WILSON

The Feb. 2020 quarterly meeting of the Del Cerro Action Council (DCAC) met the evening of Jan. 23 at Temple Emanu-EL.

Police update: John Steffen, our police department’s community relations officer, reported on the crime stats. The majority of property crimes continue to be in the area of Adobe Falls Road accessed off of Waring Road. The new police academy will increase staffing for the police department.

SDSU Police update: Corporal Mark Peterson, the community relations officer for San Diego State, announced Melissa Link will be the SDSU Police update: senior land relations officer for San Diego State, and Mark Peterson, the community relations officer for SDSU, stated, “We are about ready to submit to the city of San Diego the Del Cerro property owners.”

DCAC secretary report: Jay Wilson announced elections for two vacancies for Del Cerro on the Navajo Community Planners, Inc. board will be held in March. Go to navajoplanners.org. Scroll down to “elections.”

All Peoples Church (APC): Robert Herber, pastor of APC, stated, “We are about ready to submit to the city of San Diego for the second time. We are still working with Caltrans regarding their property at the south end of our property. The parking structure is going to be closer to College Avenue than next to the homes.”

Kathie Riser, the senior land use consultant from The Atlantis Group stated, “We are working through a number of complex issues with the city.” She showed the diagram of the first submittal. With the new plan, the parking structure will be almost level with College Avenue. We are working on the driveway into the facility and continuing to work with Caltrans.

“The submittal will include environmental, biological and traffic study update,” she added. “There will be another meeting with residents adjacent to our property. We are proposing a traffic signal at the main entrance to the parking structure.”
**Orb-weaver spiders**

By GEORGE VANGA

While out and about in Mission Trails, Rancho Mission Canyon, or in our backyard, we often see a fairly large spider in the middle of a large web consisting of concentric circles — an orb-weaver spider. The word “orb” comes from Middle English meaning “circle” and from the Latin “orbis” meaning “ring.”

Orb-weaver spiders are members of the family Araneidae (aranoids) belonging to the class Arachnida that besides spiders includes scorpions, mites, and ticks. With more than 5,000 species worldwide, araneids are the third largest family of spiders.

The creation of the web is in many ways an amazing feat of engineering and construction. First, the spider rides on the wind, straining a line to another surface. Once it has landed, it secures the line and then drops another line from the center of the first making a “Y.” It continues to add more radii starting from the center and then adds the concentric circles of webbing that gives the common name “orb-weaver.” The initial lines of the orb are spun with non-sticky silk, but the final spiral is of sticky silk which aids in the capture of prey.

Most orb-weavers tend to be active during the evening hours. Many of them will build a new web each day. They will consume the web toward the end of the day, rest for about an hour and then begin construction of the new one in roughly the same area as the original one.

Generally, when an insect blunders into the web, the spider will stun the prey with a quick bite and then wrap the insect with silk and consume it at leisure. If the prey, however, is venomous like a wasp, the wrapping may be performed first. Should you encounter an orb-weaver on your skin, keep in mind that they are reluctant to bite. However, if you do get bitten, the result is a mild local pain with some numbness and swelling. It is definitely not fatal.

Among orb-weavers, the difference between male and female, sexual dimorphism, is based on size. Males are always smaller than females. Orb-weavers also exhibit sexual cannibalism where the female will consume her male paramour. In Mission Trails, a place that is sure to give you a chance to observe the web of orb-weavers is on the slope of Kwaay Paay right across from the entrance to the parking lot for Old Mission Dam. The best time to view is early in the morning after sunrise when the webs are outlined by dew.

—George Varga is a trail guide at Mission Trails Regional Park.

**Observation of the Month: Fox squirrel**

By PATRICIA SIMPSON

For a long time, the only squirrels found at Mission Trails Regional Park were California ground squirrels (Otospermophilus beecheyi). But in 2016, an iNaturalist user photographed a fox squirrel (Sciurus niger) on a trail west of Kumeyaay Lake. No one reported another fox squirrel in the park on iNaturalist until April 2019 and since then, seven more observations have been posted, including one by skylukr (bit.ly/2uhjAR). This new population of non-native critters seems to be confined to an urban border of the park, just east of Kwaay Paay Peak Trail (off of Father Junipero Serra Trail).

The fox squirrel is a tree squirrel and as the name indicates, it excels at living among trees, where it nests in empty cavities behind the body, usually on the ground or sometimes hanging straight down if the animal is perched. The ground squirrel is also stockier and more matted in color and its eyes are lined with a distinct white ring.

According to the San Diego Natural History Museum, fox squirrels might have been introduced to the Los Angeles Area around 1904 from Tennessee or the Mississippi Valley. They have been expanding their territory ever since. In San Diego, there has been a well-established population in Balboa Park for many years (since 1929 according to most sources), but in the last few years, more and more fox squirrels have been reported in other parts of the county.

The impact of fox squirrels on California ground squirrels is minimal as the two species have different habitat and nesting preferences. However, as the fox squirrel population moves east toward San Diego’s mountains, the Western gray squirrel (Sciurus griseus) species may be affected. Both Western gray and fox squirrels are tree squirrels and would most definitely compete for habitat and food, according to a study by Los Angeles County Fish and Wildlife.

To help scientists better understand the current distribution of squirrels in San Diego County, please take photos of them, post on iNaturalist.org and join the Southern California Squirrel Survey at bit.ly/3bmI4ea.

Patricia Simpson is a trail guide at Mission Trails Regional Park.

**RAIN, WIND, AND FIRE...**

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

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

CHIMNEY SWEEPS, INC., one of San Diego’s leading chimney repair and maintenance companies, is here to protect you and your home from losses due to structural damage and chimney fires.

Family owned and operated and having been in business for over 30 years, Chimney Sweeps Inc. is a fully licensed and insured chimney contracting company (License # 976438) and they are certified with the National Fireplace Institute and have an A+ rating with the Better Business Bureau.

For a limited time, readers of this paper will receive a special discount on our full chimney cleaning and safety inspection package with special attention to chimney water intrusion points in preparation for the rainy season.
Holocaust survivor discusses memoir at Mission Trails

The Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation is pleased to present two evening lectures with Holocaust survivor Rose Schindler. She and her late husband, Max Schindler, miraculously survived the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp, later creating a new life in the United States. They moved to San Diego in the late 1950s and raised a family here, near Mission Trails Regional Park (MTRP).

Rose Schindler was born in Czechoslovakia and lived there until her parents, aunt, five sisters and two brothers were deported to Auschwitz when she was just 14 years old. Max Schindler was from Cottbus, Germany, and he and his family were deported to Poland and sent to a forced labor camp in 1942. Over a three-year period, Max was sent to six concentration camps.

Despite these horrible beginnings, Max and Rose found each other and engaged in Holocaust activities for much of their lives. Together, they were members of the 45 Aide Society and involved in The Butterfly Project, whose mission is to educate students about the Holocaust.

Rose Schindler recently published a memoir, "Two Who Survived." The book chronicles her and Max's lives, from their childhoods as a city boy and a country girl, to the persecution of Jews that resulted in their being plucked from their homes and thrust into concentration camps. They endured the Holocaust and carried on with a determination that shaped them forever. Rose Schindler has spoken to groups for decades about her life and how she and her husband persevered and later raised a family in San Diego.

Rose continues to be a sought-after speaker and will have appearances on two evenings at the Mission Trails Regional Park Visitor and Interpretive Center: Tuesday, Feb. 18, and Sunday, March 1. Advance registration is required for this event, and a link to tickets is available at www.mtrp.org. Signed copies of "Two Who Survived" will be available for purchase at the events.

SPRING BREAK DAY CAMP

Following parents' and campers' rave reviews of our Thanksgiving weekday camp at Mission Trails, the MTRP Foundation will offer camp during the San Diego Unified School District spring break, from Monday, March 30, through Friday, April 3. In a survey of campers' parents after the Thanksgiving week camp, one wrote that their camper was so excited to go to camp that they woke up early and got themselves ready for another exciting day of adventure!

Developed by the MTRP Foundation's lead educator, Amber Goslee, the Spring Break Day Camp will allow children in second through sixth grades to have an in-depth experience of the park. They will learn about a range of subjects, from animal habitats and food chains to ecosystems, geology, and Kumeyaay culture. Students will also learn about hiking etiquette, and take daily hikes, make crafts and play games, including games that Kumeyaay children played long ago.

In addition, special guest speakers will include native storyteller Kathleen Wallace and birder/photographer Wendy Esterly. The MTRP Foundation Day Camp will be held from 9 a.m.–3 p.m. with optional aftercare. Registration is $240 for the week and sibling discounts are available. There are a limited number of spaces, so register today at mtrp.org/daycamp.

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Jennifer Morrissey is executive director of the Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation.
Henry dancers get the Dinsney experience

PHHS is driven on character education, which can extend into avenues all across out campus. The goal of the Acts of Kindness Quest was to have every student on campus, in six minutes, send out at least 10 messages of kindness out to the universe — 25,320 acts of kindness.

This project was the culmination of other activities that include making an all-school art piece out of strips of paper where students publicly shared something they were thankful for (2,532 strips making a giant peace sign) to be displayed. If you’ve seen the giant starry night mural on campus, the idea is similar.

Students also wrote one thoughtful thank you card and read an excerpt from the handbook “Congratulations, By the Way” by George Saunders.

PHHS is an elective class that focuses on getting students into college. AVID instructors focus on developing communication skills, tutoring to support students into college. AVID is an elective class that helps them improve as a dancer.

On Dec. 6, PHHS junior varsity and varsity dance teams embarked on a Disney Adventure. After raising funds and getting administrative approval, the PHHS dance teams headed off to California Adventure Park to have a behind-the-scenes Disney experience. The dances entered the park in the morning where they were free to enjoy California Adventure theme park and all it had to offer. Later that day, each team participated in a Disney Performing Arts Workshop. The purpose of this trip was to give our dance team exposure to dance opportunities outside of the world of high school dance teams.

Each of the teams had the opportunity to go behind the scenes at Disney California Adventure Park and participate in a hip-hop dance workshop taught by a Disney professional. The dancers had the opportunity to learn from a Disney professional who works on the Disney TV side of the Disney entertainment world. During the workshop, dancers gleaned tips, techniques and insight as to how to navigate auditions in the professional world of dance. Dancers were taught a routine, asked to perform and then received feedback about their performance that would help them improve as a dancer.

Many of the dance team members expressed gratitude for the opportunity to learn from a professional in the field of dance, as well as an opportunity to spend a day with their team enjoying the magical world of Disney. If you have attended a dance team performance at PHHS, you have contributed to this learning experience for our dance team members, and we thank you for your support!

Community members supporting Avid classes

Allison Younghans and Marissa Lue from Illumina, a biotech company in La Jolla, graciously came to present to our AVID students on Jan. 9. They spoke to four AVID students in May, 12th grades. Both presenters spoke about their college path, how they chose their college, some obstacles in their journey and how they overcame them, as well as their career paths. Students in the AVID program were able to broaden their perspective about possible career paths and majors courses of study they might not have considered.

AVID is an elective class that focuses on getting underrepresented students into college. AVID instructors focus on developing communication skills, tutoring to support students into college. AVID is an elective class that focuses on getting underrepresented students into college. AVID instructors focus on developing communication skills, tutoring to support students into college.

Henry partners with I Love a Clean San Diego

Last November, I Love a Clean San Diego (ILACSD) celebrated its 65th anniversary of being an environmental nonprofit. Being the longest-running environmental organization in San Diego is something to celebrate but for everyone living aroundPatrick Henry High School, there is a lot more to recognize. Henry is one of three very lucky high schools in their Think Blue Brigade (TBB) program. As their website states, “ILACSD and City of San Diego’s Think Blue Brigade is an environmental awareness program that partners with existing environmental clubs on high school campuses within the City of San Diego. Think Blue Brigade members receive visits from specialists about environmental topics, as well as participate in regional off-site events, including cleanups, field trips, tours, and more!”

Henry’s TBB students have toured Scripps Pier and research facility, dissected albatross bodies, observed living plankton under a microscope, toured the Point Loma Wastewater Treatment Plant and had opportunities to network with professionals in environmental fields. In May, ILACSD is hosting a tour of the Miramar Landfill for 50 Henry students.

For more information, contact Patrick Schoettler at pschoettler@sandi.net.
PHHS Student of the Month

We are proud to have David Harimana named as Patrick Henry High School’s Student of the Month for January’s Kiwanis meeting held last month. Principal Listy Gillingham attended the meeting with David and said a hard work ethic, dedication to education, and overall solid character is what set him apart from other seniors at Henry.

Harimana has run for the Patrick Henry cross-country and track teams since his freshman year. Coach Myette has worked with him in a variety of capacities and shared this account about him when recommending him for the student of the month: “David’s impact on the team was immediate. Along with a great work ethic, David’s passion, commitment, and sacrifice makes him a great teammate and leader. In addition to success on the track and in cross-country, David knows six languages, taught himself how to program in Java by watching YouTube videos, and built his own drone. If that were not enough, you can listen to his alter ego, DJ ProJp, who has created his own music videos much to the delight of his teammates, peers, and coaches (check out his YouTube channel). Immigrating to the United States from the Democratic Republic of the Congo via Uganda, David’s remarkable life experience carries over into everything he does. He embraces every opportunity with joy, laughter, and gratitude. It is therefore fitting that he be selected as the Student of the Month.”

David’s math teacher from his junior year also was taken by David’s focus, hard work ethic, and positive nature. “David spreads positivity and has an impeccable work ethic,” she reported. “He embraces the academic challenge, and the harder a problem or assignment seems, the more enthusiastic he is about tackling it. He actually let out an audible ‘yes!’ in math last year in his Advanced Integrated Math 3 class when they were doing something that appeared kind of ugly at first glance.”

Another teacher reported that “David is the kind of student you think about when planning a lesson — the kind who gives it his absolute all and who you don’t want to let down by delivering anything but the best you can on any particular day. The kind who makes you feel like they deserve nothing but the best that you can offer. His presence makes Henry a better place and I can’t wait to see where his hard work and good attitude will take him.”

Knowing that he immigrated to the U.S. in middle school and has recently become an American citizen through his journey from Mann Middle School to Henry High School, makes us all proud to know him and honor him as one of Henry’s best.

Baseball players with college commitments lead team

Patrick Henry Baseball is tied for third in the county with three players that already have college commitments to play baseball at four-year schools.

Coming off a season in which they won their league with a 23-8-1 overall record and an 11-1 record in league schools, people are starting to take notice. With a new facility and a lot of young talent in the program, the future is very bright:

Max Jones: City League Pitcher of the year has committed to the University of San Francisco, which competes in the WCC with USD.

Matoe Medina: First-team all-league selection has committed to D2 San Francisco State. SFSSU competes in one of the toughest D2 conferences with UCSD.

Ryan Ellis: A 6-foot, 5-inch sophomore, Ellis will not graduate until 2022 but has shown enough for the University of New Mexico to offer him a scholarship. UNM competes in the Mountain West with SDSU.

—Elizabeth Gillingham is principal of Patrick Henry High School.

Service-learning opportunity

PHHS seniors Valerie Crisologo and Emily Donahue traveled to Bayahibe, Dominican Republic for a service-learning tour with SDSU. Interested parties can contact the SDSU volunteer program, student volunteers, have checked out paint and stencils to label storm drains to make it sure is understood that whatever goes down the storm drain will end up in the ocean. Litter, yard trimmings, and motor oil are not welcome.

ILACSD still supports clean-up events but they are proactively working to prevent litter by inspiring students to research environmental careers or, at the least, help communities do better at minimizing their impact on the environment. Patrick Henry loves I Love a Clean San Diego.

Supporting ILACSD supports our community. Check out their website at ilacsd.org and see how you can be a part of the movement.

Henry Engineering Team wants incoming freshmen

Patrick Henry’s Engineering Academy is accepting applications. Are you interested in a fun project-based elective course series that incorporates skills used by real engineers?

Patrick Henry has the largest engineering program in a public high school in the state of California. With four dedicated teachers, we offer nine total courses in three pathways — Engineering Design, Engineering & Architecture and Computer Science. Most of our courses are articulated for honors credit and our students have the opportunity to participate in field trips, clubs (including Society of Women Engineers and FIRST Robotics), community college credit for select classes, special internship and scholarship opportunities, and networking with industry professionals.

We accept all applicants on a first-come, first-served basis until classes are full. No prior experience in engineering is needed. For more information or to apply, please visit patrickhenryedca.org or contact Mrs. Moy at emojy@sandi.net.
Henry Cluster STEMM events
By JAY WILSON

Mini Golf Challenge: The Henry Cluster STEMM Foundation will be hosting the fifth Mini Golf Challenge on Saturday, April 18, from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. at the Mission Trails Church located at 4880 Zion Ave. Student K-12 teams of four to six students are welcome from local schools or organizations to compete. The reigning champions are from Hearst Elementary and they will be attempting to repeat as champions and take home the new trophy.

Each team is to design and build a mini golf hole that reflects this year’s theme of “Earth Day.” Bring it to the mini golf course on the day of the event. During the Mini Golf Challenge, team members will interact with attendees (the golfers) to share what it was like working as a team, how they came up with their ideas, new knowledge they’ve acquired during the process and other aspects of their experience. Event attendees will vote on the favorite hole and the winning team will bring back to their school the much-coveted Henry Cluster STEMM Foundation Mini Golf Challenge Trophy for display. Teams range in size from two to six students. We encourage them to be co-ed. Teams work with an adult mentor (volunteer teacher or parent/guardian), design and build the hole, set up and take down the hole at the Mission Trails Church, and prepare submission materials. Detailed registration packets will be distributed to adult team mentors and will also be available for download. For more information, visit hcstemm.org.

Robotics Showcase Extravaganza: Once again, the HC STEMM Foundation is partnering with the San Carlos Library and the Friends of the San Carlos Library for the annual Robotics Showcase Extravaganza on Saturday, Feb. 22, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., at the San Carlos Library. There will be robotics displays and demonstrations from a number of elementary, middle and high schools from our community including a booth from San Diego State University. For more information, go to the sancafriendsofsothellibrary.org.

—JAY Wilson writes on behalf of the Henry Cluster STEMM Foundation.

News Briefs

LOCAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT EXPO PLANNED FOR MAY 15

Local business-to-business marketing group GADS (for Granville, Allied Gardens, Del Cerro, San Carlos) is collaborating with the Friends of Del Cerro (FODC) to plan a business development expo on Wednesday, May 15. The event will draw entrepreneurs and “deliver tangible take-aways that help small businesses in the areas of mindset, marketing, public-private partnerships, human capital growth, funding, and finance,” according to a GADS press release. The event program will start at 10:30 a.m. and run until about 2:30 p.m., and will be held at Admiral Baker Golf Course. The event includes a coaches’ clinic on the Pershing Middle School fields on Saturday, Feb. 8. Rene Miramontes, the director of coaching for Crusaders, conducted the clinic.

Spring kick-off clinics: All Crusaders recreational and competitive players born between 2006 and 2013 are invited on Sunday, Feb. 16, and 23, from noon to 1:30 p.m. to the fields at Pershing Middle School. This clinic will sharpen players’ skills; they will have fun playing the games and being coached by our professional staff. The event will be under the direction of Miramontes and assistant director of coaching Victor Melendez. The clinics are at no cost to the families. Please go to our crusaderssoccer.org to register online.

Competitive Division: Teams for the Crusaders Soccer Competitive Division are also being formed for players born between 2003 and 2013. Go to crusaderssoccer.org and click on “Crusaders Staff” to contact any of the professional coaches for the 2020-21 Competitive Division season.

February is Heart Health Month

Take time to improve your heart health! Exercise, eating healthy, keeping circulation and lymphatic system moving are some great ways to support your heart and overall health!

Envision Personalized Health offers services that will support you.

For the month of February we are offering some great deals!

Spa Services

Swedish Massage $65 (reg. $75)
(promotes circulation)

Dry Brushing with Body Polish $80 (reg. $95)
(supports the lymphatic system)

Personal Training Services

Group Cardio Class
Buy 4 get one Free $100 (reg. $125)

Private Boxing Class 60 mins.
Buy 4 get one Free $240 (reg. $300)

Envision Personalized Health

4302 Alpine Canyon Road Suite 14 San Diego CA 92120
858-229-9096 www.envisionpersonalizedhealth.com
The IRC helps refugees build a future for themselves in the business world, which event organizers say is a natural fit for the small businesses they are helping.

The missions of both GADS and FODC are aligned since both exist to build relationships with businesses in the areas of Granville, Allied Gardens, El Cerrito, and San Carlos.

“We are stronger working as neighbors and desire to enhance our neighborhood’s economic base by creating strong partnerships together,” states the press release.

Event organizers are currently looking for sponsors to offset the program costs not covered by the city grant. For more information, please contact Bryan Pridmore at BPridmore@misionTF.com or call 858-925-5770.

CHANCELLOR CARROLL TO RETIRE IN 2021
San Diego Community College District (SDCCD) Chancellor Constance M. Carroll, who has served as chancellor since 2004, has announced that she will retire in 2021, following a national search for her replacement.

Frequently asked as to “Who will succeed Dr. Carroll?” the chancellor has maintained the “answer is you.”

The selection process is currently underway and candidates are being invited to apply for the chancellor position.

The Board of Trustees is committed to ensuring a smooth transition for the leadership of the district and will continue to provide regular updates on the selection process.

In the meantime, Chancellor Carroll encourages all community members to apply for the chancellor position and to join her in building a thriving and successful community college system for the next generation.

San Diego Community College District's board of trustees has approved the search for a new chancellor to replace Constance Carroll, who is set to retire in 2021. The search process will include a national search for the replacement, with the final selection to be made by the board of trustees.

The district has also established a website at sdcchiring.com where interested parties can apply for the position and provide feedback on the search process.

The quality of the candidates is critical to the success of the new chancellor, and the board of trustees is committed to finding a leader who can build on the foundation of excellence that has been established under Chancellor Carroll’s leadership.

The new chancellor will be expected to lead the district in its mission to provide access to higher education for all members of the community, including those who might not have had access before.

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DCAC  CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

Answering questions about the project, Herber said traffic signals around the park will be green for a year during the construction period, at Navajo Community College’s SDSU West Park.

In addition, Dr. Carroll was appointed by President Barack Obama and confirmed by the United States Senate for a six-year term on the National Council on the Humanities, overseeing the work of the National Endowment for the Humanities, and she has served on numerous local, state, and national boards and committees committed to educational and economic excellence.

Prior to being named chancellor, Dr. Carroll served 11 years as president of San Diego City College; was president of Saddleback College in Orange County; was president of Indian Valley Colleges in Marin County; also served as an administrator at the University of Southern Maine and the University of Pittsburgh before moving to California.

While retiring from her full-time administrative role at the district, Chancellor Carroll says she will pursue other avenues of service in education and in cultural organizations.
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